



Sofía Carbone-Sarmiento

ASTA - Referat für sozial-
ökologische
Transformation
StuWe-VR

What does commitment at KIT and beyond mean to you?

For me, engagement is an expression of everyone's awareness of their responsibility to society. We all have the opportunity to have an impact, at least locally, to fight for a better world. In my case, it is the pursuit of a socio-ecological transformation of KIT, an institution responsible for innovation and for the education of future scientists, decision-makers and other workers. We are already facing major challenges such as the climate and biodiversity crisis and food and water scarcity, but students are not yet sufficiently aware of or prepared for them.

What advantages do you see for yourself, KIT and others in your commitment?

For me, I see an incredible opportunity to learn a wide range of skills on a practical level. From project and event management to political work, I am independently acquiring skills that will certainly be of great benefit to me in the future. On a social level, I am getting to know many extremely motivated people who, like me, already want to contribute to the common good and simply enjoy doing so.

For my fellow students, I hope that our commitment (ASTA-Umwelt) should be beneficial: more vegan/vegetarian cafeterias, flea markets, free bike rental (Nextbike), free cargo bike rental, etc. For future students, our efforts should hopefully have contributed to: better teaching, a liveable and car-free campus, etc. For KIT, we provide the critical, hopeful voice that much more needs to be done, and needs to be done now. You just have to really want it intrinsically, then you will find a way.

How did you get involved?

Acquiring knowledge about ecological problems and solutions during my studies (geoecology) was not enough for me. In view of the urgency of the climate and biodiversity crisis, I wanted to fight now to put the warnings and demands of science into practice. The ASTA seemed to me to be the perfect executive body to implement things directly. From then on, I quickly became a member of KIT committees and thus came into contact with the most important decision-makers at KIT. So I would say that my goal has been fulfilled.



Sofía Carbone-Sarmiento

ASTA - Referat für sozial-
ökologische
Transformation
StuWe-VR

What is missing at KIT and in general for more student involvement?

Language, time, visibility and support.

If I didn't have this high level of German, I wouldn't have got very far. As a foreign student, I am lucky to be financially supported by my parents at all, and to have 3 semesters more standard study time because of the COVID crisis, because without this I would most likely not have been able to afford my commitment in terms of time/financially. For people from abroad who are less fortunate, it would make sense to have honorary semesters, for example, or more study time in general. If you are forced to complete your studies in the standard

period of study, most people don't have much time left for volunteering. Far too few students really know what the ASTA is and does or what influence we have on KIT and student life! It starts with everyday student infrastructure like the Nextbikes... That has to change.