

Das Physikzentrum The Physikzentrum



Youth Meeting the Original

Knowledge in physics is passed on most successfully from one generation of scientists to the next, following the master-apprentice-system. It is according to this principle that the students develop and write their Diplom theses (soon: MSc-theses) and doctoral theses – the final projects in academic teaching. But acquiring scientific knowledge is by no means a one-way street – quite the contrary: the masters, the senior researchers, benefit from the unprejudiced creativity and scientific curiosity of the young physicists, the “apprentices” – cognitive learning needs both sides.

The young physicists, students, doctoral candidates, postdocs, visiting the Physikzentrum Bad Honnef for a meeting, a workshop, or any other scientific event, are understood to be thrilled with physics and their own most individual scientific ideas and interests. These young scientists (and those who remained young), are offered, at the Physikzentrum, a very special environment to give rein to their enthusiasm in intense discussions with other physicists – after lectures, in poster sessions, at breakfast or dinner and, last but by far not least, during long sessions at night in the beer cellar. For outsiders it is sometimes difficult to follow this kind of enthusiasm – for physicists it is just their elixir of life.

Adept physicists tell us about physics schools they attended, like the one in Bad Honnef, and about the decisive role these schools played in their lives. It is particularly at these places that they met their respective professor or the head of their research group for the first time as a member of the scien-

tific community and not as their boss. It is here that they met, for the first time, the real celebrities whose names they knew from scientific literature and textbooks. And that is not all: Countless ideas and research projects – and also careers – originated here.

30 years after being founded, the Physikzentrum Bad Honnef stands its ground among the physics schools in Europe. The programme of the physics schools “Youth Meeting the Original” is, and will be, one of the most inspiring ways to discuss new and future-oriented directions of science. My wish for the Physikzentrum Bad Honnef: may it continue to contribute substantially to that programme.

