

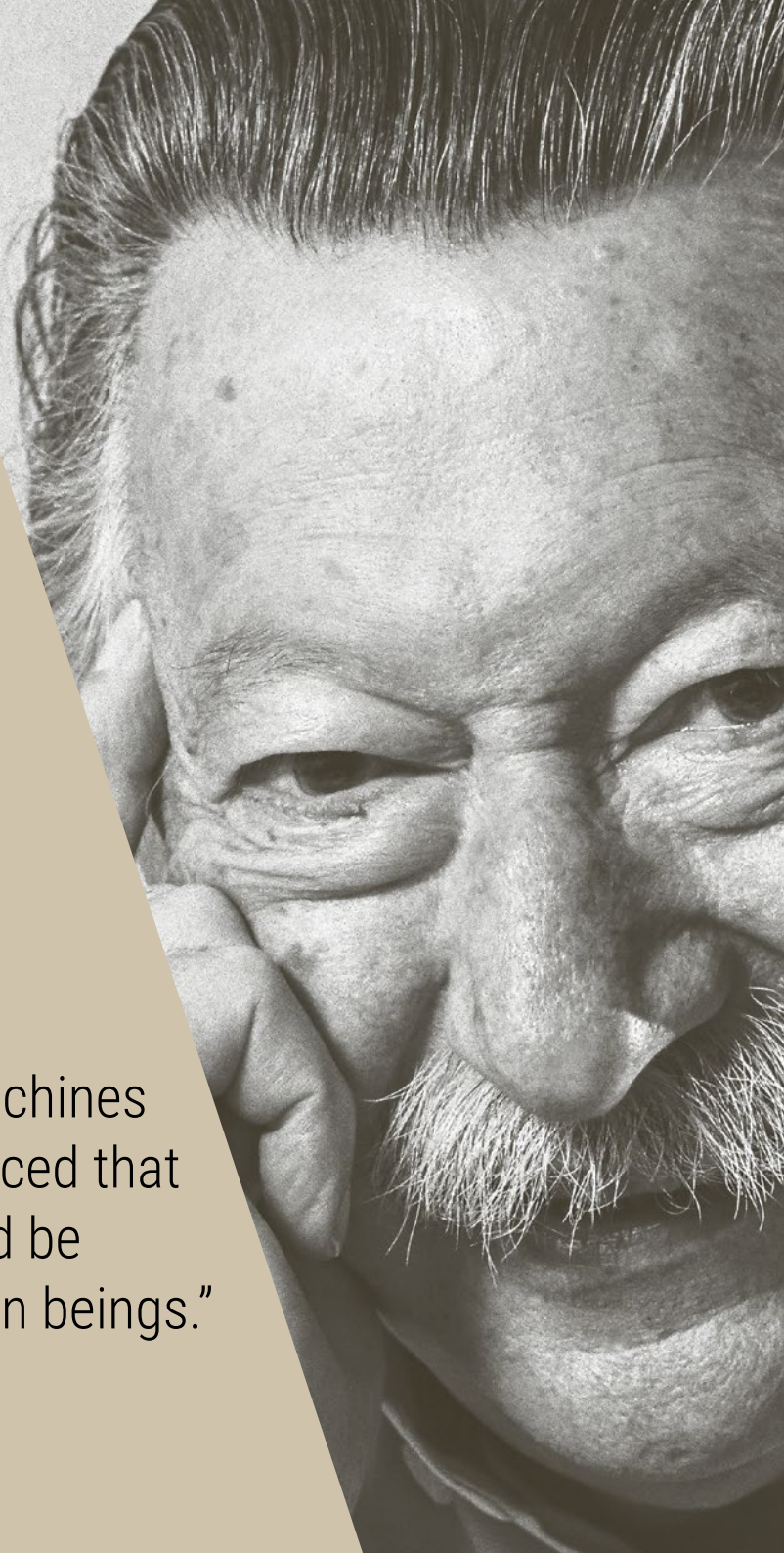


THE WEIZENBAUM INSTITUTE

Research for the
Networked Society

“No matter how intelligent machines may become, I am still convinced that certain acts of thinking should be reserved exclusively for human beings.”

Joseph Weizenbaum





Who We Are and What We Do

The Weizenbaum Institute stands for excellent, independent, interdisciplinary, and fundamental research on digitalization.

We provide policymakers, businesses, and civil society with well-founded insights and value-based recommendations. In doing so, we help ensure that the digitalization of society is not only better understood, but also shaped in a sustainable, self-determined, and responsible manner.

In addition, we study digitalization research itself. We promote open science and the digital transformation of research. Through targeted networking and infrastructure services as well as a wide range of innovative initiatives, the Weizenbaum Institute also contributes to the development of interdisciplinary digitalization research in Germany.

The institute is named after Joseph Weizenbaum, the German-American computer science pioneer and critic of the digital society.



People at the Weizenbaum Institute

180
employees

including
120
researchers



95
female

2
diverse

76
male

357 research fellows
from **47** countries
(since 2018)

93 associated
researchers from
6 countries

41% female researchers
in leadership roles

10%
of employees
with an international
background

As of December 31, 2025



What We Do

1,947
scientific
publications



665
peer-reviewed
publications



67%
of all publications
are open access



100%
of in-house
publications are
open access

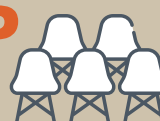
601
knowledge-transfer
publications



More than
100
courses per year



2,895
lectures /
conference participations



42 supervised
doctoral theses

13 appointments to
professorships

€ 15.5 million
in approved
third-party
funding



Since founding through December 31, 2025

Research in a Strong Consortium

The Weizenbaum Institute was founded in 2017. It is jointly supported by seven partner institutions from Berlin and Brandenburg. These include Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Universität der Künste Berlin, Universität Potsdam, as

well as the non-university research institutions Fraunhofer-Institut für Offene Kommunikationssysteme (FOKUS) and Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB).



How We Are Organized

The Weizenbaum Institute is led by the Managing Board and the Board of Directors. The Managing Board is responsible for the institute’s strategic and operational management, while the Board of Directors oversees research and the development of the institute as a whole. The Board of Trustees includes representatives of the partner institutions and funding bodies. It oversees and supports the institute’s leadership and ap-

proves decisions of fundamental importance to the institute. The Advisory Board brings together external experts who advise the institute on its research activities and on issues relating to knowledge transfer and societal engagement. All stakeholder groups within the institute are represented on the Institute Council. It serves as a central forum for information and exchange on ongoing developments.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN SOCIETY	DIGITAL MARKETS AND PUBLIC SPHERES ON PLATFORMS	ORGANIZING KNOWLEDGE
Between Opportunities for Participation and New Inequalities	Between the Common Good and Economic Imperatives	Between Openness and Exclusivity
Well-being in the Digital World	Digital News Dynamics	Working with Artificial Intelligence
Digitalization, Sustainability, and Participation	Digital Economy, Internet Ecosystem, and Internet Policy	Reorganization of Knowledge Practices
Design, Diversity, and New Commons (UdK)	Platform Algorithms and Digital Propaganda	Digitalization and Opening up Science
Data, Algorithmic Systems, and Ethics (TU)	Local Digital Public Spheres	Education for the Digital World (UP)
	Dynamics of Digital Mobilization (FU)	



DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES IN DEMOCRACY

Between Security and Freedom

Norm Setting and Decision Processes

Digitalization and Networked Security

Security and Transparency of Digital Processes (HU)

Technology, Power, and Domination (WZB)

WEIZENBAUM DIGITAL SCIENCE CENTER

Meta Research

Research Syntheses

Weizenbaum Panel

Methods Lab

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Research is organized into four interdisciplinary focus areas whose topics and research questions are developed in relation to specific societal tensions. The research groups are supported by the Weizenbaum Digital Science Center, which provides orientation and infrastructure services for interdisciplinary digitalization research and strengthens coherence across the institute's research activities.

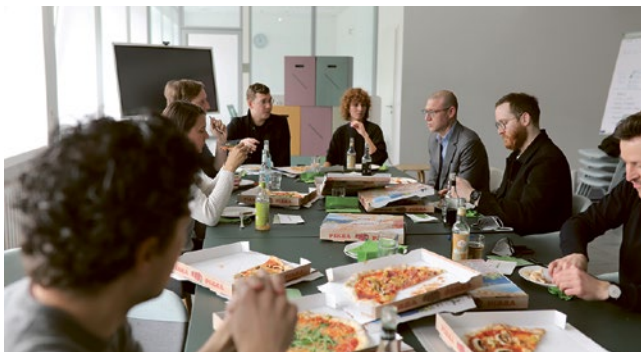
Knowledge Transfer and Dialogue

Knowledge transfer, regular exchange with stakeholders, and mutual learning are at the heart of the Weizenbaum Institute's mission. Based on our own research findings, we contribute evidence-based perspectives to societal debates and develop practical recommendations for action. The research groups work closely with

practitioners across the digital sphere. Here too, the Weizenbaum Institute is guided by its core values of self-determination and sustainability. Through a wide range of events and publications, the institute reaches target groups in politics, business, and civil society, as well as the broader public.

PIZZA AND ...

The lunchtime event series Pizza and ... brings together staff members from the German Bundestag, ministries, and political foundations with researchers from the Weizenbaum Institute. In an informal setting over a shared pizza, participants engage in in-depth discussions on current issues shaping the digital world.



WEIZENBAUM DEBATE

One topic, two positions, three speakers: the annual Weizenbaum Debate creates a space for lively yet respectful discussions on the major challenges of the digital society. Alongside invited experts, everyone interested in digital policy is invited to take part.

WEIZENBAUM FORUM

Through the Weizenbaum Forum event series, we open the institute to perspectives and concerns from politics, business, and civil society and invite a broad audience to engage in dialogue on research questions relating to the networked society.



MENSCHEN UND MUSTER (PEOPLE AND PATTERNS)

In the YouTube universe, social sciences remain a neglected field. In this weekly videocast, Sascha Friesike (Managing Board member, Director, and Principal Investigator at our Institute) takes an unconventional look at (digital) everyday phenomena and explains them using scientific concepts.



POLICY PAPERS

The Weizenbaum Institute's policy papers provide evidence-based analyses, policy briefs, and recommendations on current issues and political decision-making processes at the state, federal, and EU levels. To date, more than 120 reports, expert opinions, and statements have been published, including on the following topics:

- \ Statement on the Research Data Act (2024)
- \ Digital Policy Recommendations for the Federal Elections (2025)
- \ Statement on the Implementation of the EU AI Act (2025)
- \ Digital Services Act (2025, 2024, 2023)
- \ A Data Institute for Germany (2022)
- \ Digital Euro (2022)

Infrastructure and Services

Researching the future together: the Weizenbaum Institute promotes interdisciplinary digitalization research through a wide range of networking opportunities, methodological development, and research infrastructure services.

WEIZENBAUM JOURNAL OF THE DIGITAL SOCIETY

The Weizenbaum Journal of the Digital Society (WJDS) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal. It examines the conditions, forms, and consequences of society's digital transformation from interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives.

WEIZENBAUM LIBRARY

The Weizenbaum Library is the Weizenbaum Institute's open-access repository. It provides permanent worldwide access to the institute's openly available research outputs.





METHODS LAB

The Methods Lab at the Weizenbaum Institute serves as the central point of contact for methods training and methodological expertise. It strengthens the institute's methodological profile, supports research groups through training and consulting, conducts its own methodological research, and develops digital tools for data collection and analysis.

Its interdisciplinary work is carried out in cooperation with partners such as the Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) and the Bavarian Research Institute for Digital Transformation (bidt). The Methods Lab's activities range from methods training and methodological consulting to methodological research and the development of tools for academia and society.

WEIZENBAUM PANEL

The Weizenbaum Panel is a longitudinal study examining how people perceive digitalization, how their democratic and civic attitudes evolve, and how they shape their role in an increasingly digitalized democracy.

The survey of the same name continuously collects, analyzes, and provides high-quality data for academia, the media, and society. Its goal is to make long-term developments in the relationship between digitalization, democracy, and political participation visible and to provide well-founded insights for research and public debate.

Formats and Projects

The Weizenbaum Institute has established itself as a nationally and internationally recognised hub for exchange and networking. Through a wide range of formats and projects, we foster constructive dialogue between academia and practice.

WEIZENBAUM CONFERENCE

At the international Weizenbaum Conference, renowned experts from various disciplines meet once a year to discuss current research on cross-cutting issues. The goal is to develop a holistic perspective on the digital society and explore ways to shape it more effectively.

WEIZENBAUM REPORT

Published annually, the Weizenbaum Report presents selected findings from the Weizenbaum Panel, a longitudinal study conducted since 2019 on the political participation of citizens in Germany, both online and offline.

RESEARCH SYNTHESSES

Our research syntheses provide clear and accessible overviews of the current state of research on key questions of digitalization for audiences in academia and society. Wherever possible, they also derive recommendations for digital practice.





QUALIFICATION PROGRAM FOR DIGITALIZATION RESEARCH

Together with the Bavarian Research Institute for Digital Transformation (bidt) and the Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS), the Weizenbaum Institute offers an interdisciplinary professional development program for doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers, providing foundational competencies in digitalization research.

MAP OF DIGITALIZATION RESEARCH

The Weizenbaum Institute not only researches digitalization, but also digitalization research itself. This carefully curated interactive map provides an overview of interdisciplinary digitalization research across Germany.



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