

Challenges of Coordinating an Interdisciplinary Consortium: Leibniz ScienceCampus DiTraRe



Leibniz ScienceCampus
Digital Transformation
of Research

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FIZ Karlsruhe

Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure

2



Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

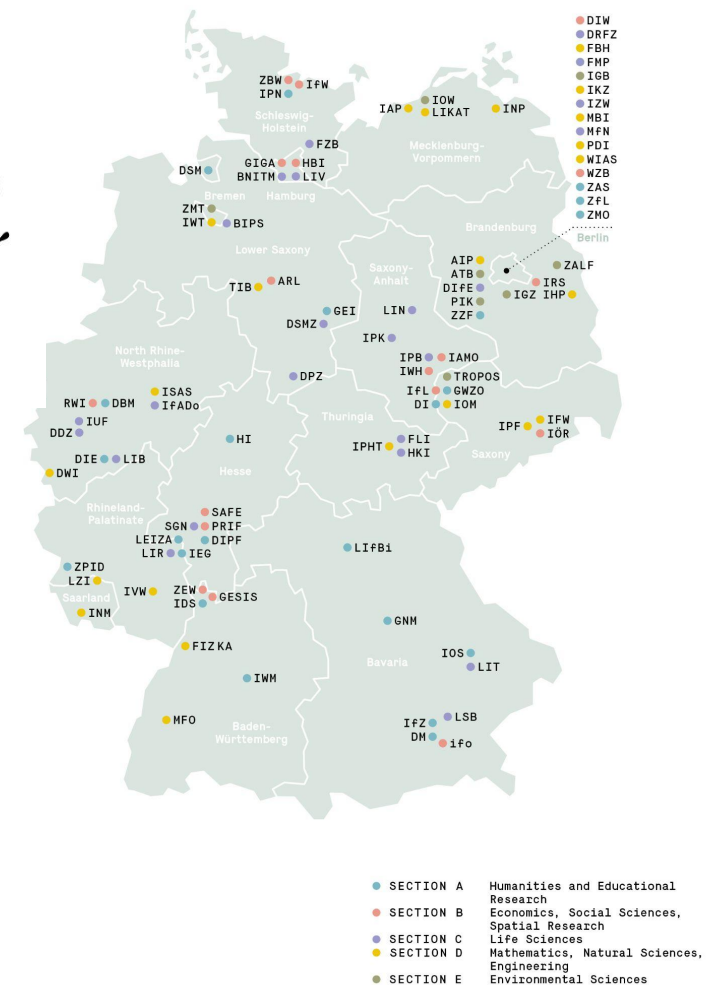


STS Netherlands Conference, University of Twente, 15-17 April 2026

Leibniz Association



- 31 years
- 96 institutes in Germany
- Across all disciplines
 - Humanities and Educational Research
 - Economics, Social Sciences, Spatial Research
 - Life Sciences
 - Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Engineering
 - Environmental Sciences



Local collaborations: Leibniz ScienceCampi (LSCi)

- Leibniz institute + local university
- One of the forms → Leibniz ScienceCampus
 - Forge new paths
 - Create networks
 - Encourage interdisciplinarity
- 15 → 19 active LSCi
- Two phase: 4+4 years



DiTraRe

Leibniz Science Campus *Digital Transformation of Research*

- Regional growth core to **establish new research branch.**



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- Analyse the process of digitalisation of research with the **focus on AI in research.**
- Start: September 2023.
- 35 active consortium members.
 - 4 professors
 - 7 PhD students
 - 1 master student

Consortium management



Spokesperson:
Prof. Dr. Harald Sack



Coordinator:
Dr. Anna Jacyszyn



Coordinator:
Dr. Katja Keller



Coordinator:
Dr. Felix Bach

Consortium divided into working groups: **use cases** and **dimensions**.

DiTraRe working groups

DiTraRe Use Cases



1

Sensitive Data
in Sports
Science

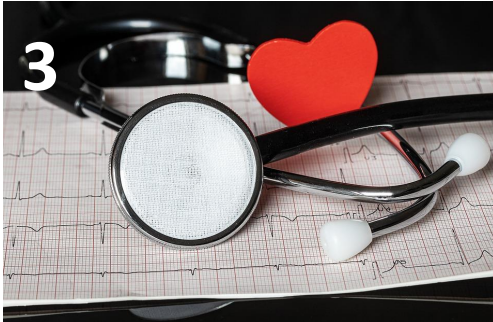
KIT Institute of Sports and Sports Science



2

Chemotion
Electronic Lab
Notebook

KIT Institute of Biological and Chemical Systems



3

AI in
Biomedical
Engineering

KIT Institute of Biomedical Engineering



4

Publication of
Large Datasets

KIT Institute of Meteorology and Climate Research

DiTraRe dimensions

A. Reflection and Resonance

(KIT Institute for *Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis*)

a dialogue between research and society, interactive process

B. Exploration and Knowledge Organisation

(FIZ KA *Knowledge-Driven AI*)

applied AI: represent, organise, and manage domain specific and procedural knowledge

C. Legal and Ethical Challenges

(FIZ KA *Intellectual Property Rights*, KIT Institute of *Applied Informatics and Formal Description Methods*)

data ethics, data protection, copyright and data law, cybersecurity

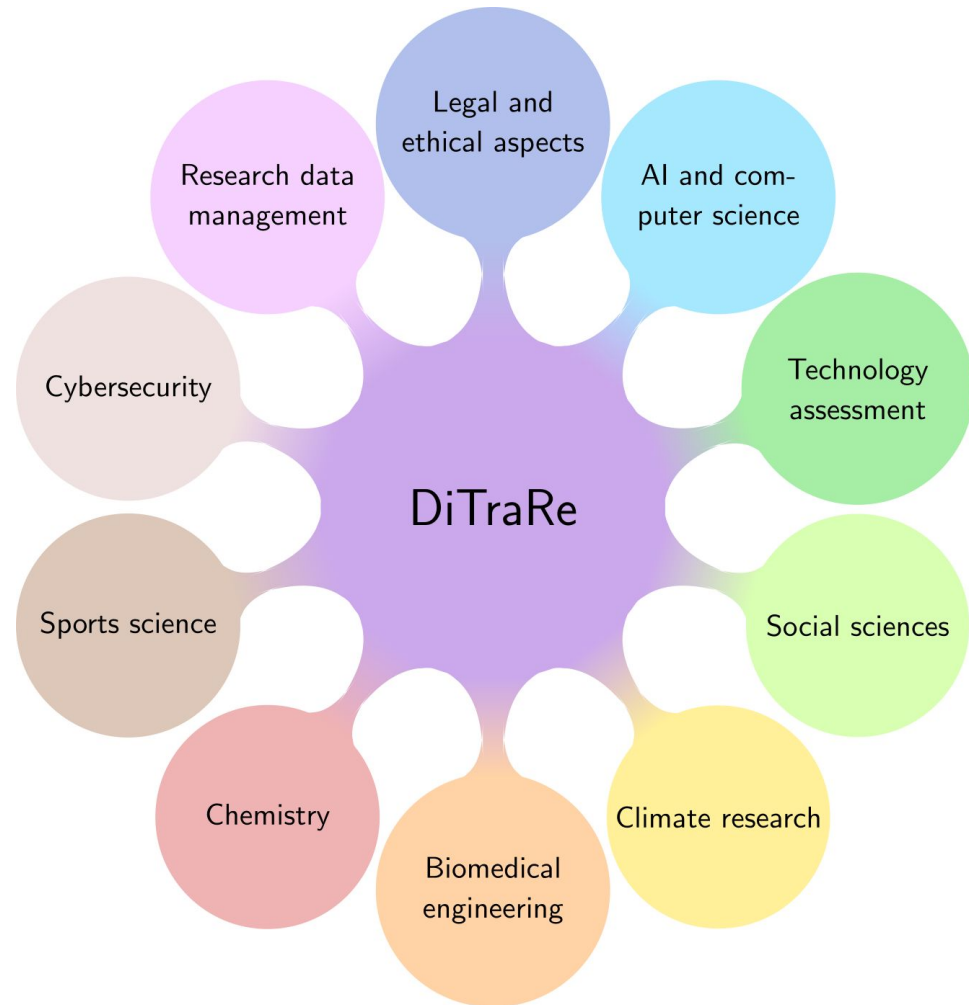
D. Tools and Processes

(FIZ KA *E-Research*)

digital tools tailored precisely to the needs of researchers

Interdisciplinarity as our main focus

- Multilevel interdisciplinary approach.
- Start with 4 specific use cases.
- Each group is collaborating.
 - On specific solutions.
 - On general aspects.



What do we do?

Our vision

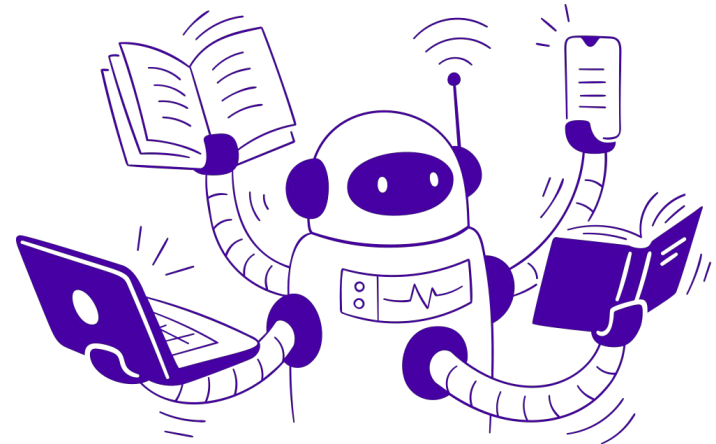
What does it take to establish a new research branch?

- Connect interdisciplinary researchers.
- Create a community.
- Conduct research.



How?

- Connect researchers
 - Create a platform for exchange:
 - Discussion forum (website).
 - Social media accounts, possibility to comment.
 - Meetings, online and in person. Conferences.
 - Organising and attending.
- Write papers
- Keep it sustainable
 - Continuous support, activity.



When real life comes into play: challenges

30+ members originating from ~10 disciplines...

- Defining our **common goal**, then **roles** and **tasks** in highly interdisciplinary environment.
 - Repeat many times...
- Comparing with the proposal (written before it all started).
 - Redefining everything again.
- *We all speak the same language but we don't understand each other.*
 - Varying standards, best practices, definitions across disciplines.

Solution: discussions.

Challenges vol. 2: organisational matters

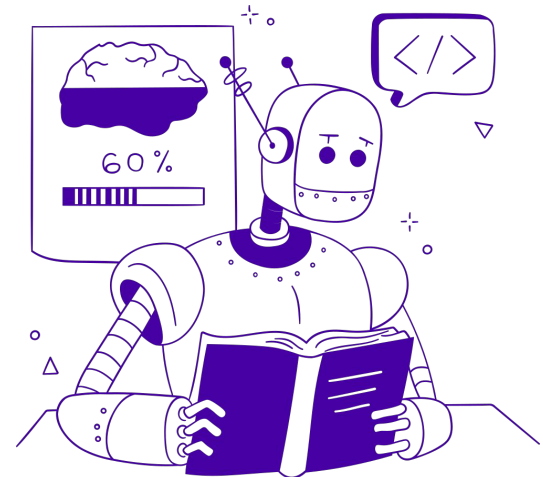
■ Internal

- Means of communication (emails? slack?).
- Preparing collaborative documents and presentations (HedgeDoc, Google Docs?).
 - Should be traceable... with a possibility to bring back old versions.
- Broadening the consortium's vision

■ External

- Publication venues
- Conference attendance
- Collaboration partners

Solution: discussions.



Where do we stand?

DiTraRe publications and presentations

- **20 publications, incl.**
 - 7 conference papers
 - 4 journal articles
 - and other (preprints, reports, etc.)
- **25 presentations**
 - International and national conferences, symposia, seminars, external and internal meetings of each partner
- **20 posters**
 - Mainly international conferences

DiTraRe public outreach

- Website
 - www.ditrare.de
- Generic email
 - ditrare@fiz-karlsruhe.de
- 306 [LinkedIn](#) followers
- 236 [Mastodon](#) followers
- 10 [YouTube](#) subscribers
 - 10 videos
- 52 [Newsletter](#) subscribers
 - sent monthly since August 2025
- 70 [Zenodo community](#) entries
- Merchandise
 - Stickers
 - Postcards
 - T-shirts
 - Lanyards



DiTraRe collaboratively organised events

- **DiTraRe Symposium on Digitalisation of Research**
 - 2-3 December 2025, ZKM, Karlsruhe
 - **14 invited speakers**
 - **80 participants**
 - 25 poster papers submissions (international)
- **Open Science Conference discussion session**
 - [Streamlining Data Publication: Automatic Metadata and Large Datasets in the Age of AI](#)
 - 8 October 2025, Hamburg
- **E-Science-Tage workshop**
 - [Information Infrastructures in the Era of AI: Opportunities and Challenges](#)
 - 12 March 2025, Heidelberg



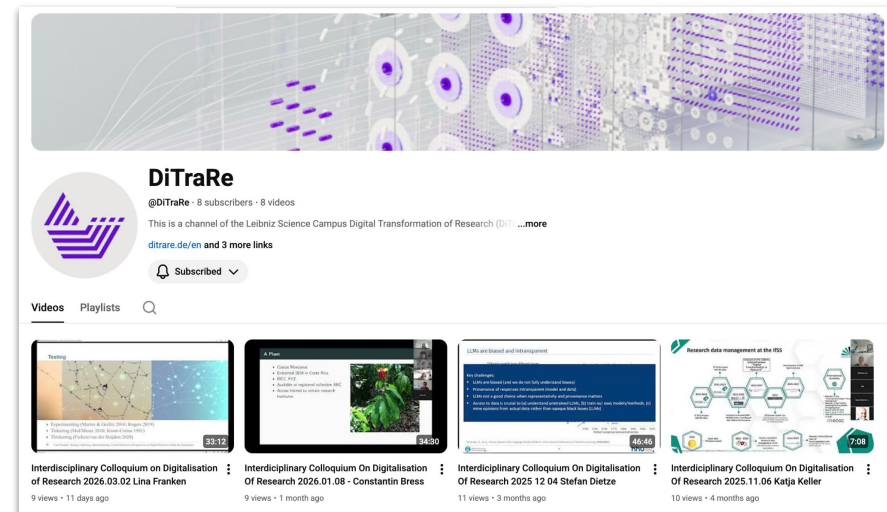
DiTraRe external collaboration

■ Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Digitalisation of Research

- Started in July 2025
- Monthly meetings
- Talks of experts from different disciplines
- Presentations and video recordings, YouTube channel

■ Active exchange

- **NFDI**: 4Chem, 4Earth, 4Society, 4DataScience, 4Memory, FAIRagro, MatWerk, 4Culture, 4Objects
- Other Leibniz ScienceCampi
- DiTraRe SAB regular meetings (5 members)



DiTraRe current stand

- First master student
- Proposals: two submitted, two in preparation
- Second Symposium in planning: **save the date! 6-7 April 2027 @ KIT**
 - Bi-yearly Karlsruhe conference on digitalisation?
- Keep on
 - Publishing
 - Applying for 3rd party funding
 - Making the consortium visible
 - Social media
 - Conferences & meetings



Future outlook

- Phase 2: in the planning.
- **Shift the scientific focus** from the effects of digitalisation on research to the **effects of (generative) AI on research in various disciplines**.
- **Extend working groups** (e.g. include not only life sciences, natural sciences & social sciences, but also humanities).
- Expand into international collaborations.
- Establish a sustainable “DiTraRe office/department” at FIZ.

Conclusions

- There are multiple interdisciplinary initiatives, like the Leibniz Science Campi.
- LSC DiTraRe concentrates on studying AI in and for research.
- *We all speak the same language but don't understand each other.*
- In interdisciplinary projects, plan **a lot** of time for **discussions** and **coordination**.

Exchange and collaborate with us!

Thank you for your attention!

- Stay **connected** with DiTraRe
 - Website: www.ditrare.de/en
 - Newsletter: www.ditrare.de/en/newsletter
 - Email: ditrare@fiz-karlsruhe.de
 - LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/ditrare
 - Mastodon: social.kit.edu/@DiTraRe
 - YouTube: www.youtube.com/@DiTraRe
 - Zenodo: zenodo.org/communities/ditrare
- Interdisciplinary **Colloquium**: monthly
- **Symposium**: second edition April 2027 @ KIT!



www.ditrare.de/en

