

Leibniz-Labs

Integration of knowledge to solve urgent societal issues

Adopted by the Executive Board of the Leibniz Association

28 February 2023

I. Starting position: Decision of the Joint Science Conference (Gemeinsame Wissenschaftskonferenz GWK).....	1
II. Idea, concept and goals of Leibniz-Labs.....	1
III. Financial framework and use of funds.....	2
IV. Setting up Leibniz-Labs: Procedure.....	2
V. Time schedule.....	3

I. Starting position: Decision of the Joint Science Conference (Gemeinsame Wissenschaftskonferenz GWK)

Resolution of the GWK of 04 November 2022:

*“The Conference asks the Leibniz-Association (...) to submit a concept for a pilot project within the framework of the Leibniz competition procedure, with which the extraordinary **synergistic resources** of the Leibniz institutions are to be systematically bundled by **setting topics on the community level** and the **innovation and transfer potential** is to be raised even more specifically. It holds out the prospect of funding this pilot project with up to 10 million Euros after reviewing the concept.”*

II. Idea, concept and goals of Leibniz-Labs

The Leibniz-Association combines disciplinary excellence with interdisciplinary competence and cooperation in the transfer of research results into knowledge for politics and society. It has considerable innovation and transfer potential for solving major societal challenges and can act as a catalyst and pioneer for transformation processes. For this purpose, scientific findings must be brought together on an interdisciplinary basis and converted into transferable results and compatible practical knowledge. **Scientific synthesis** and an **integrative perspective** based on an understanding of different methods, tools and data are needed. Relevant stakeholders from politics and society are to be involved in appropriately to gain a common understanding of issues and findings. These processes are to be tested within the framework of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary **Leibniz-Labs**¹.

¹ Leibniz-Labs is used as a working title in this concept, which is intended to signal openness to different forms of knowledge integration and cooperation across the disciplinary breadth of the Leibniz-Association and with stakeholders outside of academia. This concerns forms of work for which, as a rule, no other funding is available.

Leibniz-Labs should understand knowledge integration as a genuinely scientific task with its innovation potential, pursue a socially participatory approach, as already successfully practiced by several of Leibniz institutions, and address the question of the effectiveness of innovation and transfer in research socially pressing issues.

The goals of the Leibniz-Labs are in detail:

- Evaluation and integration of relevant knowledge on the topics of the Leibniz-Labs (possibly combined with the identification of research gaps).
- Development of evidence-based options/knowledge for action on the specific issues of the Leibniz-Labs.
- Involvement of the relevant stakeholders (science, politics, authorities, the public, ...) as well as communication and transfer of the results.
- Development of good scientific practice for Leibniz-Labs and derivation of knowledge for the conception and implementation of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, including suitable organizational and governance structures.

III. Financial framework and use of funds

According to the decision of the GWK, 10 million € are available from funds from the Leibniz competition. This is intended to finance several Leibniz-Labs² over a period of three years each, as well as additional accompanying research and evaluation.

The available funds can be used for the following measures:

- Development of know-how and structures for Leibniz-Labs
- Implementation of processes for research synthesis and knowledge integration
- Development and use of processes and tools for converting results into options/knowledge for action
- Organization and execution of the cooperation with the relevant stakeholders
- Development and use of tools for communication and transfer
- Accompanying research (development of a "good scientific practice for Leibniz-Labs") and evaluation

IV. Setting up Leibniz-Labs: Procedure

The following steps are planned for setting up Leibniz-Labs:

- (1) Finding topics:** The Leibniz-Association will identify suitable topics in an upstream participatory process, which will help to involve as many Leibniz institutions as possible across a wide range of disciplines. Topics should be chosen in such a way that the disciplinary and interdisciplinary potential of the Leibniz-Association for the integration of knowledge to solve current major societal challenges can be used in the best possible way. At the suggestion of the Executive Board, the Senate decides on which of the topics a call for application for Leibniz-Labs will be issued.

² The target is a number of three Leibniz-Labs. The amount of funding per Leibniz Lab may vary in view of the differences in the concrete design of the Labs.

(2) Expressions of interest: Leibniz entities are then invited to formulate their potential contribution to one (or more) topics in the form of expressions of interest. The expressions of interest should address the following aspects:

- What technical expertise and what relevant knowledge should be brought in?
- Which methodological skills (e.g. for the integration of knowledge), infrastructures and possibly existing networks should be used?
- Is it possible to link to own contributions to the topic in interdisciplinary contexts?
- Which formats for the involvement of stakeholders, as well as the communication and the transfer of results, are planned?
- Which possible products could be the outcome of the Leibniz-Lab?
- Are specific organizational or governance structures provided?
- Are there considerations of accompanying research and evaluation?

(3) Development of overall concepts: Within the framework of workshops, with the participation of external national and international experts, the expressions of interest are evaluated with regard to the potential contribution to a topic and transferred into overall concepts for several, thematically different Leibniz-Labs. The selection of the contributions to be included and the development of the overall concepts are guided by the following criteria:

- Inclusion of the necessary technical expertise and methodological skills as well as skills regarding infrastructure and transfer
- Utilization of interdisciplinary potentials
- Involvement of relevant stakeholders (transdisciplinary elements)
- Appropriateness of methods and processes (research synthesis, integration of knowledge, implementation in options/knowledge for action)
- Convincing communication and transfer concept
- Considerations on accompanying research and evaluation

(4) Decision: The Senate, prepared by a vote of the Senate Strategic Committee (SAS), shall decide on the establishment of the Leibniz-Labs.

V. Time schedule

Preparation phase
04 November 2022: Decision of the GWK Ministerial Conference (see I.)
From 04. November 2022: Concept development; discussions with internal stakeholders; formulation of idea and concept
27/28 February 2023: Resolution of the concept by the Executive Board 1-2023
17 March 2023: Symposium on the idea, concept and goals of the Leibniz-Labs with Leibniz-wide participation and national and international experts
09 May 2023 / 30 June 2023: Consultation of the GWK Committee / GWK Ministerial Conference on the concept of the Leibniz-Labs with the aim of approval and funds release

(1) Finding topics
by May 2023: Process for the pre-selection of suitable topics with the participation of all Leibniz institutions (in preparation for the selection of topics by the Senate following the release of funds by the GWK)
12/13 June 2023: Suggestion of topics by the Executive Board 2-2023
04 July 2023: Selection of topics by 70th Senate
July 2023: Call for application Leibniz-Labs
(2) Expressions of interest
September 2023: Receipt of expressions of interest
(3) Development of overall concepts
October 2023 until February 2024: Workshops to evaluate the expressions of interest and to develop overall concepts for Leibniz-Labs, accompanied by external national and international experts
(4) Decision
March 2024: Decision on the establishment of the Leibniz-Labs by the Senate, prepared by a vote by the SAS in February 2024. The aim is to establish three Leibniz-Labs.
01 April 2024: Start of Leibniz-Labs