

DIE – Expertise for successful Adult Education

Our self-understanding

The German Institute for Adult Education - Leibniz Center for Lifelong Learning (DIE) is a research institution of the Leibniz Association. We pursue the goal of contributing to the personal development, democratic social participation and employability of adults. Based on research results, transfer of knowledge and infrastructures for research, we work to increase the quality of continuing education and to improve the education of adults.

To achieve this, we research issues of lifelong learning of adults as the central institution for science, practice and policy of adult and continuing education in Germany. Our research focuses on teaching and learning processes, continuing education organizations and their program planning and the continuing education system with its financial, political, and legal frameworks.

We focus on existing and future societal challenges. To this end, we conduct application-oriented basic research in the spirit of the Leibniz Association. Our findings provide impulses for the professionalization of continuing education practice. At the same time, we want to take up central suggestions for our work through the continuous dialogue with practice. By transferring our findings to educational policy, we contribute to the scientific foundation of educational policy decisions.

Our claim

As an institute of the Leibniz Association, we follow the maxim: “Science for the benefit and welfare of mankind”. Our work is measured against the codes of the Leibniz Association and the German Research Foundation (DFG) to ensure good scientific practice. We ensure the quality of our scientific work through a local ethics committee, ombudspersons, the institute’s own methodological advice on research data management, regular further training and peer exchange.

We also ensure the quality of our work through the continuing education and training of all employees at the various hierarchical levels; in addition, we are committed to being a training institute. We offer doctoral candidates a structured doctoral training program as part of promoting young researchers, which is characterized by scientific supervision, advanced training courses and colloquia. Postdocs have the opportunity to develop scientifically by taking on independent project responsibility, through training and consulting opportunities, and as part of managing junior research groups.

Our strategy

Our research, transfer and infrastructure services are developed by our employees in five departments that cooperate closely. Through cooperation agreements and joint appointments, we also maintain close collaboration with various universities.

We network nationally and internationally in many ways. In addition to the universities, we cooperate with non-university research institutions within and outside the Leibniz Association, research associations and with organizations of continuing education practice. We see the internationalization of our work as a cross-sectional task and an integral part of our strategy; our internationalization process is continuously supported by a staff unit.

We ensure the transparency and accessibility of the results of our work by supporting open access publications, open educational resources and the provision of research data.

Social developments and changes are reflected in the field of adult and continuing education. As an organization, the DIE is challenged not only to take up these changes in its research work, but also to continuously develop itself.

Therefore, we regularly review and update our mission statement.

Our employees

We are committed to a diverse workforce and to equality, tolerance and equal opportunities for all our employees. We are committed to a family- and life-phase-conscious human resources policy and promote the compatibility of work and family.

In the interdisciplinary composition of our workforce, we see our strength and opportunity to address comprehensive research questions on adult teaching and learning from multiple perspectives. The indispensable basis of our content-related work is the commitment of the employees in the infrastructural and administrative areas of the institute.

Participative decision-making structures and processes make it possible to harmonize strategic requirements with the individual goals of our employees. We consider an appreciative organizational and management culture as well as the personal and professional development of all employees to be important tasks. Our aspiration is that all employees should be able to take personal responsibility for their own actions and actively help shape the character of the institute.

Management and staff of the DIE,
July 2022