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Research data treasures become available: the BMBF supports digitization at the Leibniz Institute for Catalysis and the universities of Rostock and Greifswald

The 90 million euro project to digitise science begins.

On Friday, 26 June 2020, the Joint Science Conference (GWK) of the Federal Government and the Federal states decided which disciplines will be funded within the framework of the project "National Research Data Infrastructure" (NFDI) from autumn onwards. In this first of three rounds of calls for proposals, the Leibniz Institute for Catalysis (LIKAT) in Rostock and the Universities of Rostock and Greifswald as an important part of the catalysis-related sciences will benefit.

The new project promotes digitization in key scientific areas with the aim of networking important research data from the participating partners and making it more widely available. The current corona crisis clearly shows how essential this is. In this way, those working in research can, for example, learn more effectively from the experiences, but also from the mistakes, of colleagues from other institutions and thus make better use of their expertise. Instead of putting the research data obtained after the end of the project into a drawer, as was previously the case, research data should now be bundled, networked and further used nationally and, where appropriate, internationally.

This will create a comprehensive "knowledge repository and data treasure", which will also be easily and clearly findable and accessible for third parties. The BMBF is funding the establishment of this national infrastructure for research data with up to 90 million euros. In order to take a structured approach to this major project, which will initially run for a decade, consortia of suitable disciplines applied for funding.

In addition to eight other consortia, the *NFDI4Cat* network, which brings together universities and research institutions in the catalysis-related sciences throughout Germany, is also being funded and is expected to begin its activities in October this year. In addition to LIKAT, as Europe's leading research institute for applied catalysis, the universities in Rostock and Greifswald will be supported as part of *NFDI4Cat* with approximately 2 million euros for the next 5 years.

Christoph Wulf and Dr. David Linke from the Leibniz Institute for Catalysis, who helped to design the research proposal, say: "The digitization of our research data will not least help us to move more efficiently from basic research to (industrial) applications".

Catalysis is regarded as a key technology in the containment of pressing problems such as climate change or the scarcity of fossil resources. In order to recycle CO₂ and plastics in production or to establish hydrogen technologies for the storage of renewable energies, close networking of different catalysis disciplines and process engineering is required.