New Platform for Smart Data Research

SDIL Research Platform to Bridge the Gap between Research and Application of Information Technologies for Industry's Big Data

Today, leading representatives of industry, science, and politics kicked off the establishment of the Smart Data Innovation Lab (SDIL). This high-performance infrastructure facility and the supply of data from industrial processes are major prerequisites for excellent research relating to big data. Close cooperation of all parties will ensure efficient transfer of latest research findings to industry and decisive competitive advantages of European enterprises. First projects will focus on the strategic research areas of industry 4.0, energy turnaround, smart cities, and personalized medicine.

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The SDIL research platform was designed by research in cooperation with industry and will be operated at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). Apart from the operator, the companies of Bayer, Bosch, Microsoft Deutschland, SAP, Siemens, and Software AG as well as the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI), the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, and Forschungszentrum Jülich are among the founding partners. In addition, more than 20 other companies and institutions support the SDIL. Among them are companies like Infineon, Trumpf, and Volkswagen, the ICT industry association Bitkom, and the German Informatics Society (Gesellschaft für Informatik, GI). The SDIL is open for participation of other interested representatives of science and industry. A particular focus of the SDIL lies on the support of small enterprises that will profit from the contacts to established suppliers and, hence, may offer entirely novel solutions and services in the area of big data.

"Digital data volumes are growing rapidly in our society. We need new instruments to manage them and to use them as sources of knowledge", Professor Johanna Wanka, Federal Minister of Education and Research and Co-chairperson of the working group "Education and Research for the Digital Future" of the National IT Summit, says. She points out that the Smart Data Innovation Lab and the data supplied to research are optimally suited for advancing studies in this area.

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"We are happy to contribute our competence to the Smart Data Innovation Lab and to share it with German industry", underlines the President of KIT, Professor Holger Hanselka. He emphasizes that KIT already operates infrastructure facilities for big data, such as the GridKa data center that is part of the worldwide grid of the European particle accelerator Center CERN. For many years, computer science at KIT has dealt with analysis methods, evaluation algorithms, and data security. "With SDIL, KIT and its industry partners will really turn big data into smart data."

"As the focus lies on topics like industry 4.0 or personalized medicine, we will obtain findings that will help manage not only economic, but also societal challenges," Jim Hagemann Snabe, Co-CEO of SAP AG, says. "For this purpose, we also open our network for smaller enterprises. It is mainly these small young enterprises that create innovative ideas and it is our task to support them actively."

The working groups of the current four research areas are headed by a representative of science and a representative of industry each. The groups jointly decide on the type and allocation of SDIL resources for research projects. Additional research topics are planned to be defined in the future.

Within the framework of specific projects, the scientists will be granted access to data from industrial processes that are stored safely on the platform. Analysis of the data, such as description and structurization of specific data sets or finding of anomalies, will be accomplished in close cooperation with the company partner, thus ensuring rapid knowledge and technology transfer. Moreover, the research institutes involved will develop universal tools and methods for data analysis. Via the platform, they will then be made available to all partners of the Smart Data Innovation Lab.

The SDIL is also part of the Baden-Württemberg initiative "Forward IT" to strengthen cooperation of industry and science in the areas of industry 4.0, enterprise software, mobility, and IT security.

The concept of the research platform was developed by the working group "Education and Research for the Digital Future" of the federal government's National IT Summit. The working group concentrates on the education and qualification of qualified staff and research for the digital future. In this connection, two successful initiatives have already been implemented, namely, Software Campus Network (2011) and Academy Cube (2012).

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation according to the legislation of the state of Baden-Württemberg. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. Research activities focus on energy, the natural and built environment as well as on society and technology and cover the whole range extending from fundamental aspects to application. With about 9000 employees, including nearly 6000 staff members in the science and education sector, and 24000 students, KIT is one of the biggest research and education institutions in Europe. Work of KIT is based on the knowledge triangle of research, teaching, and innovation.

This press release is available on the internet at www.kit.edu.