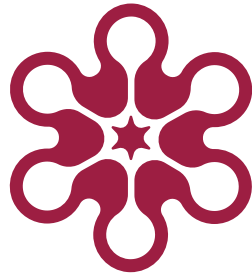


Program for the Dean's Office Medical Faculty Tübingen

Term of Office 2026–2031





thrive

Transparency
Human Values and Leadership Culture
Regulations and Resources
Innovation
Visibility and Collaboration
Excellence

OUR TEAM FOR THE DEAN'S OFFICE



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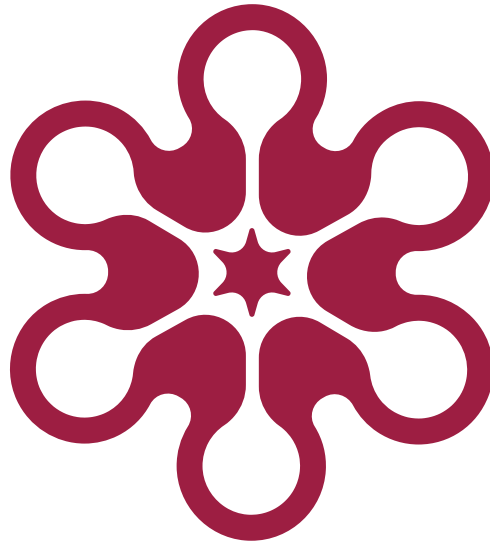


Carsten Eickhoff

TÜBINGEN, JANUARY 2026

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I. Introduction

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen is a place where excellence meets responsibility and where the future is actively shaped. We build on our strengths, keeping at the heart of our work what defines us and has made us successful. At the same time, we look ahead with confidence: driven by curiosity, creativity, and a strong spirit of innovation, we open new pathways in research, teaching, at the interface to patient care. We see challenges as opportunities that allow us to grow and make our faculty more resilient, future-proof and, above all, inspiring for future generations – a place where people want to work and learn.

Our work is dialogue-driven and grounded in values-based leadership, transparent communication, and close collaboration within the University of Tübingen, and is tightly connected to University Hospital Tübingen. We act consistently in line with our values and mission. Together, we shape a Faculty that generates knowledge, imparts expertise, enables action, inspires ideas, and motivates people—ultimately serving as a driving force for the future of medicine and demonstrating how research, teaching, and clinical excellence can responsibly advance society.

Medicine is undergoing profound substantive and structural transformation. Rapid medical progress and technological advances—especially in data analytics, artificial intelligence, and molecular medicine—are fundamentally reshaping research, teaching, education and training, and healthcare delivery. Concurrently, societal and economic frameworks are evolving. In an increasingly competitive national and international landscape, sustainable success will depend not only on individual excellence, but on the strategic consolidation of strengths, the systematic leveraging of synergies, and the sustained promotion of early- and mid-career researchers.

Excellent medical research is not primarily generated through control mechanisms, funding programs, or organizational structures, but through the generation of innovative ideas. These ideas arise from the scientific curiosity and creative capacity of individuals at all career stages and across the full translational continuum—from basic research to clinical application and societal value creation. Sustaining and enabling individual creativity must therefore remain a central objective of research policy and academic governance.

Comparisons with leading national and international faculties demonstrate that, while creativity originates at

the individual level, its full impact can only be realized when supported and scaled through appropriate shared structures and strategic programs. High-performance research infrastructures, large-scale collaborative initiatives, international partnerships, clearly defined research priorities, and systematic approaches to career and competence development constitute essential prerequisites for innovative research and the long-term sustainability of a medical faculty.

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen is distinguished by outstanding scientific strengths, a strong national and international reputation, and a deep sense of identification of its members with the University. In recent years, alongside notable successes in highly competitive funding programs, the Faculty has also engaged in intensive internal discussions regarding its future development. These discussions highlight the need for enhanced transparency, inclusive and participatory strategic planning, and dependable, forward-looking leadership structures. At the same time, they reflect the strong commitment, responsibility, and willingness to contribute to constructive change shared across all status groups of the Faculty. Our program is designed to build on these strengths and to translate them into sustainable structural and cultural renewal.

The responsibility of the Dean's Office is to establish enabling framework conditions, identify and develop potential, foster innovation, and ensure fair and transparent performance evaluation. Resource allocation must be clear and comprehensible in order to support strategic priorities and long-term development.

A synergistic, trust-based partnership between the Medical Faculty and University Hospital Tübingen is a *conditio sine qua non* for sustained success. Strengthening and further developing this collaboration on an equal footing therefore constitutes a central responsibility of the Dean's Office. The Strategy and Development Plan (STEP) 2026, to be finalized in the near future, will articulate the core elements of a shared strategic vision and will be continuously advanced through joint governance processes. Through this approach, we aim to responsibly shape the ongoing transformation of medicine and to create interdisciplinary spaces that enable innovative approaches to improving health today and in the future.

Our goal is to establish a systemic leadership culture that fosters individual creativity, strengthens high-performing structures, and enables consistent support for young talent, thereby sustainably strengthening and further

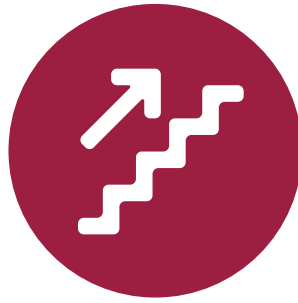
enhancing the scientific, clinical, and societal role of the Medical Faculty of Tübingen in the national and international context.

II. Strategic Fields of Action and Priority Measures

The Faculty of Medicine at Tübingen University stands for excellent research, innovative teaching, and the promotion of responsible scientists engaged in research. Our understanding of the term „scientist“ is inclusive and does not differentiate between various competencies. Clinical research, in accordance with the guidelines of the German Research Foundation (DFG), is understood as an inseparable interplay of basic, applied, and patient-oriented research, as well as their mutual appreciation. In a dynamically changing scientific, technological, and health policy environment, the Faculty pursues the goal of securing its long-term performance, further expanding its national and international visibility as a leading center, and systematically developing new medical priorities. To this end, our program defines **five areas of action** that serve as a **binding framework for the development of the Faculty of Medicine at Tübingen University** in the coming years.

Their implementation is carried out in close coordination with the University Hospital of Tübingen, the University of Tübingen, and external partners.

With these five fields of action, we define a future-oriented strategic framework for 2026–2031, integrating scientific excellence, quality-assured teaching, responsible innovation, and sustainable governance into a coherent overall concept.



II.1 Early-Career Support and Competence Development

Objectives

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen creates reliable, transparent, and attractive conditions for early-career development, academic qualification, and sustainable career pathways. By “early career” we mean students, postgraduate clinical and research staff, and the academic mid-level faculty. We understand early-career development and competence building as a continuous process connecting education, training, research, and clinical work.

There is urgent need for action. Responsibilities must be consolidated and deficits addressed consistently—from the beginning of studies through the academic mid-level phase to target positions.

Education and Teaching as the Foundation

With 16 degree programs, the Faculty offers an impressive and exceptionally broad range of subjects. However, this potential is not yet fully realized. While the preclinical phase of the human medicine program is well-structured, the clinical phase faces notable structural challenges. Binding competency objectives for clinical rotations and the practical year are lacking, and the consistent application of evidence-based and innovative teaching methods is uneven. Moreover, learning objectives, teaching methods, and assessment formats are often insufficiently aligned (constructive alignment). This

makes reliable competence development more difficult, reduces the transparency of the learning process and directly impacts the transition to medical practice and scientific qualification.

Integration between degree programs also falls short of what a campus of this size could achieve. Rather than learning from, with, and about each other, the programs currently operate too independently. In addition, some aspects of the teaching and learning infrastructure are outdated and at times impede further development.

At the same time, this presents a significant opportunity. A consistently competency-oriented development of the curricula, stronger integration of the degree programs, the utilization of synergies, and research-oriented teaching will propel the Tübingen Medical Faculty to a leading position nationally. Moreover, our goal is to be an internationally attractive partner for the exchange of scientific talent.

Academic Early and Mid Career Researchers in the Faculty

The academic mid-level faculty carries a substantial share of research and teaching but often works under high structural pressure. Fixed-term contracts, high workload, and unclear development perspectives threaten motivation and long-term commitment.

Structured programs such as Clinician Scientist, Medical Scientist, doctoral and postdoctoral programs provide an important foundation and will be strengthened. Mentoring is understood as a central instrument of individual development and will be systematically expanded both at departmental and faculty levels.

Priority Measures – Teaching, Early Career, and Mid-Level Faculty

1. Reorganization of the Clinical Phase of Medical Studies

The clinical phase of studies is being reviewed in terms of content and structure and is being fundamentally revised, reformed, and restructured. This serves as the basis for strengthening the necessary interprofessional collaboration between the degree programs of the Faculty of Medicine and, where applicable, neighboring faculties (interprofessionalism), integrating essential future skills and content of modern medicine, implementing evidence-based teaching formats across the board, and preserving the strengths of our faculty (e.g., scientific rigor). The practical orientation will be significantly expanded. Accordingly, binding competency goals will be defined for clinical rotations and the practical year. The quality of training will be regulated in a binding manner in coordination with the hospitals. The student development plan forms an important foundation for the committee's work. The student development plan serves as a central reference framework. Based on this, the interprofessional collaboration between the degree programs of the Faculty of Medicine and – where appropriate – with neighboring faculties will also be systematically strengthened.

2. Competency-Oriented Practical Year

The Practical Year is being further developed as an independent training phase in cooperation with the lecturers and the hospitals. The development of competencies toward independent medical practice is systematically taught, observed, and assessed through the implementation of the concept of „Entrustable Professional Activities“ (EPA). Central coordination within the Dean's Office establishes minimum standards, ensures binding compliance, and thus guarantees uniform implementation across the hospitals.

3. Strengthening Teaching and Learning Infrastructure

The teaching and learning center is the dean's office's construction priority. An infrastructure roadmap, currently being developed, will identify shortcomings in space, technology, and digitalization, and prioritize investments faculty-wide, including dentistry. At the same time, improvements to the learning infrastructure in the valley (e.g., learning hubs) will continue to be pursued.

4. Transparent Career Paths

Structured programs will be strengthened. Regulations regarding time off, work-life balance, and planning security are legally binding. Teaching performance is recognized as an independent contribution and considered in evaluation and development processes. This increases the attractiveness of teaching.

5. Early and Mid-Career Researcher Forum with clear feedback for exchange and development

A faculty-wide forum for early and mid-career researchers will be established. It will serve as a platform for structured exchange among researchers, for example in the form of peer mentoring, communication with the dean's office, and the development of realistic career prospects.



II.2 Research

Objectives

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen positions itself as an internationally visible and competitive research location with clearly defined profiles in forward-looking thematic fields.

Medical research is subject to continuous change. Disease patterns are becoming more complex, and demographic developments are creating new demands on prevention and healthcare delivery. At the same time, methodological and technological advances are progressing rapidly. To remain scientifically successful under these conditions, a deeper understanding of biological systems across multiple levels is required, together with close integration of research, clinical expertise, and methodological innovation.

The content focuses particularly on immune-mediated, acute and chronic inflammatory processes, neurological, sensory and neurodegenerative diseases, gender-specific medicine, metabolic and age-related diseases, as well as the molecular basis of genetic, degenerative and oncological diseases and their therapy resistance. Additionally, gender- and life-stage-dependent differences in disease development, care, and treatment success are considered, as are preventive medicine strategies and population-based care approaches. These topics are scientifically demanding and have a long-term focus. Their successful implementation requires the systematic integration of diverse perspectives and expertise, as well as the strengthening of the technical and human resources infrastructure for these areas.

The Tübingen site offers excellent prerequisites to address these challenges. Three Clusters of Excellence, five German Centers for Health Research, strong performance in European competitive funding programs, and a large number of high-performing junior research groups demonstrate the scientific quality and thematic breadth of the Medical Faculty.

At the same time, there are areas where existing scientific strength has not yet been fully translated into impact. In particular, research activities are not yet sufficiently bundled into sustainable collaborative structures, such as Collaborative Research Centers (SFBs). Moreover, clinical research is not yet sufficiently visible for a site of this size and performance level, and successful local translation from discovery to clinical application is not adequately supported. In addition, core facilities show heterogeneous performance levels, and the overall infrastructure for managing core facilities is still under development. Further administrative requirements—such as preparatory processes at University Hospital Tübingen and regulatory approval procedures for animal experiments—add additional barriers to efficient research processes.

Strategic Profiling and Collaborative Research

The Dean's Office aims to consistently develop the faculty's profile in strategically relevant research fields. Existing areas of focus will be strengthened, while at the same time, space must be left for new scientific developments – both thematically and for independent, individually profiled research groups. Profile development is understood as a quality- and potential-oriented process. Coordinated collaborative projects play an important role in this context. However, their initiation is judicious and only undertaken where the necessary scientific prerequisites and realistic prospects for success exist. The faculty views this approach as a learning

process, which also includes consciously deciding not to pursue initiatives further if the necessary conditions are not apparent.

Naturally, compelling but previously unsuccessful collaborative project proposals for coordinated funding programs are seen as a potentially important foundation for further development. Junior research groups play a special role here, as they establish new research topics and contribute to the long-term renewal and collaborative capacity of the location. Coordinated collaborative projects are crucial in this context. However, their initiation is judicious and only undertaken where the scientific prerequisites and realistic prospects for success exist. The faculty understands this approach as a learning process, which also includes consciously deciding not to pursue initiatives further if the necessary prerequisites are not apparent. Supportive and advisory internal and external bodies are needed within these processes.

A central instrument to support this development is the Faculty Capability Map (see Section II.5). It visualizes where scientific competencies, junior research groups, infrastructures, and clinical integration already interact effectively and where targeted impulses are needed. On this basis, research priorities can be further developed, and appointments, early-career support, and infrastructure decisions can be better aligned.

Basic Research, Clinical Research, and Translation

Sustainable medical research requires strong basic science. The Medical Faculty will therefore further intensify collaboration with the Faculty of Science as well as with non-university research institutions at the site. Interdisciplinary research institutes have proven to be viable structures and will be further developed or newly initiated in a targeted manner.

At the same time, clinical research is a central profile element of university medicine. Its systematic consideration in research evaluation and collaborative concepts will be further strengthened. Translation is not understood as a downstream step, but as an integral component of excellent research—from the clinical question through experimental development and clinical testing to valorization and spin-off creation, where appropriate. For this reason, clinical research and potential valorization will be made **central guiding themes of the Faculty's work** in the coming years.

Research Infrastructures and Core Facilities

High-performance research infrastructures are an essential prerequisite for international competitiveness. Existing core facilities form an important foundation but currently show heterogeneous performance levels. The goal is to gradually develop these facilities into technology centers that combine service provision, technology development, and bioinformatics expertise.

Priority Measures – Research

1. Strategic Profiling and Development of Collaborative Research

Structured further development of faculty-wide research priorities, incorporating external and international expertise; targeted support for the further development of both previously unsuccessful and new proposals for Collaborative Research Centers (SFB), Clinical Research Units (KFO), FORS and Clusters of Excellence.

2. Strengthening Junior Research Groups

Systematic identification, increased visibility, and strategic integration of junior research groups (JRG) as a key pillar of future collaborative research initiatives. This also includes the option for the Faculty to fund new junior research groups, in particular to strengthen emerging collaborative projects.

3. Strengthening Clinical and Translational Research

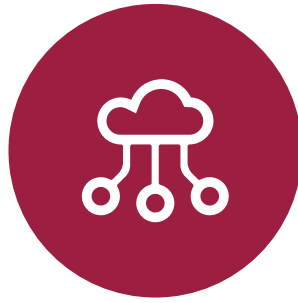
Improving the visibility of clinical research and strengthening its close integration with translational structures (biostatistics and project management). This also includes expanding seed funding for clinical trials through the AKF-program.

4. Development of Core Facilities into Technology Centers

Stepwise development of high-performance technology centers with clear governance, sustainable funding models, and strong bioinformatics support. Technology development will be established as an integral component of the activities of existing core facilities.

5. Horizon Scanning and Competence Development

Establishment of a structured horizon-scanning process for early identification of emerging research topics, competencies, and collaborative research potential.



II.3 Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence

Objectives

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen uses digitalization, data, and artificial intelligence as key enablers of modern research, efficient administrative processes, innovative teaching, and high-performance clinical medicine.

In this area, we see an urgent need for action. Digitalization and artificial intelligence are fundamentally transforming medical research. They enable new approaches to complex biological and clinical questions and make research questions accessible that could not be addressed without data-driven methods. At the same time, they directly affect the efficiency of research and teaching, the support of clinical processes, and the overall administrative workload. It is the responsibility of the Dean's Office to actively shape these developments and to create the conditions for excellent, internationally competitive research and teaching.

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen has exceptional prerequisites in this field. International visibility in AI and data science, Cyber Valley as the first innovation campus in Baden-Württemberg, the Cluster of Excellence Machine Learning, Hertie AI, and the Center for Digital Health together form a globally competitive scientific environment. However, this potential has so far been used insufficiently and inconsistently, not systematically along clinical questions and beyond individual projects.

AI and Clinical Data as Research Infrastructure

Key challenges of the coming years, such as in oncology, immunology, neurology, infectious diseases, or metabolic disorders, cannot be addressed without the systematic collection and use of clinical data. Imaging, longitudinal data, registries, omics data, and real-world care data must be understood as scientific resource. The goal is not merely to elicit clinical data, but to make them available in a structured, quality-assured, and timely manner for both research and clinical questions. This requires reliable data platforms, clear access rules, and sufficient computing capacity for data- and AI-intensive analyses. The development of this infrastructure will be carried out in close coordination with the University and the University Hospital. It is essential that clinical data are systematically and comprehensively made accessible for scientific use.

From Pockets of Excellence to Data-Driven Research Practice

To date, AI-based research often remains limited to individual groups or initiatives. Heterogeneous IT systems, missing interfaces, and unclear responsibilities hinder the systematic use of clinical data for research. This particularly hampers translational approaches and the development of collaborative, multi-site projects.

The goal of the Dean's Office is to enable data-driven research in a comprehensive and systematic manner. Existing competencies in clinical data integration, quantitative analysis, and AI should not operate in parallel, but be brought together in coordinated structures. Research must be supported through clear access pathways, aligned infrastructures, and short, efficient processes.

Application, Automation, and Efficiency

In addition to research, the use of digital and AI-based tools in everyday operations is essential. More efficient administrative processes, digital support for study management and grant applications, automated documentation, and AI-assisted data analysis create additional capacity for research and teaching. At the same time, data- and AI-driven research requires new competencies. These must be systematically embedded in undergraduate education, doctoral training, continuing professional development, and leadership roles. Beyond methodological skills, a key competence is the ability to translate clinical questions into data-driven research strategies.

Priority Measures – Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence

1. Faculty-Wide Digital and Data Strategy

Highest priority is given to the development of a binding digital and data strategy that explicitly defines data- and AI-driven medical research as a central objective. This includes the definition of priority clinical data types, quality standards, access models, and alignment with infrastructure, appointment, and collaborative research strategies.

2. Establish Clinical Data as

Shared Research Infrastructure

Clinical routine data, imaging, and longitudinal data shall be made available early, in a quality-assured manner, and faculty-wide for research purposes, enabling translational, collaborative, and multicenter projects. This process should be guided by existing best-practice models.

3. Targeted Expansion of Computing, Analytics, and Data Infrastructure

Needs-based expansion of interoperable data platforms as well as high-performance computing and storage resources, including GPU infrastructure for AI-based analyses. Implementation will be coordinated with the University and the University Hospital.

4. Strengthen the Center for Digital Health as an Operational Hub

Positioning the Center for Digital Health as a coordinating and implementation-oriented unit. It will bundle digital needs, coordinate collaboration

between QBiQ, meDIC, and other IT and data structures, and ensure clear responsibilities and short operational pathways.

5. Integrated Development of AI Applications, Methodological Competence, and Translation

AI applications, methodological expertise, and translation shall be developed jointly at the Medical Faculty of Tübingen by systematically identifying concrete use cases from research, clinical practice, and administration, implementing them in interdisciplinary teams, and subsequently integrating them into routine processes; in parallel, structured qualification programs will be established for undergraduate education, doctoral training, continuing professional development, and leadership roles.

6. Use AI to Increase Efficiency in Administration and Research Support

AI shall be strategically deployed to improve efficiency in administrative processes and research support. Accelerated and assisted workflows—such as ethics approvals, software approval procedures, and IT security and data protection reviews—are exemplary application areas. Beyond this, AI should be used systematically wherever it reduces administrative burden and acts as a multiplier of scientific productivity at the site.



II.4 Internationalization, Translation, Transfer, and Spin-Offs

Objectives

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen strengthens its international visibility and systematically translates scientific discoveries into clinical application, societal impact, and economic value creation. This strategic field of action is addressed in close coordination with the Rectorate.

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen aims to reliably translate scientific findings into clinical application and sustainable value creation. The potential of research for both societal and economic benefit must be identified at an early stage and supported in a targeted manner. Translation and transfer are not understood as an add-on to research, but as an integral component of its scientific and societal mission.

The institution holds considerable potential, with highly successful spin-offs, compelling examples of technology transfer, and strong clinical research. These cases illustrate that successful spin-offs can not only advance patient care and foster innovation but also generate substantial returns and revenue for the medical faculty. To date, however, these achievements have largely depended on the personal commitment of individual stakeholders. Reliable structures, clearly defined responsibilities, and systematic support are often lacking. In addition, technology transfer is currently only partially recognized and too rarely acknowledged as an independent contribution to research and career development, as traditional performance indicators—such as publi-

cation impact factors or third-party funding—do not adequately capture its value.

From Individual Initiatives to Sustainable Structures

The goal of the Dean's Office is to detach translation, transfer, and spin-off activities from engagement of individual people and to secure them structurally. This requires clear processes along the entire innovation chain—from preclinical and clinical development to intellectual property protection, spin-off creation, and cooperation with external partners. Academic freedom remains untouched but will be complemented by professional support structures.

Clinical trials play a central role. They represent the most important transition point between research and application and are therefore a core element of successful translation. Their structural strengthening is not a peripheral issue, but a prerequisite for effective transfer. This can only be achieved in close interaction with the clinical and translational structures of University Hospital Tübingen.

Competence, Recognition, and International Connectivity

Transfer does not happen incidentally. It requires specific expertise in patents, valorization, regulatory requirements, and start-up processes. These competencies must be built up systematically and made accessible—both to established researchers and to early-career scientists. Transfer should be visible as a legitimate development and career pathway.

In international competition for talent, partners, and investment, isolated excellence is not sufficient. What is needed are professional, reliable structures and international partnerships that bring together research, clinical development, and transfer.

Cooperation, Data, and Infrastructure

Cooperation with industry and biotech companies can accelerate translational processes, provided that scientific independence and clear rules are maintained. Useful digital and data-based structures are becoming increasingly important in this context. Well-curated clinical data, AI-supported analyses, and functional digital processes are now central prerequisites for translation, for spin-offs, and for international collaboration.

Large infrastructures such as the Gene and RNA Therapy Center are strategically important in this regard. However, their benefit depends on whether they are clearly positioned, realistically further developed, and embedded in an overarching strategy.

Priority Measures – Translation, Transfer, and Spin-Offs

- 1. Establish Clear Responsibilities for Translation and Transfer**
Definition of clear responsibilities for transfer and spin-off activities at faculty level, in coordination with the University. Researchers will have a dedicated point of contact for advice on intellectual property, clinical development, cooperation models, and spin-off creation.
- 2. Strengthen Clinical Trials as the Core of Translation**
Clinical trial centers will be structurally and organizationally strengthened as a central bridge between research and application. Biometrics will be further developed as an independent, high-performing unit and systematically strengthened, particularly for investigator-initiated studies. Professional study project management will also be enhanced at the Center for Clinical Studies and in larger centers or study centers. An assessment of potential knowledge transfer activities will be consistently integrated within the context of clinical trials.
- 3. Establish Qualification Programs for Transfer and Entrepreneurship**
Targeted qualification programs on patenting, valorization, regulatory requirements, and spin-off creation will be established and explicitly made accessible to early-career researchers. Best-practice models from other universities will be systematically incorporated and adapted to the specific needs of the site. In parallel, existing transfer structures will be further developed beyond a purely technology-transfer logic toward an integrated business development approach.
- 4. Recognize Transfer as a Performance Dimension**
Transfer activities, spin-offs, and clinical translation will be considered in evaluation, development, and incentive systems. The goal is to ensure visibility, reliability, and incentives to recognize transfer and entrepreneurship as part of individual academic performance.
- 5. Strategically Leverage Digital and Data-Driven Translation**
Transfer structures will be closely linked with the Faculty's digitalization and data initiatives. Clinical data, digital platforms, and AI methods will be deliberately used as enablers of translation.
- 6. Realistically Develop Strategic Infrastructures**
Critical assessment of translationally relevant infrastructures, in particular the Gene and RNA Therapy Center. On this basis, a clear and implementable roadmap for further development will be defined.



II.5 Governance, Structure, and Finances

Objectives

The Medical Faculty of Tübingen strengthens its strategic capacity through transparent governance structures, sustainable financial planning, and clear prioritization and synergistic use of resources.

Structures and finances decisively determine whether scientific creativity and consistent early-career support can become effective. It is therefore the responsibility of the Dean's Office to set clear and comprehensible priorities and to create fair and transparent framework conditions under which performance in research and teaching can be sustainably developed. This requires well-founded decisions and their regular review.

Structural Principles and Governance

Departments and institutes are the primary structures of the Medical Faculty of Tübingen. They form the foundation of scientific identity and innovative capacity. Complementary structures such as centers, cross-sectional units, sections, and junior research groups serve cooperation, further profiling, and visibility. Structure is explicitly not synonymous with performance evaluation or funding allocation.

Effective governance must be both reliable and nuanced. This is particularly true for professorships affiliated with departments, whose role often lies at the intersection of high individual academic achievement, limited structural autonomy, and unclear career prospects.

The Dean's Office aims to systematically evaluate these situations and to develop and implement individual and realistic development options. Depending on the specific constellation, these may include clearly defined scientific profiles within existing departments, leadership or coordination roles in sections or cross-sectional units, structural strengthening of junior research groups, improved equipment, clearer responsibilities, or visible integration into centers and collaborative structures. In accordance with the established regulations and criteria, the establishment of an independent department may also represent a developmental step.

The Faculty *Capability Map* to be developed is not a rigid structural instrument, but an analytical tool to support differentiated and transparent decision-making. It visualizes functional interdependencies, makes previously under-recognized strengths of the Faculty visible, and serves the systematic identification of development and investment potential. This is particularly helpful regarding new strategic priorities and collaborative research initiatives. On this basis, a fact-based, stepwise development of resource allocation and space utilization can be enabled.

Financial Steering and Resource Allocation

The Faculty's financial resources are limited and largely already committed. This makes transparent and strategically justified use of available funds even more important. Only in this way can further development and long-term sustainability be ensured. For professors and clinical leadership, this means reliable framework conditions and comprehensible decision-making pathways. For the academic mid-level faculty and early-career researchers, transparent use of funds creates trust and planning security. For students, it has a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning conditions.

The Dean's Office does not understand financial steering as operational micro-management, but as an instrument of strategic priority setting. The objective is to enable development without cementing implicit vested interests or creating unrealistic expectations. In addition, the Dean's Office pursues active diversification of financial leeway, including the targeted expansion of fundraising, cooperation with foundations, licensing revenues, alumni relations, and other suitable third-party sources, to create additional development impulses beyond basic funding.

Development of Buildings, Space, and Infrastructure

Building and space issues are among the most conflict-prone topics within a faculty. The goal of the Dean's Office is a realistic, fair, and development-oriented approach to existing and future space—without fueling fears of loss of status, but also without avoiding necessary reforms. Priority is given to more efficient use of existing space.

In addition, new development options will be explored, including public–private partnerships, if they safeguard academic freedom and the long-term interests of the Faculty. Such models may open additional space, new perspectives for translation, and—where appropriate—industry-on-campus approaches.

Internal Organization of the Dean's Office and Administrative Structures

Effective strategic governance requires a strong internal organization of the Dean's Office. Demands on the Dean's Office are steadily increasing. Growing regulatory requirements, more complex structures in research and teaching, and the rising need for coordination between the Faculty, the University Hospital, and the University make today's tasks significantly more demanding than in the past. Our goal is to support and further develop the Dean's Office administration as a professional, service-oriented, and strategically integrated unit. Academic leadership and administration see themselves as partners with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. In this understanding, good administration does not mean additional control, but rather relief, reliability, and support.

Priority Measures

1. Faculty Capability Map

Development and publication of a transparent Capability Map that functionally describes departments, institutes, sections, and junior research groups and makes their alignment with existing and potential future research priorities visible. It serves as a shared basis for identifying development potential (e.g., for new priorities or SFBs) and for a fact-based, stepwise development of resource allocation and space utilization.

2. Review of Complementary Structures

Structures are not an end in themselves and must serve clear purposes. Against this background, a dialogue-oriented review process will be established for centers and cross-sectional units, focusing on their concrete added value for research, teaching, and clinical care. The Faculty's strategy process will be closely aligned with that of the University Hospital and is intended to lead to a jointly supported outcome.

3. Transparent Funding Strategy

Transparent financial and allocation principles create reliability and trust for strategic decisions. They make visible the criteria according to which development and investment funds are allocated. In addition, this will be complemented by the targeted expansion of additional funding sources (foundations, fundraising, alumni relations).

4. Building and Space Strategy

Regular, transparent information on ongoing construction and infrastructure projects, and development of shared principles for flexible, needs-based space utilization; in addition, examination of public–private partnerships as a development option under clear academic guiding principles.

5. Decision-Making Pathways within the Dean's Office

Systematic clarification of internal responsibilities and interfaces between the Dean's Office, Faculty committees, the University, and the University Hospital to increase transparency, speed, and reliability. This includes all aspects of the strategic concept (research, teaching, AI/IT, valorization). In addition, strengthening clear and reliable service processes for professors, academic staff, and students with the aim of significantly reducing administrative burdens, with particular attention to the needs of students and research-active junior research groups.

III. Our Way of Working: Transparent and Participatory

The Dean's Office operates according to the principles of **transparency, participation, and accountability**. We understand participation as a prerequisite for high-quality content, diverse perspectives, and broad acceptance of decisions.

To develop and prepare content for the faculty's five key areas of action, **topic-specific faculty board committees with an advisory function are established**. These committees are formed through a transparent, **cross-status-group process, appointed by the Faculty Council, and chaired by the respective Vice Deans**. Election and nomination procedures are combined to ensure both democratic legitimacy and subject-matter expertise. The committees pool relevant expertise, address clearly defined issues, and develop sound decision-making criteria. Their work is task-focused, and the results are presented to the Dean's Office and relevant bodies, particularly the Faculty Council. Organizational support is provided by the Dean's Office administration, with additional expertise—such as in law, data protection, IT, or third-party funding administration—brought in as needed. The goal is to develop proposals that are both realistic and implementable.

In parallel, a **new approach to communication, information flow, and faculty-wide dialogue** is being established. This ensures that professors, junior faculty, and students are continuously informed and systematically involved in relevant developments and decision-making processes. A core element is a **faculty-wide communication strategy** that includes regular **video updates ("Faculty News")** and **open office hours with the Dean and Vice Deans**. In addition, **faculty-wide information and discussion events, entitled "Faculty Dialogue"**, take place approximately every two months.

The **faculty's annual conference** is being restructured as a central forum for joint consultation on strategic issues for the future. It brings together all professors as well as representatives of junior faculty and students on the Faculty Council, combining plenary sessions with structured working phases. To enable in-depth coordination, **regular retreats with specific focuses on teaching and research** are also held, such as a biennial retreat for all degree programs.

This approach provides the foundation for a **continuous, open, and future-oriented development process in the**

spirit of academic self-governance, with the overarching goal of shaping the Medical Faculty of Tübingen into a high-performing, self-reflective, and socially relevant institution.

IV. Our Team in Action: Objectives for the First Year in Office

In the first year of office, our goals are to implement our participatory mode of working, build institutional trust, and achieve visible progress. To this end, the Dean's Office will focus on selected, high-impact measures with transparent prioritization. The measures outlined below will be further developed into an implementation plan using the participatory approach described above.

- **Transition and Coordination**
At the outset, close coordination takes place with the current dean, the dean's office, the rectorate, and the board of the university hospital. Based on this, a realistic implementation plan for the term of office is developed. Ongoing processes (e.g., appointment procedures) are seamlessly handed over and continued without interruption.
- **Participatory Mode of Working**
The committees for the five areas of activity are established and staffed by the Faculty Council and commence their work. This brings into effect the working methods described in Chapter III, and the participation of all status groups is firmly established from the outset. The new communication strategy is implemented.
- **Transparency on Structures, Buildings, and Finances**
The Faculty Capability Map will be developed. In parallel, transparent overviews of construction projects, space allocation, and central financial flows will be created, and a dialogue-oriented review of centers and cross-sectional units will be initiated.
- **Teaching, Study Programs, and Early-Career Development**
Key decisions are being made to ensure effective further development in teaching. The student body's development plan is being developed in committees. Particular focus is placed on the reform of the clinical phase of medical studies, the practical year, and effective networking of the degree programs. Cen-

tral to this is a joint survey of the current situation with the student councils, the student representatives on the faculty council, the deans of studies, the program coordinators, as well as the departments and institutes.

- **Research, Targeted Early-Career Support, and Collaborative Capacity**

Scientifically strong but previously unsuccessful grant proposals will be systematically and structurally further developed and supported, particularly where realistic prospects of success exist. The work of junior research groups will be specifically promoted.

- **Digitalization and Administrative Relief through Efficiency Gains**

Development of a faculty-wide digital and data strategy coordinated with the university hospital. Initial concrete steps towards reducing bureaucracy are being implemented, for example through digital processes in administration and research. The goal is a noticeable reduction in workload in daily work.

- **Foundations, Fundraising, and Alumni Relations**

Existing interactions with foundations will be continued. Initial steps toward structured fundraising and alumni relations will be initiated.

Potential risks include limited human and financial resources, growing administrative burdens, and evolving external conditions in higher education and health policy. Addressing these challenges requires responsible resource allocation, clear prioritization, and transparent communication. Continuous monitoring allows us to anticipate challenges early and integrate insights into strategic decision-making and implementation.

The findings from success and impact monitoring underpin the ongoing development of the Dean's Office. Over the longer term, they support the strengthening of innovative teaching and research, the expansion of reliable structures, and the cultivation of a shared learning culture. Our goal is a Medical Faculty that embodies quality, transparency, and innovation, positioning itself sustainably in national and international competition.

We view monitoring and evaluation not as ends in themselves, but as instruments of **shared responsibility and continuous improvement. By making successes visible and openly addressing challenges, we lay the foundation for sustainable, forward-looking development.** In doing so, the Dean's Office can enhance its capacity to shape change, support its members, and create the conditions in which excellent teaching, innovative research, and responsible medical practice can thrive.

V. Monitoring Success and Impact: Risk Factors and Outlook

Monitoring success and impact is a cornerstone of responsible leadership and a defining feature of a learning organization. Our aim is to regularly and critically review strategies and measures, making their effectiveness transparent and assessable, and to base binding decisions on this evidence.

This reflective approach is a permanent agenda item for the Dean's Office and is closely coordinated with advisory committees, decision-making bodies, the Executive Board of the University Hospital, the Rectorate, and, when needed, external experts. Evaluations draw on qualitative and quantitative criteria across research, teaching, early-career development, structural effectiveness, and administrative efficiency.

