

General Information About the Framework of the iDiv Synthesis Centre

1 About iDiv

The German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research Halle-Jena-Leipzig (iDiv) is a world-leading centre for biodiversity science and focuses on understanding biodiversity on our planet.

Established in 2012 as a DFG-funded research centre, iDiv has grown to over 190 [iDiv Members](#), with nearly 300 people working at its core centre. iDiv is now funded by the three central German states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia, through their universities in Halle, Jena and Leipzig, together with the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research GmbH – UFZ. Additionally, iDiv is a consortium with member institutions from the Leibniz Association and the Max Planck Society. In 2025, iDiv became an association, iDiv e. V., the representative body of the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research Halle-Jena-Leipzig. At the core centre in Leipzig, iDiv hosts nine core Professorships, funded by our host institutions, and three externally funded Junior Research Groups.

iDiv mission: Advancing integrative biodiversity science for a biodiversity-positive future.

This strategy positions iDiv as a global leader in studying biodiversity change as a critical societal challenge. Its mission is threefold:

1. to understand the biodiversity of life on Earth,
2. develop scientific knowledge for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in alignment with international frameworks (such as the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework), and
3. to advance the field of integrative biodiversity research.

iDiv integrates excellent basic research with real-world impact, ensuring scientific insights that translate into solutions for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem functioning, and human well-being.

2 Goals of the iDiv Synthesis Centre – an iDiv Tool to Foster Integration and Novel Science

The iDiv Synthesis Centre (formerly known as sDiv), **provides global leadership on synthesising knowledge of biodiversity change, its underlying ecological, socio-environmental and -economic processes, and its consequences for the functioning of ecosystems.**

As one of iDiv's funding mechanism, the iDiv Synthesis Centre focuses on the integration of a) iDiv's five biodiversity research topics (Functions, Complexity, People and Biodiversity,

Integrative Approaches, and Transdisciplinary Research) and the expertise within the iDiv consortium, and b) the broader national and international research community.

The core of the iDiv philosophy is synergy and integration, achieved through **interaction between working group project participants and iDiv scientists within the consortium**. Formally, this is accomplished by **including several iDiv Members in each working group project** (e.g., as working group participant or as one of the PIs), and by giving at least one mandatory seminar open to all iDiv scientists during the project. We hope that working group project participants will bring in fresh ideas and are interested in **collaborations with iDiv scientists** beyond the scope of their working group projects. The resident iDiv scientists in turn offer a unique pool of expertise in biodiversity science. Working group participants are encouraged to approach them for help and discussions.

The iDiv Synthesis Centre is part of the [International Synthesis Consortium](#), a global group of synthesis centres. The participating centres share experiences, tools, ideas and collaborate on joint calls and projects of significant societal relevance. **The iDiv Synthesis Centre has been led by [Dr Marten Winter](#) since 2012**. Dr. Winter has been a *highly cited* scientist with a strong background in biodiversity research, applied conservation, macroecology, and biological invasions. He is part of several advisory boards and supports synthesis centres and related initiatives worldwide with his extensive expertise.

The iDiv Synthesis Centre is strongly supported by different services, including iDiv's Events Team and the Administration Units. As part of our equal opportunity policy, **iDiv provides an option for flexible childcare** while participants attend the meetings. If you have any further questions regarding this subject, please contact the [Synthesis Centre staff](#).

In a nutshell: **the iDiv Synthesis Centre, is an incubator for new ideas – a think tank and place of inherent horizon scanning. This “hot spot” of biodiversity science** brings together skilled and open-minded international scientists in a very interactive atmosphere.

3 General Characteristics of Synthesis Working Groups at the iDiv Synthesis Centre

Applications are **open to scientists worldwide**. Proposals should address novel questions or examine known problems from an innovative synthesis perspective related to iDiv's research questions. **Besides data synthesis, we also advocate for and encourage theory and conceptual syntheses. We are particularly interested in scientific topics with relevance to policy and the sustainable transformation of industry, economy and finance.** We encourage applicants to also propose forward looking theory and synthesis topics and perspectives, which can pave the way for novel research themes, going beyond traditional and conventional perspectives.

Outcomes are typically multi-author high-quality and ideally high-impact scientific publications. **Projects could involve integrating existing and new concepts, theories, approaches to data exploration, experimental or modelling syntheses.** Similarly,

projects that initiate collaborative research beyond the iDiv Synthesis Centre project itself are highly welcome. Projects may address socio-economic aspects of biodiversity science and can involve stakeholders; deliverables can include concepts for practitioners of how biodiversity can be safeguarded and tools to disseminate such concepts to policy makers and the stakeholder community (for example software, policy briefs, websites, and databases). While project ideas may be risky, applicants should provide evidence that sufficient data and appropriate analytical tools are available or will be developed to tackle novel questions. The availability of the data must be indicated in the proposal.

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The Executive Board, consisting of the Scientific Director, Prof Dr Martin Quaas, and the Chief Operating Officer, Dr Anne Wesemann, acts on behalf of iDiv e. V., the representative body of the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research Halle-Jena-Leipzig. Leipzig University, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research GmbH – UFZ are founding institutional members of iDiv e.V.