

MISSION STATEMENT

Education in the fields of mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology (MINT education, the German equivalent of STEM – science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is understood as part of a concept for comprehensive education. Knowledge of MINT contexts is a fundamental prerequisite for open-mindedness in general towards scientific and technological developments. It forms the foundations for a socially, ecologically and ethically responsible and qualified debate in society on relevant issues and for addressing global challenges. This is why the National MINT Forum seeks to promote interest in issues and professions in the MINT area and to focus, early on and persistently, on the development of corresponding skills.

The National MINT Forum supports good MINT education at all levels of the education system, for highly qualified professionals are indispensable in maintaining the competitiveness and innovation potential of Germany as a business location. MINT education which still needs to be improved in many schools, role and profession stereotypes making it difficult for youths, and in particular girls, to gain access to MINT to MINT topics, falling numbers of applications for technical vocational education, ensuring success in studying MINT subjects at German higher education institutions and lifelong learning at the business level are aspects that pose special challenges. The shortage of MINT professionals, which continues to increase owing to demographic developments, is not a business cycle phenomenon but a structural problem. This is why early childhood, school and extracurricular, and vocational and academic MINT education as well as lifelong learning have to be sustainably improved and developed. Excellent MINT qualification of education specialists and teachers forms an essential prerequisite for the achievement of these goals. It is equally important to mobilise additional resources in society and create suitable framework conditions for the education and employment system.

The National MINT Forum is an alliance of institutions and associations acting at superregional level that seek to promote MINT education. Many members are concentrating on extracurricular initiatives. The organisations that have joined forces in the National MINT Forum represent the entire MINT education chain ranging from early childhood education through extracurricular, school, vocational and academic education to further education and lifelong learning.

The National MINT Forum supports continuous MINT education encompassing all phases in life, both in the sense of factual knowledge and the acquisition of skills and in the sense of a fundamental familiarity with a world shaped by science and technology. Such education is of considerable importance in the development of an individual's personality and his or her life perspective. It is a precondition for participation in civil society and for career development, and it plays a significant role in achieving more equal opportunities. In addition, it enhances the unfolding of creative abilities and design skills and promotes the development of scientific and engineering talent.

The National MINT Forum sees its inherent role as that of providing a floor for exchange among its members and acting as a think tank on their behalf. It presents itself outwards as a national advocate of good MINT education that supports corresponding policies.

The common goal is to amplify the impact of every single initiative, create synergies and sustainably advance further improvements in the quality of MINT education in Germany by networking and cooperating via the National MINT Forum. Here, the National MINT Forum seeks to act as an exchange platform and a members' think tank as well as being the key stakeholder in MINT education. The Forum is to extend its role at national level as the first point of contact when it comes to the topic of MINT education for politics and the media. Thanks to its expertise, the National MINT Forum is an indispensable institution for decisions taken in the political sphere.

COOPERATION PRINCIPLES

The National MINT Forum is a strategic organisation that supports but also critically reviews policies and backs the common interests of its members beyond their operative activities by developing recommendations for action on MINT topics and communicating them to national politics and the public at large.

In order to achieve synergy effects, the members regularly exchange their views and ideas and contribute their networks, expertise and experience. In working groups, education policy recommendations on specific MINT education topics are compiled and common quality standards and impact criteria are developed.

Once a year, the National MINT Forum organises the National MINT Summit in order to present the core political messages and major topics of its work and engage in discussions with representatives from politics, the media, higher education and research, industry and society.

The National MINT Forum is represented in public by two part-time spokespersons from the member organisations. A full-time head office coordinates the activities, which are adopted by the Members' Assembly.

In cooperating with its members, the National MINT Forum observes the subsidiarity principle. The members unrestrictedly retain their identity and visibility and act operationally independently in the interest of their own missions.