

Dear Reader,

When the University of Oldenburg was founded in the 1970s, Germany's energy supply was a burning political issue: it was a time when arguments raged over the expansion of nuclear power and finite resources, especially oil. Oldenburg researchers began looking for alternative sources of energy – and were ridiculed for their ideas.

Today all nuclear power plants in Germany have been shut down, and the coal phaseout has been rubber stamped, as has carbon neutrality. Yet energy remains a critical issue, both nationwide and at the University. Oldenburg's unique energy research path – from its rocky beginnings to the broad interdisciplinary collaborations today – is one of the themes of this anniversary edition. We take a brief look at the past and then turn our attention to what the future holds.

In many other areas, too, our erstwhile "reform university" continues to be a galvanising force. Not only has it become larger, more diverse and more international, promoting start-ups better than almost any other German universities, but when it comes to research, it always keeps

its finger on the pulse. This magazine is dedicated to a number of its key areas of research, such as sustainability, hearing research, marine sciences and teacher training.

This current edition of EINBLICKE, for example, takes a look at the future of schooling in Germany. Education scientist Till-Sebastian Idel accompanies a school experiment in North Rhine-Westphalia and explains the advantages of not changing schools in Year four in contrast to current practice in Germany and how mixed-age classrooms work.

The topic of artificial intelligence (AI) is on everybody's lips these days. Computer scientist Oliver Kramer is an expert in this rapidly developing field. In our interview, he explains the benefits of this new technology and how it can advance digitalisation.

AI is also built into the voice assistants that are found in so many homes today. Communication acoustics expert Bernd T. Meyer, who works with his team in the Cluster of Excellence Hearing4all, takes advantage of these apps to diagnose hearing impairments.

A mysterious group of long-lived organic molecules is the focus of marine geochemist Thorsten Dittmar's and modelling expert Sinikka Lennartz's research alike. Using different approaches, they aim to determine the role played by this vast but largely invisible carbon reservoir in the global climate.

Critical social issues are the focus of a series of articles called Outlooks. The series offers a forum for researchers at the University to paint a vision of the future from the perspective of their particular field. Taking the format of short texts distributed throughout the magazine, they discuss issues such as social inequity, human-machine collaboration and the transformation of the health system.

Other topics in the magazine include: how a new property law could curb the overexploitation of nature and why love is still a hot topic for readers and the editorial team alike. We wish you an inspiring read!

The EINBLICKE editorial team



## A potpourri of events in the anniversary year

Since 1974, the University of Oldenburg has been teaching and conducting research in innovative fields. With an interdisciplinary, international, and socially responsible approach, the University aims to provide answers to key social issues and scientific questions. "50 years of openness to new approaches" is thus the motto for its anniversary year. The programme of events is as diverse as the University itself. We invite you to embark on a discovery tour – on campus, in the city or online. [www.uol.de/50jahre](http://www.uol.de/50jahre)