

The Leibniz Association has once again awarded the IPK an excellent rating

Gatersleben, 08.07.2026 **The Leibniz Association has once again recognised the IPK Leibniz Institute for its excellent work, and has therefore recommended to the federal and state governments that they continue their joint funding of the IPK. The Senate's decision was based on the report by the Evaluation Commission, which had spent two days visiting the IPK in November 2025. The evaluation takes place every seven years.**

In its statement, published on Tuesday, the Senate of the Leibniz Association reaffirmed the IPK's leading international role in cereal genomics and plant breeding research. Beyond cereal varieties, the institute has in recent years systematically expanded its focus to include other crops, and built on its expertise in bioinformatics and modelling. Unique research infrastructures underpin its scientific work. In particular, the Senate commends the further development of the Federal *Ex situ* Genebank, one of the world's largest collections of plant genetic resources. Its portfolio is continually being supplemented with valuable biodigital information, in addition to the physical collections. The Senate also highlights the PhenoSphere in a positive light, noting that its operation must now be secured financially on a long-term basis.

The IPK is a driving force in key research consortia, but also works closely with industry partners, ensuring that scientific findings are successfully transferred into plant breeding practice. Furthermore, the institute carries out important educational work regarding the use of genetic engineering and genome editing in crop plants.

According to the Evaluation Commission, chaired by Prof. Dr. Stephan Clemens of the University of Bayreuth, the IPK regularly achieves outstanding research results, which are published in renowned specialist journals and received very positively by the scientific community. Among the best-known results are the assembly of several cereal pangenomes, as well as new insights into the functioning and manipulation of regulatory mechanisms in plants. "Through its work, the IPK remains a world-leading institute in cereal genomics and breeding research," the assessment stated.

The Leibniz Association rated the work of two departments as "excellent", one department as "very good to excellent", and another as "very good".

"We would like to express our sincere thanks to the evaluation committee for their recognition of our research findings and their valuable feedback, and we are delighted that the IPK's work has once again been rated as excellent," said Prof. Dr. Nicolaus von Wirén, IPK's Managing Director. "This fantastic result gives us a great deal of momentum for the tasks ahead." The task now, he added, is to continue finding solutions to major global challenges, such as climate change, the loss of biodiversity and global food security.

"The evaluation shows that we are ideally positioned to tackle these issues, and we therefore continue to hope for financial support for our work from the federal and state governments, particularly regarding the application for the planned extraordinary item of

Press Release

Scientific Contact

Prof. Dr. Nicolaus von Wirén
Phone: +49 39482 5602
vonwiren@ipk-gatersleben.de

Media Contact

Christian Schafmeister
Phone: +49 39482 5461
schafmeister@ipk-gatersleben.de

expenditure,” said Prof. Dr. Nicolaus von Wirén. The Evaluation Commission had recommended this project for funding without reservation. The aim of the planned extraordinary item of expenditure, the outline of which has been presented to the assessors, is to investigate the history of how our crops have adapted to changing environmental and growing conditions, in order to use this knowledge to lay the foundations for the development of new varieties.

Saxony-Anhalt’s Minister for Science, Prof. Dr. Armin Willingmann, also emphasised the great importance of the IPK. “The IPK in Gatersleben is one of Saxony-Anhalt’s flagship research institutions, whose influence extends far beyond the state’s borders. This has now been impressively underlined once again by the successful evaluation,” said the Minister. “Considering the undeniable consequences of advancing climate change and the associated issues of food security, the IPK is carrying out excellent research, which the state should continue to support consistently in the years to come,” said Prof. Dr. Armin Willingmann. “This requires, not least, a stable political environment, even beyond 6 September. And the political insight to recognise what is necessary.”

Further information:

Click [here](#) for the Leibniz Association’s press release.

Click [here](#) for the Senate’s statement on the IPK.