

Press release  
German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI)

## **DFKI Laboratory Lübeck officially opened: A milestone for AI research in Schleswig-Holstein**

Lübeck, October 22, 2024

**Dirk Schrödter, Minister for Digitalization and Head of the State Chancellery of Schleswig-Holstein, today presented the funding decision for the new laboratory of the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI) in Lübeck. This is a decisive step towards the long-term establishment of the DFKI location in Schleswig-Holstein and the further development of AI research in the healthcare sector.**

After a successful evaluation of the branch office established in 2021, the DFKI Supervisory Board decided in November 2023 to expand the DFKI in Lübeck into a laboratory. With its focus on the application areas of medicine, medical technology and the healthcare industry, the northernmost DFKI laboratory represents a central milestone for the structural development of Schleswig-Holstein in the field of artificial intelligence.

### **State funding of approximately 5 million euros**

The state government is providing almost five million euros in funding for the expansion of the laboratory over a three-year period starting in early 2024. In the presence of guests from politics, science and industry, Minister Dirk Schrödter ceremonially presented the funding decision today at the University of Lübeck's Multifunctional Center. In handing over the decision, he emphasized the importance of the funding for the region's innovative strength: *"I am very pleased to be able to seal the opening of the DFKI Lab Lübeck today by handing over the funding decision. This funding not only strengthens the research landscape in Schleswig-Holstein, but also positions our region internationally as a forward-looking science location. The close cooperation between the University of Lübeck, DFKI, the state and the regional economy creates a highly attractive environment for research, innovation and cooperation, which attracts highly qualified young people from all over the world."*

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gillesen-Kaesbach, acting president of the University of Lübeck, was also very pleased about the continuation and further development of DFKI in Lübeck: *"With the Lübeck research areas 'AI in Medical Image and Signal Processing' headed by Prof. Dr. Heinz Handels and 'AI for Assistive Health Technologies' headed by Prof. Dr. Marcin Grzegorzec, we are well positioned for the future as a scientific location. The expansion of the DFKI laboratory at the Lübeck site is a logical step and makes us as the University of Lübeck very proud. Over the next three years, we will continue to conduct important research here together and look forward to continuing our successful cooperation."*

### **Artificial intelligence for medicine and healthcare**

The research focus of the DFKI Laboratory Lübeck is on the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare. Ongoing digitalization in medicine and medical technology is leading to a rapid increase in complex, heterogeneous data sets in the life sciences, which hold great potential for intelligent healthcare systems and self-learning AI technologies. Such IT systems increasingly support physicians in diagnostic and therapeutic decisions. Lübeck's research focuses on medical image and signal processing, which enables

non-invasive insights into the body and sustainably improves everyday medical practice for the benefit of people.

In his speech, DFKI Managing Director Prof. Dr. Antonio Krüger emphasized the importance of the Lübeck research focus: *"Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing healthcare, and DFKI is an important driver of this development. With the DFKI laboratory in Lübeck and the support of the state of Schleswig-Holstein, we are advancing AI research in this highly relevant area of application for society. We look forward to expanding our activities in the region and working closely with local partners from research and industry. Together, we will shape the digital future of healthcare."*

### **Close cooperation with regional partners**

In addition to its close ties to the University of Lübeck, DFKI cooperates closely with other research institutions on the Hanse Innovation Campus Lübeck, such as the Fraunhofer Institute for Individualized and Cell-based Medical Engineering (IMTE) and the University Medical Center Schleswig-Holstein (UKSH). These partnerships enable joint research projects in areas such as robotic surgery and prevention. The laboratory also works with medical device companies in the region on practical AI applications, and collaborates with the energy and food industries on green technologies.

### **Foundation and reorientation of the DFKI in Lübeck**

The DFKI in Lübeck was founded in 2021 as a branch with three research areas. After personnel changes and a structural reorientation, the laboratory now conducts research in the departments "AI in Medical Image and Signal Processing" under the direction of Prof. Dr. Heinz Handels and "AI for Assistive Health Technologies" under the direction of Prof. Dr. Marcin Grzegorzek. The work includes AI-supported image processing, the analysis of biosignals, for example for the development of intelligent hearing aids and gesture recognition for the control of prostheses, as well as the development of AI processes for the automated analysis of heterogeneous personal data.

Today's official lab opening was rounded out by live demonstrations from the research departments, giving guests a fascinating look at the practical applications of the research. The projects presented illustrated the great potential of artificial intelligence in the healthcare industry and beyond.

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