

Mannheim, 24. Dezember 2018

Dr. Kurt Hamann Foundation to receive a new name

The "Dr. Kurt Hamann Foundation" has decided to change its name to "Stiftung zur Förderung der Versicherungswissenschaft an der Universität Mannheim – Foundation for the Promotion of Insurance Science at the University of Mannheim", following the revelation by a historical survey that Kurt Hamann, in his role as Chairman of the Victoria Insurance Company, was involved in the so-called "aryanization" process under the National Socialists.

The "Dr. Kurt-Hamann-Preis" is considered to be one of the most prestigious prizes in German Insurance Science. Ever since the foundation of the same name first came into being in 1979, the prize has been regularly awarded at the University of Mannheim for outstanding habilitation, doctorate and diploma theses in the field of Insurance Science. As CEO of Victoria zu Berlin Allgemeine Versicherungs AG and other companies of the Victoria Group, Kurt Hamann (1898-1981), whose name the prize bears, headed one of the largest German insurance groups from 1935 until 1968 . Now the prize and the associated foundation is going to receive a new name: With today's adoption of a modified statute by the Board of Trustees, the "Dr. Kurt Hamann Foundation" will change its name to "Stiftung zur Förderung der Versicherungswissenschaft an der Universität Mannheim – Foundation for the Promotion of Insurance Science at the University of Mannheim". The amendment is subject to approval by the Administrative Council (Regierungspräsidium).

The Board of Trustees' decision to choose a neutral name is based on a survey report by an Economic Historian. While the preserved sources used for the report do not enable a judgment to be made of Kurt Hamann's personal views regarding National Socialism, it has become clear that, under Hamann's chairmanship, the Victoria demonstrably took many properties from Jewish owners. This often happened as a result of foreclosures filed by the company against Jewish mortgage debtors. However, Hamann was not evidently anti-Semitic. With the change of name, the University of Mannheim would like to set an example: Any person who lends his name to a prize awarded to excellent young academics should also be able to serve as an ethical role model.