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Akademie

Challenging Gifted Pupils in Residential Summer Programs

A German Success Story

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Deutsche SchülerAkademie (German Pupils Academy)

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- A residential pre-college program for 11th and 12th graders (16-19 yrs.)
- Location: Boarding schools
- Duration: 16 days in summer holidays
- Models: US academic summer programs (TIP, CTY, JHU)
- Patron: German Federal President Johannes Rau

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Objectives (1)

- To train knowledge acquisition, interdisciplinary thinking, research techniques and autonomous learning
- To challenge intellectual potentials to their limits
- To improve techniques of oral and written presentations

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Objectives (2)

- To exercise cooperation and coordination in group work
- To provide role models through encounters with inspiring teachers and scientists
- To experience a community of able and motivated peers and to develop lasting friendships

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Objectives (3)

- To raise consciousness, that exceptional abilities must be used in a prosocial manner and in responsible leadership
- To help students with career-planning decisions

Pedagogical Concept - Key Elements

- Achievement motivation
- Willingness to exert oneself
- Ability to work in teams
- Creativity
- Communication skills
- Interdisciplinary thinking
- Readiness to take over responsibility

Course Work (1)

- Six courses from diverse academic disciplines
- Each participant attends only one course
- No overlap with school curriculum
- Exemplary topic, introduction to terminology, methods, research techniques, literature

Course work (2)

- Amount of course work: ~50 hours, 4-5 hours/day
- Goal-orientation: written reports for the „Documentation“
- Exchange with other courses: „Rotation Day“
- No grades, marks, reports

Example: Academy Rostock 2003

- Cryptology and Number Theory
- Experimental Physics
- Marine Diversity in Mud Flats
- History and Future of the European Integration
- Franz Kafka
- Music and Mathematics

Additional Activities

- Music as a paramount element
 - Choir singing
 - Instrumental ensembles
 - Internal and public performances
- Excursions
- Sports, volleyball tournament
- Evening lectures
- Initiatives of the participants: drama, dance, newsletter, languages ...

Selection of participants (1)

- Ideal profile:
 - High intellectual ability
 - Demonstrated achievements far above average
 - Diverse interests
 - Strong achievement motivation
- Qualifications:
 - Champion in national competitions
 - School nominations (1-2 per year)
 - (Self nominations)

Selection of participants (2)

- Admission: pragmatic strategy
 - Course preferences
 - Proper representation of boys and girls, geographic regions, champions and school nominees
 - School grade (12th grade preferred)
 - Participation only once
 - Max. one participant per school

Selection of personnel (1)

- Needed: 15 persons/academy
 - Academic director plus assistant
 - 6 x 2 instructors
 - Coordinator for musical activities

Selection of personnel (2)

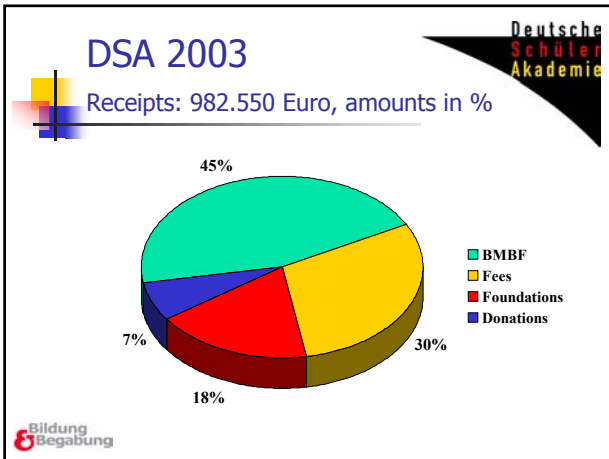
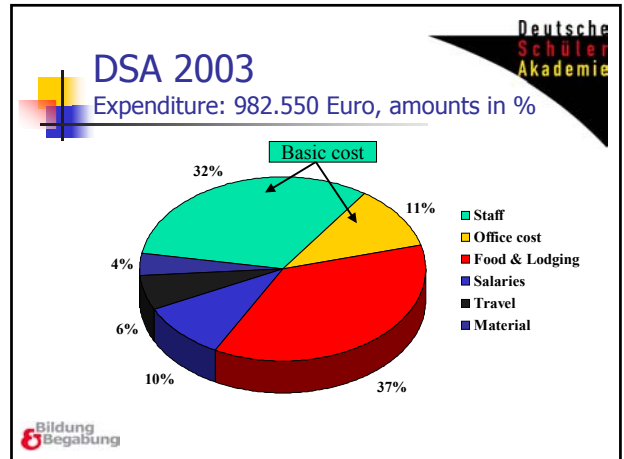
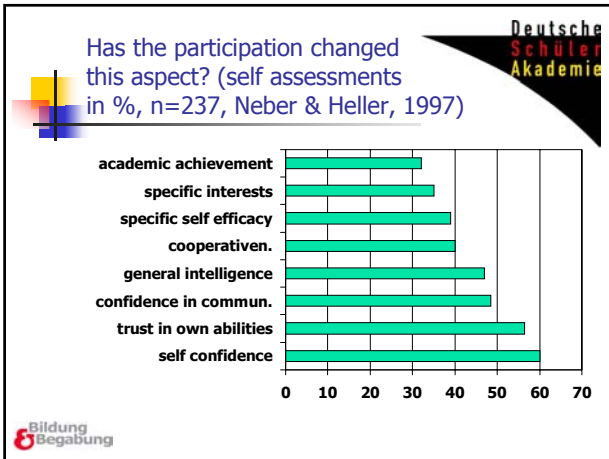
- Ideal profile:
 - Experts in their field
 - Additional abilities and interests
 - Pedagogical talent
 - Cooperativeness
 - Idealism
 - Readiness to full personal involvement

Selection of personnel (3)

- Sources
 - Expert highschool teachers
 - Academic faculty
 - National Scholarship Foundation
 - Professionals
 - Free-lancers

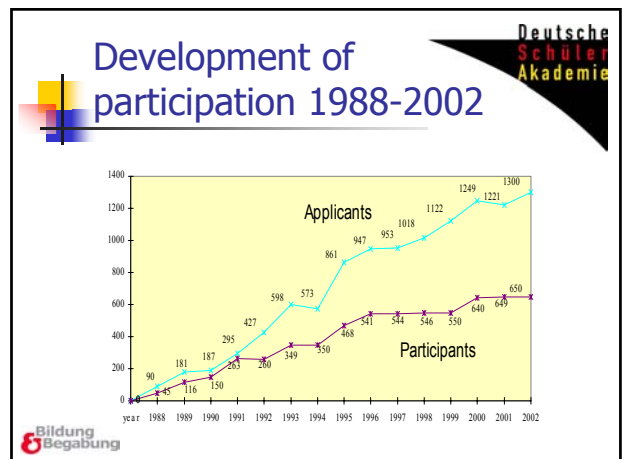
Effects of participation

- Enthusiastic feedback from participants, instructors, directors, schools
- Long term effects: alumni association, newsletter, network, reunions
- Evaluation studies (Neber & Heller)



- ### Participation fee
- 500 Euro
 - Reductions for financially challenged participants (2003: ~40.000 Euro)

- ### Statistics
- 1988 – 2002: 69 academies
6.100 participants
 - 2003: 8 academies, 715 participants
twice as many qualified applicants



Recent developments

- Multinational academies
- Extension of the concept to 12-15 year-olds: „German Junior Academies“
- Development of a network in Germany



Perspectives

- Additional academies
- Academy in Israel
- Quest for additional sponsors

Contact

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