

PRESS RELEASE

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FIZ Karlsruhe and State Archives of Baden-Württemberg Shape the Digital Transformation

Innovative cooperation projects are to set new standards for scientific archiving in order to substantially advance the research infrastructure.

Karlsruhe, April 12, 2022 — The digital transformation offers great opportunities for archives, but also presents them with considerable challenges. After all, using archives in the digital age means researching and processing archived material online from any location at any time. To achieve this, however, a wide range of prerequisites must be created for the acquisition, indexing, management, digitization, preservation and target-group specific access to documents.

State Archives of Baden-Württemberg and FIZ Karlsruhe - Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure want to make the vision of digital research archives a reality. To this end, the two renowned infrastructure institutions have now signed a cooperation agreement that is intended to intensify their successful collaboration. For example, together with other partners, [Archivportal-D](#) was created as a Germany-wide research portal with holdings from more than 400 archives. Currently, both partners are developing easy-to-use indexing software for small and medium-sized archives. The combination of archival expertise and strategic networking on the part of the State Archives of Baden-Württemberg and FIZ Karlsruhe's strength in software development and research creates considerable synergies. It benefits all institutions dedicated to the preservation and presentation of cultural heritage. The next step will be the joint development of a new type of Archival Subject Information System (AFIS), with an entirely novel, digital approach towards the technical basis of archival work "AFIS Next Generation" serves to index, manage and present archival material - with a map module, linked data, user-generated content and AI functions. It is intended to support all internal archival work processes of the State Archives. Externally, the new AFIS enables comprehensive online presentation and the use of indexing data and digitized material.

Sabine Brünger-Weilandt, President and CEO of FIZ Karlsruhe, emphasizes the strategic importance: "With this cooperation, we are entering new territory. I am convinced that a virtual reading room as a networked place of learning and working will reveal a dimension of archive use that was previously unimaginable. It will open up entirely new

opportunities for researchers to ask questions and gain new insights. At the same time, we are strengthening citizen science in a comprehensive way."

Prof. Dr. Gerald Maier, President State Archives of Baden-Württemberg, emphasizes: "Our cooperation goes beyond the concrete benefits for both partners. The results should radiate to other institutions, not only in Baden-Württemberg. They are supposed to set new standards for an archival information system and thus for the work of archives in total and for safeguarding and making available our cultural heritage."

Another focus is on cooperation in the area of digital long-term archiving. It can build on existing, established services: For example, the State Archives have been operating DIMAG (Digital Magazine), an IT system for the permanent preservation of their digital archival materials, since 2006. FIZ Karlsruhe, in turn, develops and operates [RADAR](#), a repository for cross-disciplinary archiving and publication of research data.

More information is available on [FIZ Karlsruhe's website](#) and on the [AFIS project page](#) of State Archives of Baden-Württemberg.

FIZ Karlsruhe – Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure is one of the leading provider of scientific information and services and a member of the Leibniz Association. Our core task is the professional support of science and industry with research and patent information as well as the development of innovative information infrastructures, e.g. with a focus on research data management, knowledge graphs and digital platforms. For this purpose, we conduct in-house research, cooperate with renowned universities and research associations and maintain an international network. FIZ Karlsruhe is a GmbH (a limited liability company) with a non-profit character and one of the largest non-university institutions of its kind in Germany.

State Archives of Baden-Württemberg safeguard the archival records of Baden-Württemberg and make them accessible to interested parties. They take over, store, preserve and make accessible all documents of permanent value from the authorities, courts and other agencies of the state. As a competence center for regional studies, the State Archives make the archive material generally usable and evaluates it. They thus actively contribute to cultural and historical-political education.

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