In times of tense transatlantic relations, we need to find ways to foster close U.S.-German relationships on all levels and to continue the conversation on how to implement measures of social development. We believe that cities are the best actors to take on the challenges of ongoing and rapid societal and technological transformation. It is clear that the overarching issues of our time: globalization, climate change, migration and multiculturalism, must be addressed on a global level and solved collaboratively between cities on both sides of the Atlantic. With the United Nations projecting that up to 75% of the global population will live in an urban environment by 2050, the “New Urban Progress” project argues that now is the time to build intra-city networks for our collective future.

Our concrete goal is to build on the current state of research and debate on the topic of urban development. In doing so, we will enable a structured and practice-oriented reflection on common challenges and support collaborative work in finding practical solutions. Apart from the classic nation-state “summit” policy, we would like to focus on the intermediary level by drawing attention to our hand-picked large and medium-sized metro regions, and their protagonists, at the center of a transatlantic dialogue.

We plan to create a dynamic network that will expand beyond capital cities as an attractive physical and virtual platform for new ideas and bottom-up initiatives, opening spaces for co-creation. This creates real added value to transatlantic relations and ensures a sustainable impact on future-oriented urban life in the U.S. and Germany. The project aims at establishing a high-quality dialogue process over a period of three years and delivering specific project outputs, such as high visibility of its results.

As a dynamic process that brings together people of diverse backgrounds, we believe our “New Urban Progress” project can become a platform for tackling key societal challenges with a fresh approach, as well as the laboratory for future solutions. We are convinced that a progressive urban policy can serve as the foundation for social mobility, cultural inclusion and a prospering economy based on sustainability and innovation, while simultaneously bringing Germany and the U.S. closer together.

With the aim of sparking a cross-fertilization of ideas for local initiative and problem-solving, Das Progressive Zentrum and Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft in Germany and the Progressive Policy Institute in the United States have joined forces to launch a three-year effort to study and compare notes on metro innovation in German and U.S. cities.

Mission Statement
New Urban Progress
Metro Innovation and Democratic Renewal: A Transatlantic Dialogue
fact sheet

Duration: September 1st, 2019 - August 31st, 2022

objectives
Das Progressive Zentrum, in cooperation with the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft and the Progressive Policy Institute, developed a project based on targeted measures to strengthen the relationship between Germany and the United States. The project focuses on “the city” as a space where creative transformative processes are possible, concerning
1. Inclusive innovation and growth (digital transformation and energy transition),
2. Networked governance (cultural integration, citizen participation, and democratic innovations), and
3. Social mobility (equal opportunity and addressing inequality as well as accessibility of public services).

target group and impact
Twenty Project Fellows will debate these three core topics, exchange innovative ideas and forge personal alliances. The group will consist of German and U.S.-American “Young Leaders of Tomorrow”, from various sectors: civil society, culture & media, political activists and practitioners, startups and entrepreneurs as well as experts and think-tank actors. This group of emerging leaders will strengthen the project through their wide range of perspectives and diverse expertise. The selected Project Fellows are also expected to act as Project Ambassadors, providing suggestions for its visibility and outreach, and compose final Policy Papers on three project topics.

activities and outcome
After the initial online work period, all Project Fellows from Germany and the U.S. will meet in person and embark on two journeys. Over the course of these trips, the delegation will visit several cities in Germany and the U.S. to explore a range of urban projects and learn from the various background stories of the involved actors. Also, further content-driven inputs, such as workshops, will be incorporated into the program. The first bilateral delegation trip (in Germany) will commence in March 2021, the second (in the U.S.), in October 2021. Both tours will be documented in a real-time Journey Blog as well as in a documentary film, featuring all Project Fellows and visited destinations.

governance
In addition to a Steering Committee - the collaboration between representatives of all three Project Partners ensuring a timely and effective implementation of the initiative, the project will organize a Sounding Board of distinguished urban experts and transatlantic analysts from Germany and the U.S., which will serve as an advisory body. Moreover, leaders in urban and metro innovation in Germany and the U.S. will be invited to take on the role of Project Patrons.

funding
The project is supported by the Transatlantic Program of the Federal Republic of Germany, and funded by the European Recovery Program (ERP) of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi).

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Das Progressive Zentrum (DPZ) is an independent, non-profit think-tank founded in 2007, devoted to establishing new networks of progressive actors from different backgrounds and promoting active and effective policies for economic and social progress. It involves the next generation German and European innovative thinkers and decision-makers in the debates. Its thematic priorities are situated within the three programmes: “Future of Democracy”, “Structural Change” and “International Dialogue”, with a particular focus on European integration and the transatlantic partnership. The organization is based in Berlin and also operates in other European countries (including France, Poland and Great Britain) as well as in the U.S.

www.progressives-zentrum.org
Facebook: www.fb.com/DasProgressiveZentrum
Executive Director: Dominic Schwickert

Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft (AHG)

Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft promotes a free and open society and its cohesion. Democracy, the social market economy and sustainability are the foundations of such a society. The work is based on the values of Alfred Herrhausen: on freedom and responsibility, on competition and compassion. Alfred Herrhausen thought and acted with the aim of crossing and overcoming boundaries. In his memory, the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft creates platforms for discussions to enrich relevant discourses during selected events, and in publications and other media.

www.alfred-herrhausen-gesellschaft.de
Twitter: @AHG_Berlin
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Executive Director: Dr. Anna Herrhausen

Progressive Policy Institute (PPI)

The PPI is an independent think-tank based in Washington, D.C., which has been an international catalyst for new ideas and practical concepts for progressive policy since its founding in 1989. Currently, the Progressive Policy Institute is developing new proposals in various projects to stimulate economic growth and technological, political and social innovation in the knowledge-based digital economy. The focus is also on issues of social mobility and the modernization of the public sector. In addition, the Progressive Policy Institute is strengthening its international projects for the model of liberal democracy and sustainable transatlantic relations. In order to combine conceptual ideas and pragmatic political action, the Progressive Policy Institute relies on an extensive network of experts, decision makers and partner organizations, especially in North America and Europe, but increasingly also in Asia and Latin America.

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