

Sehr geehrte Frau Ministerin, Magnifizienz, sehr geehrter Herr Müller, sehr geehrte Professoren und Professorinnen

... Dear Graduates!

Congratulations – you are all one step away from becoming HHL Alumni!

What defines the value of a degree from a business school?

At the end of the day it is three things:

- The school's reputation
- The curriculum, and
- Its alumni network

As we all know from various rankings: you passed an excellent curriculum at a highly respected, up-and-coming school. However, when it comes to the network, I have bad news for you, you have not crossed a finish line. But the good news is it's all about fun.

For sure you are connected with some of your classmates. Potentially you also know somebody from the other graduation classes. But how about the graduates from next year? And what about those who received their degree last year? Not to mention even older classes.

Now it's all in your hands! In order to get the real value out of your degree you need to get active.

This was the very reason why I stepped up last year, when asked to become president of the HHL Alumni Association. I was excited by the potential that lies at all our fingertips only waiting to be released.

The value within our network is thrilling. And now is the right time to evolve it to a high quality alumni network that will help you further grow, long after the lectures are but a memory.

Today, we are roughly 1500 alumni working as professionals in over 70 countries in all thinkable industries from banking, to fashion, IT, or real estate. And at the current rate we are adding 170 alumni to the pool each year. Moreover, we have an exciting startup scene with

over 130 businesses founded since 2000, creating more than 2500 jobs. Venture capital and seed funding companies of former HHL entrepreneurs are already spurring the European startup scene.

Use this opportunity to shape our network with the spirit and fellowship that evolved among you during your studies.

Become active in a top-level business network and position its alumni as entrepreneurial and sustainable leaders. In the end, as HHL Alumni we all have a few things in common: we are hungry for excellence and we want to continuously improve ourselves, personally and professionally.

All this makes the Alumni Association the place to build up your personal network! So let's help each other to boost our careers, learn from each other throughout our entire lives, and – of course – let's celebrate together and have some exciting events around the globe.

That said I'm looking forward to welcoming you all in the Alumni Association, as well as talking to you at the graduation ball tonight.

Let's live the network!