

VALUES: REFLECT UPON – DISCUSS – LIVE

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BACKGROUND

The **Ethics Platform** has been founded in 2011. Its aim is to generally sensitize and generate awareness for the understanding of responsible living, teaching and research at the University. Therefore it pushes discussions to consider the consequences of interactions of people and nature in a systematic, constructive and participatory way. The Ethics Platform's members meet several times per semester. In addition, smaller working groups are engaged temporarily in addressing selected topics as they arise.

BASIS

The **BOKU ETHICS CHARTER**, lays the foundation for acting responsibly at BOKU. It is the consensual product of a thorough bottom-up consultation process. The basic ethical principles, operating values and objectives compiled in the five chapters of the Ethics Charter provide an ethical foundation and supplement the existing guidelines of BOKU. The objectives include mutual interactions, teaching and research. Other documents which have been written by the Ethics Platform, cover the topics *Dual Use* and *Bioeconomy*.



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Geoethical conflicts:
Tourism, forestry,
agriculture and remote
water supply are
contradicting interests in
the area of the
Hochschwab massive
(Eastern part of Austria).

ACTIVITIES

ETHICAL CONCEPTS: Scientists and teachers at the University are aware of their responsibility concerning the ethical dimension of their actions. Many of them are interested in deepening their knowledge of fundamental ethical concepts. They are the target group of lectures given by philosophers. There is plenty of space for questions and discussions. Lectures and discussions covered as yet different conceptions of „Responsibility“ (E. Kant, H. Jonas) and „Discourse Ethics“ as a theory.

TEACHING: How to introduce students to solution approaches in science and economy? There, scientific teaching and training is in demand. The Ethics platform offers events to train trainers in basic ethical concepts and practical methods to share their knowledge with the students. Recent Training courses covered the topics „Freedom of Science and Responsibility“ and „Discourse Ethics“ as a communication model, using Bioeconomy as subject for debate. Actually, outputs of the GOAL project will be educational resources for geoscience higher education.

SCIENCE & RESEARCH: Values are implicit to science. The Ethics Platform aims at discussing various aspects of current scientific developments. Furthermore it addresses the field of tension between Scientific freedom and Responsibility. Lectures covered the following topics by now: Animal Experiments, Bioeconomy, Dual Use, Freedom & Responsibility and Genome Editing. The Ethics Platform also supports applicants with any ethical questions arising in their research proposals, upon request.

BOKU-CINEMA: The Ethics Platform promotes – in cooperation with the Students' Union BOKU – a movie series, followed by panel discussions, which is open to the public. It takes on questions and challenges that ensue from current research. Carefully selected films are shown, after which a panel of internal and external experts discuss the relevant issues.