

Foundation of the Informatics Innovation Center (IIC)

The IIC Shall Enhance Knowledge Transfer between Research, Academic Education, and Industry.
Official Opening on November 16.



Investment in research and education: IBM supplies a large computer of the type IBM z10 in the amount of EUR 2 million to the Department of Informatics. (Photo: IBM)

With the foundation of the Informatics Innovation Center (IIC), the long cooperation of the Department of Informatics of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) with the Research Center for Information Technology (FZI) and IBM is placed on a new basis. Together, the partners wish to launch IT innovations. On Tuesday, November 16, representatives of politics, science, and industry celebrated the foundation of the Innovation Center that aims at strengthening Baden-Württemberg in innovation, research, and teaching. A large-scale computer in the amount of EUR 2 million was handed over by IBM to KIT for use in education and research at the Department of Informatics.

The IIC is aimed at enhancing the networking of know-how from industry and science and extending cooperation in strategic IT fields. Students will profit from close-to-practice education. Their contacts to industry will be closer and take place earlier by joint projects for

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graduation theses or close-to-practice seminars. "Close contact with industry helps the students bridge the gap between theory and practice and experience the competitive advantages resulting for enterprises using high-performance IT," explained Michael A. Maier, Head of the IBM Division for the Public Service Sector.

Other companies and public institutions are free to join this partnership and contribute their know-how. "All IT companies may become members of the IIC, whether they are located in the Karlsruhe Technology Region or not," underlined Professor Ralf Reussner, Vice Dean for Research at the Department of Informatics and Head of the IIC for KIT and FZI. "In addition to individual student projects, internships may be defined and organized jointly," said Reussner.

The IIC also is a platform for the rapid and uncomplicated execution of research cooperation projects. Presently, the focus is on cloud computing, a new flexible type of using computer power, software, and services via the internet, the security of which shall be increased. Under the HOMER project, scientists of KIT, FZI, and IBM are working on the implementation of a theoretical process for rapid and error-free calculation on encoded data in the cloud. By means of such a process, encoded data may be transferred without the service provider calculating on these data being able to read or misuse them. "In an increasingly service-oriented IT infrastructure, computation on encoded data would be a real advantage for the clients in terms of data security," underlined Professor Jörn Müller-Quade, Head of the KIT Institute of Cryptography and Security and Scientific Director at FZI. For 30 years, this so-called "homomorphous encoding" had been considered an unrealizable dream until IBM staff member Craig Gentry found a way to minimize errors of computations on encoded data in the past year. However, the process is not yet rapid enough to ensure secure services. HOMER is aimed at constructing a prototype to study practical feasibility of the process.

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation and state institution of Baden-Württemberg, Germany. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. KIT focuses on a knowledge triangle that links the tasks of research, teaching, and innovation.

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