

## History and Goals

The Federation of German Scientists (FGS; German acronym VDW) was founded in 1959 in West-Berlin by renowned nuclear scientists, including Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker and the Nobel Prize laureates Max Born, Otto Hahn, Werner Heisenberg, and Max von Laue. Two years earlier this group of experts had become well-known to the public as the *Göttinger 18*: Nuclear scientists who had publicly argued against a nuclear armament of the German *Bundeswehr*.

Since then the FGS feels bound to the tradition of responsible science. In **Annual Conferences** and in interdisciplinary **Expert Groups** as well as public **comments** it addresses issues of science and technology on the one hand, and peace and security policy on the other. At the same time, the role of science itself in *genesis* and in *solution* of socio-technological problems is subject of examination and expertise.

FGS is publishing the **series** “Science and Responsibility” (BWV publishers, Berlin) and policy papers (VDW-Materialien) on important and contested issues concerning technological innovations and associated conflicts.

## Present Concerns and Issues

- Implications of *global change*,
- science for sustainability,
- the meaning of *public goods* for human security and peace,
- implementing the *precautionary principle* as a basic rule in science and politics,
- biodiversity, agriculture, and agro-genetic engineering,
- the changing role of science,
- research and science politics,
- nuclear *disarmament* and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons,
- European security policy.

## Whistleblower Award

Together with the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms, (IALANA, German section) FGS awards the *Whistleblower Award* to individuals who have disclosed severe irregularities associated with substantial dangers to individuals, society, democracy, environment and peace.

### Award laureates:

1999 Alexander Nikitin, Russian Federation  
2001 Margrit Herbst, Germany  
2003 Daniel Ellsberg, USA  
2005 Th. A. Postol, USA & A. Pusztai, UK  
2007 Liv Bode & Brigitte Heinisch, Germany

## Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs

FGS constitutes the German section of the **Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs**, which were founded in 1957 and distinguished with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995. In addition to annual conferences, “Pugwash International” holds workshops on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, on topics of biological and chemical weapons and weapon technologies, on issues of sustainable development and its meaning for peace and for the responsibility of scientists.

## Interdisciplinary Expert Groups of FGS

- Agriculture & biodiversity
- Economics
- Gender dimensions of violent conflicts
- Peace and security policy
- Research and science policies and politics

## **Organs**

### **Board of Directors:**

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Christine von Weizsäcker, Bonn

## **Members and Funding**

FGS is an independent, non-partisan and non-profit organisation, not tied to religious confession or ideology. It has nearly 400 members from different fields of the natural sciences, the humanities, and social sciences.

FGS' financial expenditures are raised by membership fees, by the proceeds of an endowment fund and by donations. Current projects have been supported by Berghof Foundation for Conflict Research, the German Foundation for Peace Research (DSF), the German Research Foundation (DFG) and by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

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# **Federation of German Scientists**

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