

Computer Scientist York Sure-Vetter of KIT Is Appointed Director of the National Research Data Infrastructure (NFDI)

FIZ Karlsruhe and KIT Share Tasks of the Founding Directorate



Professor York Sure-Vetter (Photo: Amadeus Bramsiepe, KIT)

On March 1, York Sure-Vetter took over office of director of NFDI. The renowned computer scientist has been working as a professor at the Institute of Applied Informatics and Formal Description Methods (AIFB) of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) so far and is an acknowledged researcher in the areas of artificial intelligence and data science. Thanks to his career that also included work at a private company, he has best prerequisites for the post of executive director of the NFDI.

The NFDI is to systematically manage, network, and provide access to data inventories of science and research for the entire German science community. It is funded jointly by the Federal Republic of Germany and the federal states. This digital knowledge inventory represents an indispensable prerequisite for work on new research topics, findings, and innovations. By decision of the Joint Science Conference (GWK), the NFDI directorate was placed in Karlsruhe. By 2021, the NFDI is to become a legal entity of its own. Until then, FIZ Karlsruhe – Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology are entrusted with the establishment and organization of the directorate.

Monika Landgraf
Chief Press Officer,
Head of Corp. Communications

Kaiserstraße 12
76131 Karlsruhe, Germany
Phone: +49 721 608-21105
Email: presse@kit.edu

Press contact:

Dr. Babett Bolle
FIZ Karlsruhe – Leibniz Institute
for Information Infrastructure
Press and Public Relations
Phone: +49 2332 662365
Babett.Bolle@fiz-karlsruhe.de

Central elements of the NFDI will be consortia, in which users and providers of research data will interact with information infrastructure institutions. The directorate and office will manage and coordinate interdisciplinary data exchange in science and will represent the NFDI to funding partners and the public.

“With Professor York Sure-Vetter, the GWK has won a founding director of the NFDI, who is highly familiar with both industry and research and education institutions. As founding chairman of the European Research Data Infrastructure CESSDA ERIC, he has gained outstanding experience he can now use for the establishment and management of the NFDI,” says Professor Dr. Holger Hanselka, President of KIT.

Sabine Brünger-Weilandt, President and CEO of FIZ Karlsruhe, emphasizes: “I have held Professor Sure-Vetter in high esteem since our joint work in the Leibniz Association and I am convinced that he will manage his complex tasks at the NFDI in a competent and highly professional way. I am very much looking forward to advancing with him the establishment of the NFDI in terms of both contents and organization.”

About the Person:

In 2003, York Sure-Vetter was conferred his doctorate in the area of semantic knowledge representations by Universität Karlsruhe (TH). From 2007 to 2009, he worked as a senior researcher at SAP AG. From 2009 to 2015, Sure-Vetter was President of GESIS – Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences. In 2015, he was appointed professor at the Institute of Applied Informatics and Formal Description Methods (AIFB) of KIT and spokesman of the AIFB Directorate. During his professional career, he also was founding chairman of the European Research Data Infrastructure CESSDA ERIC, member of the Council for Social and Economic Data (RatSWD), and guest professor at Stanford University. Sure-Vetter is an acknowledged expert in artificial intelligence (AI) and data science.

Professor York Sure-Vetter underlines: “Optimal access to research data for science and research is a major prerequisite for effectively and efficiently managing a number of challenges. The NFDI will make an important contribution by better networking existing infrastructures and providing data meeting current requirements of science and research. I am looking forward to my work as director and to collaboration with all persons involved.”

About FIZ Karlsruhe:

FIZ Karlsruhe – Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure is a limited liability company with state-recognized non-profit status. As one of the largest non-academic information infrastructure institutions in Germany, its public mission is to provide scientists and researchers with scientific information and to develop appropriate products and services. For this, FIZ Karlsruhe opens up vast amounts of data from various sources, develops and operates innovative information services and e-research solutions, and conducts own research projects. FIZ Karlsruhe is member of the Leibniz Association that comprises more than 95 institutions conducting research and providing scientific infrastructure.

Being “The Research University in the Helmholtz Association,” KIT creates and imparts knowledge for the society and the environment. It is the objective to make significant contributions to the global challenges in the fields of energy, mobility and information. For this, about 9,300 employees cooperate in a broad range of disciplines in natural sciences, engineering sciences, economics, and the humanities and social sciences. KIT prepares its 24,400 students for responsible tasks in society, industry, and science by offering research-based study programs. Innovation efforts at KIT build a bridge between important scientific findings and their application for the benefit of society, economic prosperity, and the preservation of our natural basis of life. KIT is one of the German universities of excellence.

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