

## Ladenburg Roundtables of the Daimler and Benz Foundation

### **Objectives**

According to the statutes of the Daimler and Benz Foundation, its purpose is to “promote science and research in order to gain a better understanding of the interrelations between humans, the environment, and technology.” Since these processes are complex and dynamic, well-informed scientifically based reflection is required for their proper understanding.

With the “**Ladenburg Roundtables**” format, the Foundation provides a forum in which scientists and experts from practical fields convene to discuss important research topics, with a research question as leitmotif and a point of departure. The Roundtables encourage participation from all disciplines, are open to various outcomes, and do not involve specific expectations on the part of the Foundation. A Ladenburg Roundtable can conclude with a publication, for example, or can lead to an application to another organization that promotes research (DFG, BMBF, EU etc.). If there is seen to be a need for further research on conclusion of a Roundtable, a “Ladenburg Research Cluster” can then be established – assuming sufficient Foundation assets are available for this purpose. The results of the various Ladenburg Roundtables are summarized in the annual report of the Foundation.

### **Application**

There is no formal application process for a Ladenburg Roundtable; suggestions may be freely made to the Foundation at any time by leading scientists from universities or non-university research institutions representing all disciplines. It is recommended that the management of the Foundation first be contacted to determine whether a topic is in keeping with the statutes and is fundamentally suited to the Ladenburg Roundtable format. In a second step, a brief exposé (maximum two pages) should be submitted, in which the central research question and the thematic orientation of the Roundtable are outlined; possible participants can already be named. A suitable date for the event is arranged between the applicant and the Foundation, depending on when a suitable venue is available on its premises and when the participants are able to attend.

### **Support from the Foundation**

In connection with a Ladenburg Roundtable, the Foundation assumes organization of the event, along with the travel and accommodation costs of all participants. Economy class air tickets, 2nd class train tickets, and hotel costs are reimbursed; fees are not paid. As a rule, the Roundtables take place at the Foundation’s representation in the historical Carl Benz House in Ladenburg.

This building has a good infrastructure, with a conference room for a maximum of 22 persons and catering facilities. An impression of the various rooms can be gained from a virtual tour on the home page of the Foundation ([www.daimler-benz-stiftung.de/cms/index.php/de/stiftung/ladenburg](http://www.daimler-benz-stiftung.de/cms/index.php/de/stiftung/ladenburg)).

The site's proximity to the Mannheim long-distance train station and its good connections to Frankfurt Airport ensure efficient, convenient travel from all over Germany. Participation of scientists from abroad is fundamentally possible and desirable, but must be arranged beforehand with the Foundation management in view of the higher traveling expenses, and also from an ecological perspective.

### **The Event**

Since the Ladenburg Roundtables thrive above all on personal exchange and discussion between the participants, the Foundation advises against having more than 20 persons in attendance – independent of the dimensions of the rooms. The applicant (scientific director of the Roundtable) has complete freedom regarding the actual program. He or she may personally select the participants; depending on the topic, the Foundation can point out further interesting personalities. There is no fixed duration for a Roundtable, but one- or two-day events have proved to be most suitable. For a one-day Roundtable, the most appropriate format is for all participants to arrive on the previous evening for dinner in one of the restaurants in Ladenburg's medieval town center. The applicant is responsible for the scientific program and for conducting the event, while the Foundation assumes the entire organization (invitation of participants, hotel bookings, care for and accommodation of the participants in Ladenburg, catering, travel expense accounting, etc.).

Should you have any further questions, please contact the Managing Director of the Daimler and Benz Foundation, Dr. Jörg Klein.

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