



GUIDING PRINCIPLES AT THE

FZI



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— Foreword

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Research is the engine of the future. As a non-profit foundation under civil law, the FZI Research Center for Information Technology stands for applied research and technology transfer. Since our founding in 1985 we conduct research in various topics related to computer science. Through innovative research at the highest level and open-mindedness towards technical innovations, we would like to continue to inspire with new ideas and solutions in the future.

In doing so, we want to shape the future responsibly. We at the FZI are happy to make our contribution to the common good. We do it out of conviction and with a view to the generations that will follow us.

Those who shape the future need a clear orientation. Together, we shape the culture of the FZI. In our daily collaboration – with each other and with our partners – we are guided by clear values and convictions.

The Code of Ethics developed by the Board of Executive Directors together with the researchers and employees of the research center summarizes the convictions for which the FZI stands. We want to continue to fill these values with life and protect them.

That is why we have given ourselves rules in the form of a Code of Conduct that is binding for all colleagues at the FZI. Lawful and value-oriented action creates the basis of trust for our cooperation, both at the FZI and with our partners in companies and public institutions.



**The Board of Executive Directors of the FZI (from left to right):
Jan Wiesenberger, Prof. Dr.-Ing. J. Marius Zöllner,
Prof. Dr. Stefan Nickel**

The FZI's Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct form the main pillars of our Guiding Principles (see „Structure of our Guiding Principles“ graphic on the right). They are supplemented by our Leadership Principles, which are based on the same standards. They underline the special importance of managers as role models.

These three guiding principles of the FZI formulate our self-understanding, shape our cultural mission statement and give us orientation for our actions. At the same time, they protect us from risks and thus secure the further development and future of the FZI.

Karlsruhe, September 2019

VISION

Every innovation for the well-being of society contains research and knowledge from the FZI.

MISSION

„We are the leading independent institute for cutting-edge applied research and research transfer in the field of information and communications technology in response to the societal challenges worldwide, today and tomorrow.“

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

CODE OF CONDUCT

CODE OF ETHICS

Foundation purpose / statute
General social legal framework

CODE OF ETHICS

- 8 Research and knowledge for the common good**
- 8 Professional excellence, interdisciplinarity, and creativity**
- 8 Independence, initiative, and responsibility**
- 8 Transparency, openness, and trust**
- 9 Appreciation, respect, and fairness**

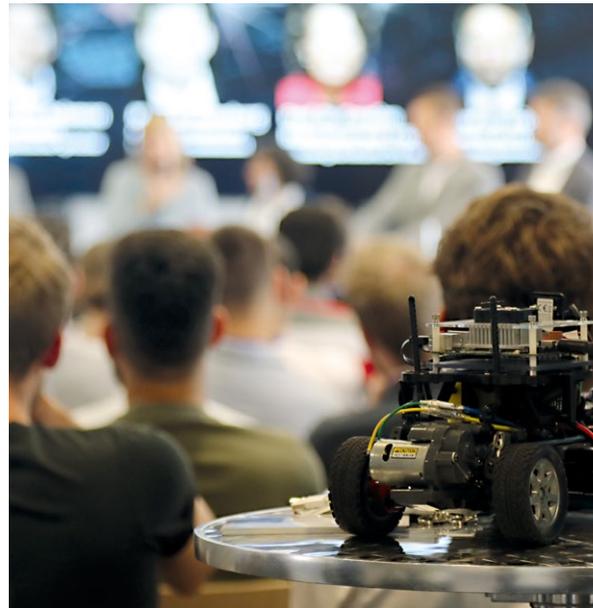
— Code of Ethics

Research and knowledge for the common good

We explore the potential of digital technologies and develop innovative applications for business and society at the highest international level. In doing so, we attach great importance to foresighted consideration of the possible consequences of our research. We are committed to acting sustainably in ecological, social, and economic terms. With each of our innovations, we strive to add value for society.

Professional excellence, interdisciplinarity, and creativity

As enthusiastic problem solvers, we shape the digital world of tomorrow and build bridges between science, business, politics, administration, and citizens. The highest scientific standards combined with interdisciplinarity and diversity are the basis for our innovative capacity and performance.



Thanks to the latest methods and technologies, state-of-the-art laboratories and test fields, as well as our network of innovative partners, we can test creative ideas directly in practice. This research and working environment offers colleagues ideal conditions for a professional future in specialist and management positions and in their own companies.

Independence, initiative, and responsibility

As a non-profit foundation under civil law, we are committed to the common good. We maintain our legal, economic and moral independence and rely on the initiative and integrity of all our colleagues. We accept our responsibility: We play an active role in shaping debates on the opportunities and risks of technological innovations and back up our words with action.

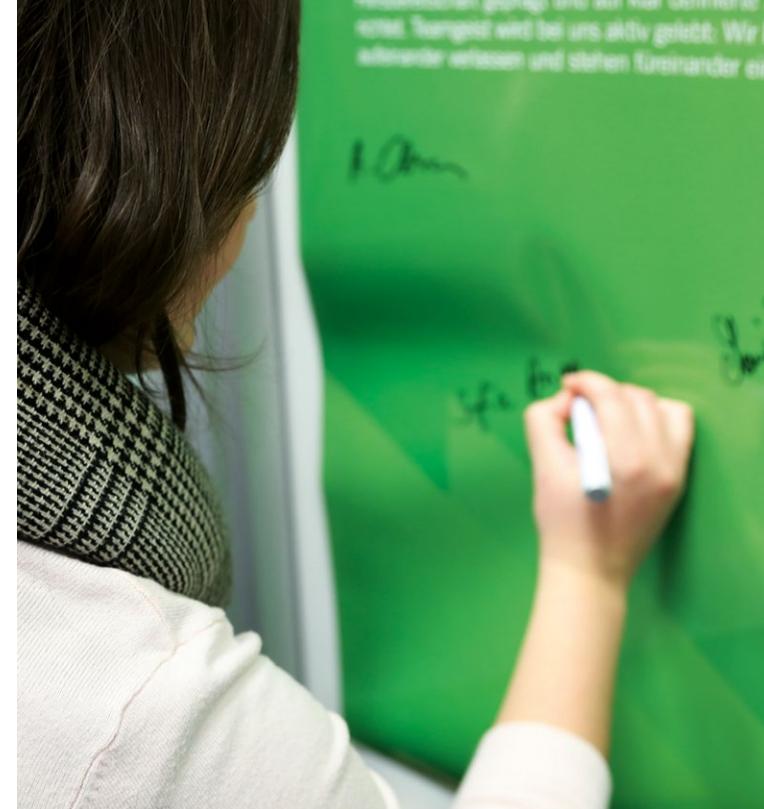
Transparency, openness, and trust

We communicate with each other and our partners on an equal footing, focusing on openness and willingly accepting constructive criticism. For us, transparency means that decisions are understandable. Cooperation at the FZI is characterized by trust, commitment and willingness to help and is geared towards clearly defined goals. Team spirit is actively lived at our company: We can rely on and stand up for each other.

Appreciation, respect, and fairness

We show the same respect and appreciation to our colleagues, partners and clients, and are guided by the principles of equal opportunity and fairness.

We are united by our enthusiasm for digital technologies of the future. For individual professional and personal development, we rely on a flexible and family-friendly working environment



CODE OF CONDUCT

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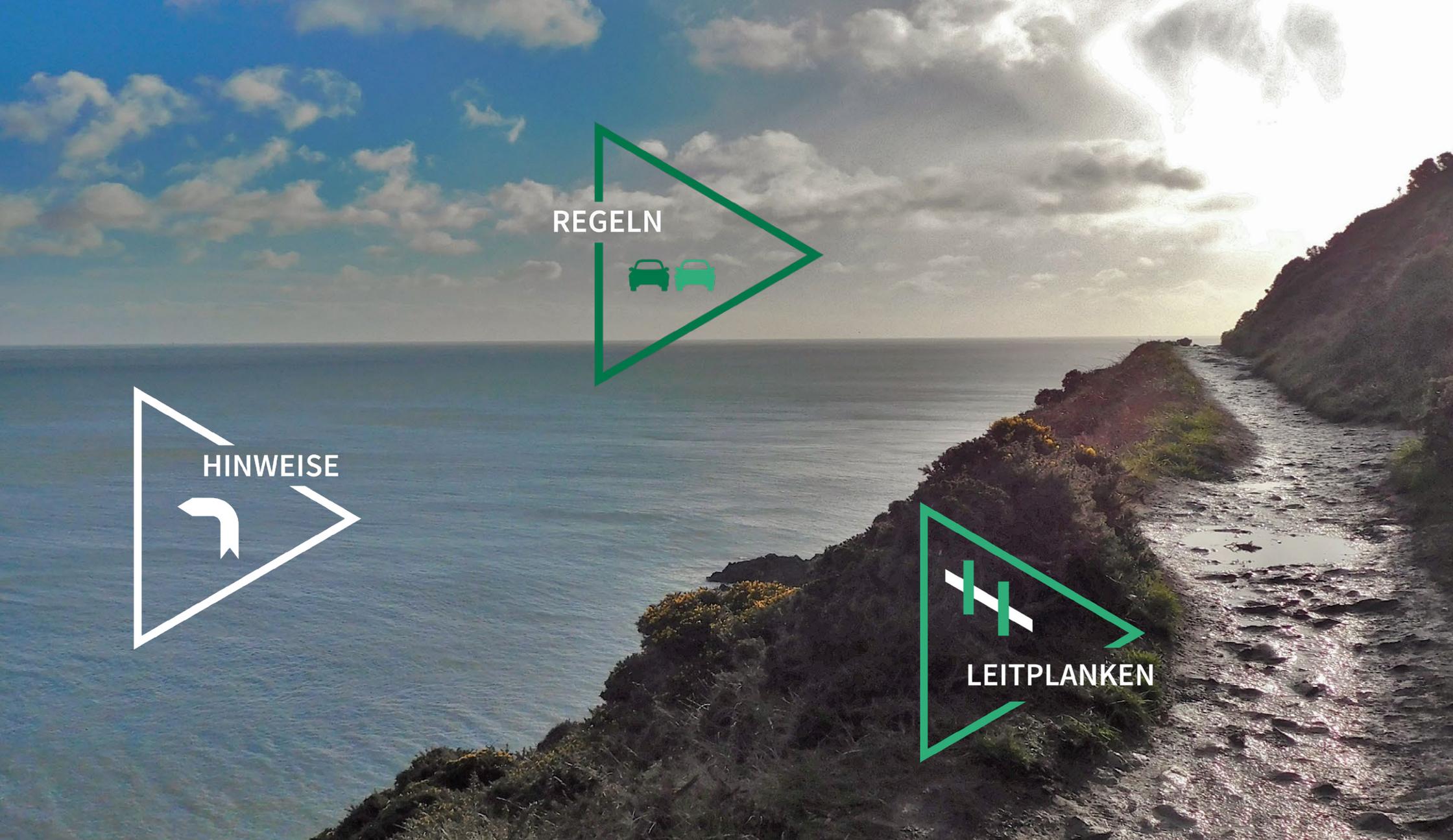
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HINWEISE



LEITPLANKEN

„This Code of Conduct is the compass for
our research and actions.“

— Code of Conduct



I. Compliance as a compass

Compliance at the FZI entails adhering to the laws, guidelines, and standards applicable to the FZI. It encompasses measures such as self-imposed internal regulations and binding processes for all FZI employees, regardless of position or role. This supports lawful behavior, strengthens awareness of proper conduct, and prevents situations that could compromise the FZI's reputation and have negative consequences.

This Code of Conduct serves as the basis for our compliance management system, which is aligned with DIN ISO 37301. This system provides the foundation for lawful conduct at the FZI and in our interactions with partners. It is intended to support employees, managers, scientific directors, and executive directors alike in complying with our principles and the regulations that apply to us in our daily work. Further guidelines on specific aspects, such as the data protection guideline, round off the topics addressed in this Code of Conduct.

Compliance is the responsibility of all FZI employees, including scientific directors, managers, and executive directors. Notwithstanding this collective compliance responsibility, certain functions are explicitly entrusted with identifying compliance risks and with maintaining appropriate standards of conduct and processes, as well as the corresponding control and audit measures. This primarily includes the compliance officer, who is supported by the compliance team. It also includes specialist functions, such as occupational safety, data protection, information security, quality management, and management of the Research Administration (RAD) division. A Compliance Board has been established to coordinate compliance functions and to regulate cooperation and exchanges with organizational units.

A compliance organizational policy reinforces the importance of this measure and consolidates the chosen structure. Through our self-developed e-learning program, we also ensure that our employees, particularly our managers, are trained in compliance. Through continuous compliance communication and case-study discussions, current and general topics are addressed, clarified, and discussed within the individual organizational units of the FZI. This ensures that everyone is up to date on compliance issues at all levels. Our quality management system and information security management system have been established and certified since 2011 and 2023, respectively, in accordance with the current ISO 9001 and ISO 27001 standards.

II. Economic independence

In accordance with our foundation statutes, the FZI is a knowledge transfer institution, serving as a link between businesses, public institutions, universities, and other research institutions. As a non-profit foundation under civil law, we are committed to the common good and our independence. To maintain this independence, we do not enter into any collaborations that account for more than one-eighth of our total annual budget, or that could pose a similar risk of economic dependence.

III. Standards we set for our research

The FZI has been conducting research in computer science and its applications for over 40 years. In addition to transferring research results to industry, administration, and society, the FZI's central task is also to train and educate future specialists and managers for the digital transformation through applied cutting-edge research.

To ensure the long-term high standard of scientific progress and research, and to transform practical solutions into practice and publish them, we adhere to the German Research Foundation (DFG) guidelines on good scientific practice. In this way, we ensure our scientific integrity and fulfill our responsibility in the field of research. Our scientific ombudspersons base their actions in research on the principles of the DFG Code and are available as contact persons for internal and external inquiries regarding research and science at the FZI. In doing so, they also ensure good scientific practice. In addition to assisting with questions about scientific work, they also act as ombudspersons in cases of scientific misconduct and respond consistently and appropriately.

IV. Standards we set for our partners

This Code of Conduct expresses our high standards of compliance for ourselves. We expect our partners to adopt a similar approach, at least with regard to the provisions set out in this Code of Conduct. We also encourage our partners to incorporate these provisions into their corporate policies.



— Code of Conduct

V. Justice and legislation as a minimum requirement

The following principles apply as minimum standards to protect the integrity of the FZI, our partners, and all employees.

— Respecting human rights

Research and science expand knowledge and contribute to society's progress. However, this must not be done without restrictions, especially without consideration for the common good. We are committed to fair working conditions and do not tolerate behavior that disregards human rights.

- ☑ Compliance with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights is a minimum standard for our research.
- ☑ In all our research work, we question what purpose it serves and what the resulting prototypes or findings can be used for. We assess the corresponding risks to the common good and base our further actions on this assessment.

— Supporting variety and diversity

We respect and value each other in all our differences. Against this backdrop, we at the FZI create an environment free of discrimination. In particular, we do not tolerate discrimination

based on gender, nationality, social or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

- ☑ The FZI has a complaints office for social conflicts and discrimination.
- ☑ The FZI has a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) that is updated annually.
- ☑ Our employees are paid according to TV-L without discrimination.

— Making objective decisions without bias

We carefully separate personal and business interests. We are therefore obliged to objectively make decisions that could influence business activities in any way. In cases of uncertainty regarding situations that appear to involve a potential conflict of interest, the responsible departments within the company will examine the facts and resolve them.

- ☑ Exclusion of a possible conflict of interest in the event of simultaneous participation of a FZI scientific director and the affiliated university.
- ☑ Transparency through disclosure of secondary employment to prevent conflicts of interest

— No chance for corruption

We do not tolerate any form of corruption or bribery. Success must not be achieved through improper influence. Our business position must not be abused to demand, accept, obtain, or be granted unfair advantages (such as objects, financial benefits, or illegal privileges). The same applies to offering, promising, and granting such advantages.

- ☑ Further details regarding benefits, such as invitations, gifts, and other personal advantages, are outlined in our gifts and invitations policy.

— Preventing money laundering and terrorist financing

We neither approve nor support money laundering and the financing of terrorism. In this context, the identity and integrity of our business partners and employees are of particular importance to us. To prevent money laundering, we place great importance on transparent and open payment flows. This is to prevent the origin of illegally acquired funds from being concealed and criminal funds from entering the legal economic cycle.

- ☑ To prevent terrorist financing and money laundering, we conduct various internal audits to an appropriate extent in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

— Advocating for fair competition

Fair competition benefits all players equally. Market distortions caused by cartels, price fixing, or illegal market dominance lead to unfair decisions in the economy and in the pre-competitive sector. Therefore, we do not tolerate or support agreements that restrict or distort competition. We measure ourselves against our competitors without colluding on prices, terms, and capacities, thus avoiding any influence on competition.

- ✔ Changing business partners and objective order distribution ensure neutral procurement.

— Careful handling of third-party funds

Third-party funds are handled transparently, correctly, and exclusively in accordance with the respective funding conditions. In doing so, we observe the principles of economy and cost-effectiveness in the use of funds. Insofar as the funding conditions or the law require compliance, we conscientiously observe the provisions of public procurement law.

- ✔ Procurement is conducted in accordance with our procurement policy.
- ✔ We strictly adhere to the guidelines for ensuring good scientific practice as outlined by the German Research Foundation (DFG Code). Furthermore, we have scientific ombudspersons.
- ✔ Payment and treatment of our employees are in accordance with TV-L (collective agreement for civil servants).

— Ensuring safety

The physical integrity and health of our employees are our top priority. We therefore ensure that occupational safety conditions comply with applicable regulations and our internal rules. Continuous review and adjustment of working conditions are crucial for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. Additionally, we offer consulting and training services to promote workplace well-being.

- ✔ Occupational physicians offer preventive medical checkups tailored to the specific field of work, such as occupational health checkups for screen work.
- ✔ When equipping workstations, we place great importance on ergonomics. This is why we regularly consult external occupational safety specialists and occupational physicians, especially regarding screen positioning and workspace design.
- ✔ We comply with the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO).
- ✔ We have been recognized multiple times as a “Top Employer for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses” by FOCUS-Business.
- ✔ The successful implementation of the “Gesundheit mit System (Health with System)” concept has been repeatedly certified by the statutory accident insurance provider VBG.
- ✔ The FZI was awarded the VBG Prevention Prize in 2022.



— Code of Conduct

— Conserving resources

Our research is committed to the principle of sustainability. As a research institution, we only offer services that cannot be certified with a quality mark. We are neither manufacturers nor distributors of products. However, with a view to future generations, we are aware of our social responsibility. We therefore set high standards for social responsibility and sustainability, and conduct our research and work in a responsible, socially conscious, ecological, and sustainable manner.

- ✔ Extensive digitalization of documents, work steps, and processes.
- ✔ Purchase of green electricity (climate protection certificate from Stadtwerke Karlsruhe)
- ✔ The building's heating system is primarily operated by district heating.
- ✔ Use of energy-efficient software and hardware.
- ✔ Use of recycled products, such as recycled printer paper and toilet paper.
- ✔ Reduction of business trips through increased use of alternative digital communication media.

✔ Extensive use of rail as transportation, especially for trips to our branch office in Berlin.

✔ Use of the modern fleet of vehicles of a car-sharing provider.

— Protecting personal data

Protecting personal data is of great importance as it safeguards the privacy and informational self-determination of each individual, and this protection is enshrined in law. To ensure this protection, we have high standards for the security of our employees' data and the handling of personal data in projects.

To ensure data protection at all times, both technically and organizationally, the FZI developed a guideline and established the appropriate structures, processes, and roles. Additionally, we continually review and refine our internal processes to ensure the protection of personal data.

- ✔ We apply our data protection guidelines and
- ✔ detailed ISMS guidelines containing data protection requirements.

— Safeguarding confidentiality and intellectual property

At the FZI, our most valuable asset is the knowledge gained through research. To counter the risk of data loss – particularly through data leaks, industrial espionage, or cyberattacks – the responsible handling of data and information is particularly important in our daily work. We do not disclose information

that is intended for our exclusive use. This includes, in particular, trade or business secrets and information subject to confidentiality under contractual agreements or corresponding labeling. The implemented Information Security Management System (ISMS) helps us to handle such information professionally.

We only use intellectual property within the legal framework and in accordance with the agreed contract.

- ✔ Our information security management system is ISO 27001 certified.
- ✔ Our information security policy and its associated guidelines apply.

— Handling AI systems safely

AI systems and models are both the subject of our research activities and relevant to operational processes. Legal requirements must be taken into account in the research, development, and use of AI systems, in particular the Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act). Furthermore, data protection and security are important interdisciplinary issues for AI systems.

The role of the AI officers at the FZI was established to address internal processes, implement legal requirements, and strategically advance the use of AI systems within the FZI. They serve as contact persons and provide support on technical and legal issues related to the creation, use, and (further) development of AI systems.

- ✔ The use of generative AI at the FZI is subject to the guidelines for the use of generative Artificial Intelligence, which specify labeling requirements, procurement, and data handling.

VI. Freedom requires boundaries

Even minor violations of internal regulations or statutory and legal provisions can have serious consequences. Possible consequences include damage to the FZI's reputation and liabilities, as well as those of its Executive Board and employees. Violations will therefore be consistently prosecuted and appropriately sanctioned. Depending on the severity of the breach, labor law measures up to and including termination of employment, as well as liability for damages and criminal consequences, may be imposed.

VII. Call for openness – contact persons and whistleblower procedures

In general, potential risks to a company or institution are usually known before they materialize and cause reputational damage or liability issues. If you are aware of any harmful behavior or risks, sharing information can help ensure that you can continue to work at the FZI without any worries. This also contributes to FZI's long-term success.

'Asking questions is better than justifying yourself' – this call for openness is practised at the FZI. All employees, including the FZI's Scientific Directors, represent the FZI through their



behavior and actions. Even with careful behavior, situations can arise in everyday work where a decision cannot be made with absolute certainty. Through our whistleblower procedure, we also aim to foster and ensure open communication on compliance issues. In addition to our managers, the first points of contact here are the compliance team, including the compliance officers. In addition, our employees can submit reports anonymously via an external ombudsperson. These individuals are here to help make the right decisions, clarify uncertainties, and identify violations promptly to prevent misconduct.

The contact details of the compliance officers and other contact persons are available on the intranet and on our website, portal or on our homepage.

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

- 21 We actively shape cooperation**
- 21 We foster employee development**
- 22 We communicate from the heart and with an open ear**
- 22 We decide with a sense of proportion in the spirit of the FZI**



— Leadership Principles

We are convinced that the FZI achieves its best results when we inspire ourselves and others with our work. As leaders, we assume a central role.

In line with our foundation's mission, we make sure that good ideas are implemented to achieve the goals we have set ourselves and benefit society. Within this framework, we provide creative freedom for all employees, in which the power of innovation can flourish based on scientific and professional knowledge and where excellence can unfold.

Good leadership means taking responsibility, making decisions and reflecting on one's own actions. Our Leadership Principles provide guidance in this regard and create the essential conditions for the growth and further development of the FZI. In addition to the Code of Conduct and the Code of Values, they offer security when making decisions. At the same time, they leave sufficient room for maneuver to promote creativity and agility while driving change. They also ensure an improvement in the relevant framework conditions, such as work-life balance.

The Leadership Principles formulated in these guidelines define the attitude that employees and managers can expect from each other. The managers undertake to constantly reflect on their behavior and adjust it if needed.

We rely on a trust-based management culture that is characterized by integrity and mutual appreciation. By living our shared values in our day-to-day work and representing them to the outside world, we make a significant contribution to the FZI's good reputation.

With these Leadership Principles, we are laying a foundation stone that we are consistently working to implement. In a continuous process, we are working together to further develop these management guidelines on this basis.

We actively shape cooperation

Our cooperation requires honesty towards others and ourselves, but also tolerance and understanding for other points of view. We create an environment from which we work for a fair and transparent distribution of tasks.

We are open to different perspectives and include them in finding solutions. We regard the diversity of our employees as an enrichment and therefore promote their interdisciplinarity. We face conflicts constructively and use them as an opportunity to improve cooperation. We attach particular importance to confidentiality and the protection of privacy. We are committed to a healthy, family-friendly and safe working atmosphere.



We foster employee development

We owe the success of the FZI to the knowledge, experience and commitment of all our employees. We offer scope for design and participation so that our colleagues can further develop their skills and opportunities. In particular, we actively encourage the initiative and commitment of all employees to contribute their knowledge and experience. We also invest in individual, personal and team-oriented training and further qualification.

Through personal feedback, we foster our employees rather than just demanding performance. We motivate through recognition, but also with constructive criticism.



— Leadership Principles

We communicate from the heart with an open ear

We maintain appreciative, transparent and open communication, and lead by example. We actively engage in respectful dialogue with our employees and with each other. We exchange information on relevant developments within the legal framework, assign clear responsibilities with clear targets, and enable result-oriented solutions from employees. If we identify challenges, we address them in a clear and timely manner and intervene in a supportive way.



We decide with a sense of proportion in the spirit of the FZI

Leading means setting an example. Mutual trust promotes the courage to take responsibility, to make decisions within one's authority in the spirit of the FZI and to be consistent in one's actions. The Code of Conduct provides dependable support in this regard. We make reliable statements and keep our word. We stand loyally behind the actions of our employees and view mistakes as an opportunity to build on our experience.





— Legal Notice

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