



Alexander von Humboldt
Stiftung/Foundation

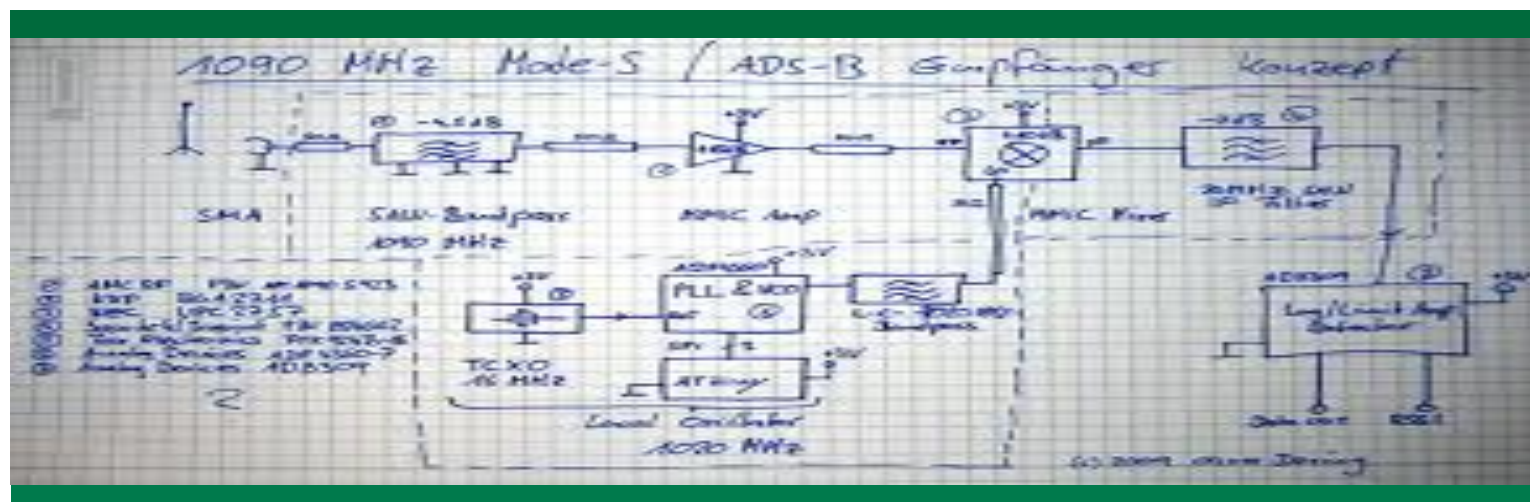
Lessons learnt client perspective





Evaluation Concept

- Evaluation stakeholder and process: adequate
- Evaluation cycle: not every seven years but programme monitoring
- No overall view but focused questions
- Multivariate methods





Project Management Foundation

- Acceptance
- Coordination of feedback in a hierarchic organization
- Benefit visible and appreciated
- Relevance of reporting systems





Interaction with Evaluator

- Common knowledge of the evaluation object
- Increase of database skills
- More in-depth view and understanding of programme ideas
- Independence - distance
- Budget management
- Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data



The evaluator's perspective

- Introduction
 - technopolis group
 - Our assignments with the Humboldt Foundation
 - Methods applied in all three evaluations
 - Particularities
- Dealing with complexity necessarily implies learning
 - Methodology
 - Content & Results
 - Relation with the Client
- The impact
 - Concerning the stakeholders of an evaluation study
 - Concerning the scope of an evaluation study



The Technopolis Group

- Founded in 1989 as a spin-off from the Science and Technology Policy Research Unit (SPRU) of the University of Sussex
- Consultancy company specialised in the area of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy
- Offices in 9 countries with 90+ people
- We work for public organisations and public-private partnerships
- People with very mixed backgrounds in terms of background, experience and nationality
- We conduct studies, help with strategy building and in some instances support the implementation

Three Assignments with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

- Evaluation of the Humboldt Research Award and the Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
 - “Award Programmes”: 2008-2009
- Evaluation of the Humboldt Research Fellowship Program of the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation
 - “Research Fellowship Programme”: 2009-2011
- Evaluation of the Feodor Lynen Research Fellowship Programme
 - “Feodor Lynen Programme”: 2010-2012

Methods applied in all three evaluations

- Stakeholder interviews
- Database analysis
 - > 20.000 entries
 - Long term funding
 - Multiple support types
- Online survey
 - Fellows
 - Hosts (not always systematic...)
- Analysis of final reports & assessments

Methods applied in particular settings

- Award programme:
 - Case studies,
 - Bibliometrics
 - Network analysis,
- Research Fellowship Programme
 - Digging more deeply in the database: 16 875 Fellows since 1970
 - Comparison of final reports of fellows and of their hosts
 - Special attention to alumni programmes
 - Participation in annual meeting
 - Case studies
- Feodor Lynen Program
 - Control group:
 - *Survey*
 - *Bibliometrics*
 - Focus groups
 - Participation in network event

Specific challenges

- Huge and long-term database
- Life long funding
- Multiple network layers
 - Within the Humboldt-Network
 - Triggered by the Humboldt-Network
 - Beyond the Humboldt Network
- Corporate Culture of the Humboldt Foundation
 - Individual treatment of each Humboldtian
 - Resistance to aggregation
 - Academic (research) ambition, pragmatic needs

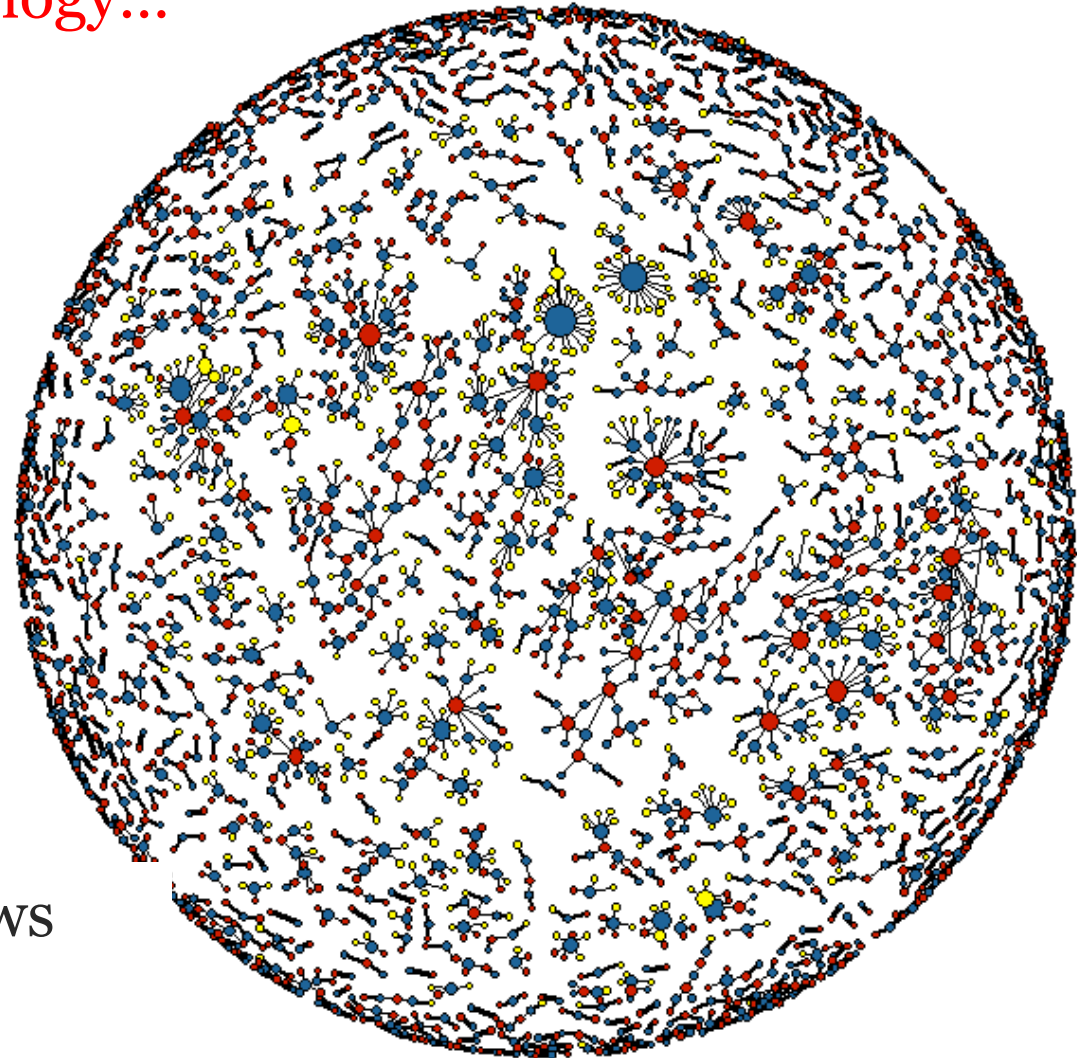
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When dealing with complexity, we necessarily reach the limits of our methodology...

Hosts

Awardees

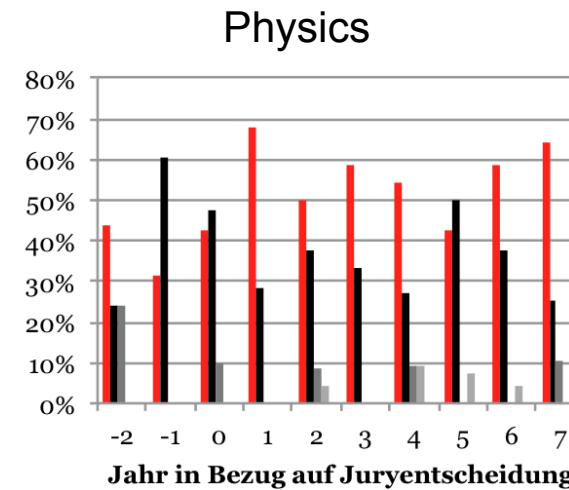
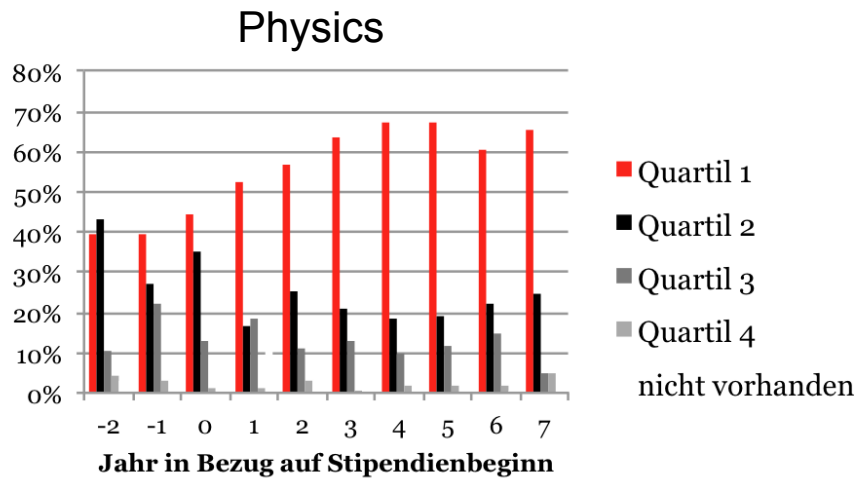
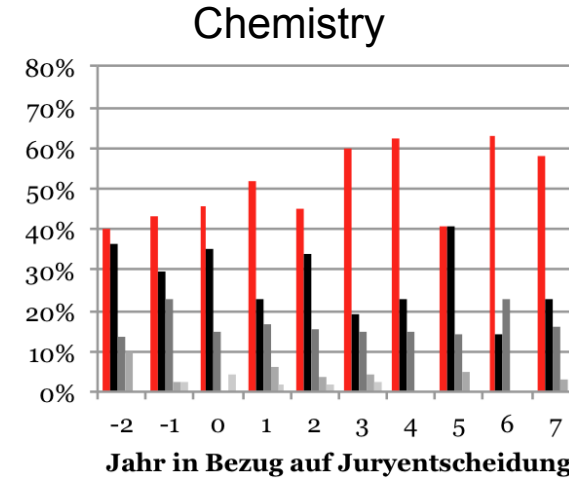
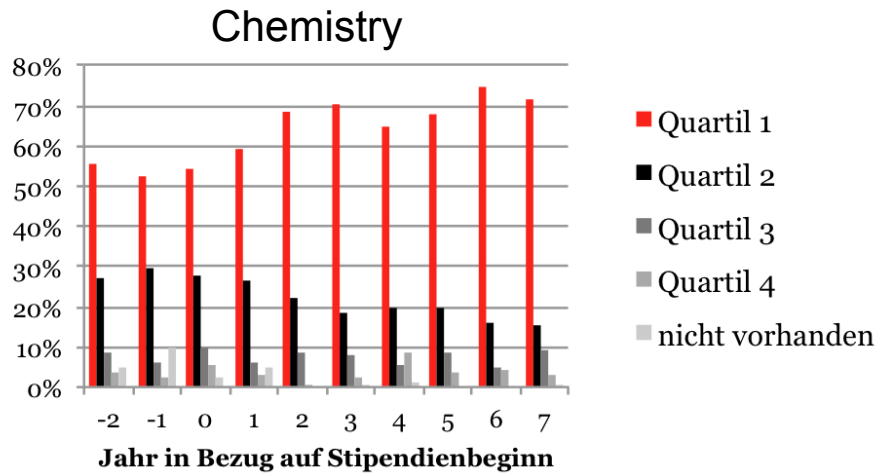
Lynen Fellows



Research fellows
are missing...

In bibliometrics however, we have to limit the sample:

Lynen fellows:



Control group: not accepted applications

Journal impact factor of publications: distribution according to quartiles: „the top 25% journals: Q1

Learning about the field of investigation

- Data analysis without data mining uses up unpredictable resources
 - Step by step understanding of the database
 - Close interaction with the AvH
 - In parallel: reorganisation of the IT system
- When diversity is the key success factor of the funding intervention, “representativeness” is a misleading concept
 - Evaluation has to develop a new language from a systemic point of view
- The notion of a “project” does not capture the reality of long term cooperation.
- Understanding of the evaluation object needs counting, observing, empathy

The impact of this learning process

- Special attention when defining the scope of an evaluation study
- Special attention to the stakeholders of an evaluation study
 - Understanding of the logic of the funding organisation
 - Consciously design the relationship with the client: close cooperation in full independence
- Acknowledge evaluation as a learning process



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