

To all BESSY II Users

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Letter to our Users

Dear colleagues, dear users,

First of all, please allow us to express our gratitude for your kind understanding and patience in the current pandemic situation. HZB is committed to manage the balancing act between providing the user community with access to the BESSY facility and taking the necessary measures to protect the health and safety of both our employees and our users. As a research infrastructure with normally more than 3000 user visits from more than 25 different countries per year, we have to be aware of our responsibility and have to contribute to the world-wide efforts of preventing the virus spread by taking the necessary precautions.

To address this responsibility, HZB has adopted a safety-first approach and applies this strategy rigorously, also when it comes to scheduling and conducting experiments at BESSY II. Please note that we do not do this lightly, we are conscious of the fact that this approach has negative consequences on your scientific program, and we regret this very much. Trying to ameliorate the situation as much as we can, we have started from very early on to work on improving the “remote experiment” capabilities. We like to make use of this occasion to acknowledge our staff and thank them for all the efforts they put into making experiments possible without users on-site. However, despite all these efforts it is clear that they cannot compensate all the knowledge, expertise, work power and ideas that you as external users bring to the experiments and the facility! We thus have to ask you for your understanding that many things simply have not been possible to do over the past months!

To keep the occupancy of the BESSY II experimental hall at a safe limit, we had to run with thinned out beamtime schedule and several experiments had to be postponed, some of them even more than once due to the development of the pandemic. As a consequence, we had to skip the call for proposals 2021/I last summer, since the available beamtime during this coming semester is already allocated to deferred proposals from the rounds before.

In view of the upcoming call for proposals for the second semester of 2021, we decided last fall not to reschedule any further experiments that had to be canceled due to the pandemic. Otherwise, the cancellation of a second consecutive proposal call would have ensued, which in consequence would have prohibited any new projects for a period of more than a year.

We would like to give our users an opportunity to adapt their experiments to potential recent developments. Thus, we encourage everyone to submit a new beamtime proposal, and to mention the cancellation of their experiment when applicable.

We deeply regret every single beamtime cancellation, we understand the disappointment this creates for you. Please be assured, that we undertake every effort to find the best possible solutions under the current conditions, being aware that conditions keep changing constantly in ways that none of us can predict. We can only express our hope that the situation will return to more normal boundary conditions soon.

We are looking forward to welcoming you back at BESSY II!

With kind regards



Prof. Dr. Bernd Rech
Scientific Director / Spokesperson



Prof. Dr. Jan Lüning
Scientific Director