



Leopoldina  
Nationale Akademie  
der Wissenschaften

# Leopoldina

A tour of the German National  
Academy of Sciences Leopoldina





Dear Readers,



The Leopoldina was declared German National Academy of Sciences in July 2008. Since then, it has expanded its activities and has progressively been restructured.

In January 2012 the Office of the President, the Secretariat General and the three departments Policy Advice, International Relations and Press and Public Relations as well as the Administration have moved into the new headquarters on the Jägerberg in Halle. An office in the government district in Berlin ensures immediate contact to policy makers.

In this brochure, we would like to provide you with an overview on the Leopoldina. The brochure describes our work and also gives you the names of the relevant contact persons.

Please do not hesitate to contact us! We welcome your enquiries and feedback.

Halle upon Saale, October 2012

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jörg Hacker".

Jörg Hacker

XXVI President of the Leopoldina



*The conference room*



*The auditorium*



*The main stairs*



*The banquet room*

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*Federal Minister Annette Schavan, Leopoldina President Volker ter Meulen, Federal President Horst Köhler and Minister-President of the State of Saxony-Anhalt Wolfgang Böhmer (from left to right) on the occasion of the declaration of the Leopoldina as the German National Academy of Sciences in July 2008.*

## Leopoldina – Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften

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The Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina was appointed the German National Academy of Sciences on 14 July 2008. The legal basis for this act was the resolution by the Joint Science Conference of the federation and states of 18 February 2008. Since then, the Federal President of Germany has been the patron of the Leopoldina. The academy is independent and dedicated to the common good.

In founding a national academy, the idea was to create a legitimised institution that would work scientifically on important social topics of relevance to the future, independently of economic or political interests; communicate its results in the political sphere and to the public; and represent these topics both nationally and internationally.

The Leopoldina was founded in 1652 in Schweinfurt and is thus the oldest continuously existing academy of natural sciences and medicine in the world. As an academy, it selects outstanding scientists to become members. Since its foundation, it has appointed over 7000 individuals, including Marie Curie, Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt, Justus von Liebig and Max Planck, among others.

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# Members, Sections, and Classes

With currently over 1,400 members in more than 30 countries, the Leopoldina has the largest number of members among German academies. The members are organised in specialised sections, which in turn are grouped into four classes.

These classes, which were newly introduced in 2009, integrate the members more strongly than before in the drafting of statements and recom-

mendations and also strengthen interdisciplinary exchange. The classes focus on natural sciences, life sciences, medicine, as well as behavioural and social sciences and the humanities. They also form the platform for international exchange and the selection of new members.

The yearly assemblies provide a forum for the members.

## Leopoldina's Classes and Sections:

### Class I: Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Engineering

- Mathematics
- Informatics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Earth Sciences
- Engineering Sciences

### Class II: Life Sciences

- Agricultural and Nutritional Sciences
- Physiological and Evolutionary Biology
- Genetics/Molecular Biology and Cell Biology
- Biochemistry and Biophysics
- Microbiology and Immunology
- Human Genetics and Molecular Medicine
- Physiology and Pharmacology/Toxicology

### Class III: Medical Sciences

- Anatomy and Anthropology
- Pathology and Forensic Medicine
- Internal Medicine and Dermatology
- Surgery, Orthopaedics, Anaesthesiology
- Gynaecology and Paediatrics
- Neurosciences
- Ophthalmology, Oto-Rhino-Laryngology and Stomatology
- Radiology
- Veterinary Medicine

### Class IV: Humanities, Social and Behavioural Sciences

- History of Science and Medicine
- Epistemology
- Economics and Empirical Social Sciences
- Psychology and Cognitive Sciences
- Cultural Sciences

# Organisation

The Leopoldina is a supranational association of scientists. More than a quarter of its members come from outside Germany. New members are proposed by the academy members and elected to the academy by the presidium in a multi-stage selection process. Each member belongs to a section in accordance with their scientific discipline. Each section elects a representative to the senate from its members. The senate, to which individuals from scientific organisations and the public also belong, elects the members of the presidium, checks the accountability reports and decides on the academy's scientific strategy.

The academy is organised as a non-profit registered association and is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (80%) and the state where it is located, Saxony-Anhalt (20%). The president and four vice presidents form the executive board in the legal sense. The presidium is made up of the executive board and additional members and is responsible for the Leopoldina's activities. A full-time secretary general is in charge of the office and is supported by the administration department in this role.



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*Leopoldina members and the city of Schweinfurt donated this president's chain of office to the academy in 1955.*



*Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel  
at the Annual Assembly  
2011.*

## Advice for Policy Makers and Society

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and commenting appropriately on them.

The Leopoldina conducts its policy advice activities jointly with the Union of Academies of Sciences, including the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, as well as acatech – the German Academy of Science and Engineering. The work is steered by a coordinating committee, which is led by the Leopoldina. Working groups or ad hoc commissions can also be formed alone or in cooperation with other academies, scientific institutions or international partners, in order to produce recommendations and statements. As a result, statements, recommendations or reports are produced on interdisciplinary or field-specific topics and long-term developments, but also on current, day-to-day political issues.

The Leopoldina conducts a peer review of the results and then submits them as a basis for discussion and political measures to decision makers and interested parties in the political sphere and society.

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# International Relations

In the age of globalisation, topics such as energy, climate change or health require supranational political measures. By cooperating with the academies of other countries, the Leopoldina promotes the international exchange of views on these topics. This takes place in various forms, such as joint symposia or statements issued in the context of the scientific guidance of the G8 summit meetings of the heads of state and government.

To this end, the Leopoldina is active in international umbrella organisations, in which other national academies, such as the Royal Society in London, the Académie des Sciences in Paris, the Chinese Academy of Sciences or the National Academies of the USA are also represented. For example, these include the:

- InterAcademy Council (IAC)
- InterAcademy Panel (IAP)
- InterAcademy Medical Panel (IAMP)

Since April 2010, the Secretariat of the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC), to which the national academies of the EU member states belong, is located at the Leopoldina. International statements and recommendations of European significance are produced by EASAC and sent to the EU Commission or the EU Parliament.

*Joint nanotechnology symposium of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Leopoldina in Münster in July 2009.*

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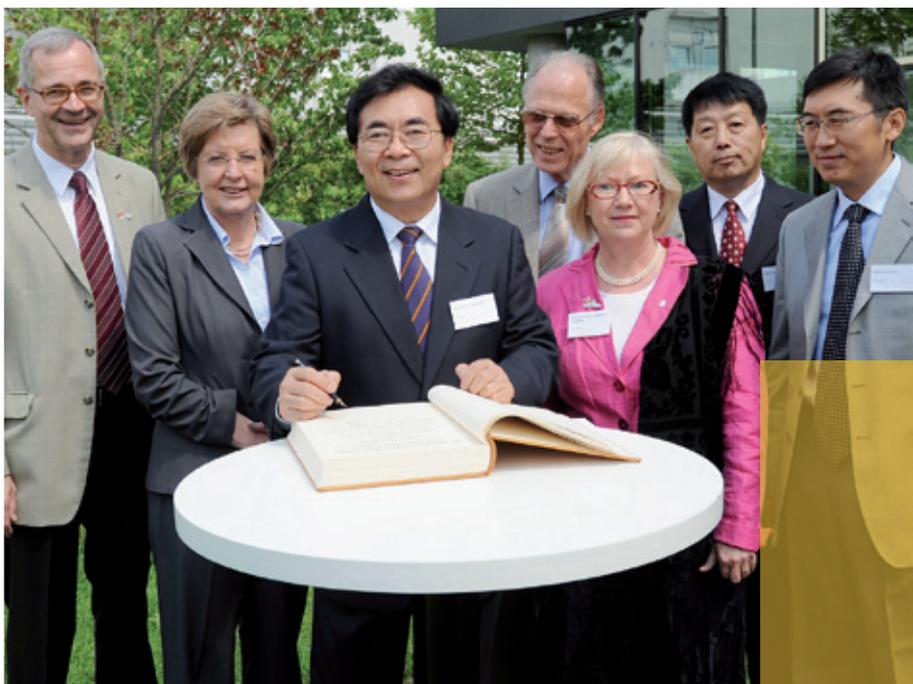
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▲ Leopoldina member Stefan Müller from Bonn speaking on the mathematical fascination of magnetic patterns at the 2009 biennial assembly.

◀ Leopoldina member Jörg Hacker during his keynote lecture on migration and epidemics at the Leopoldina biennial assembly in 2007.

## Public Events

Policy advice also always includes advising society. The public should have the opportunity to inform itself more easily and better about current scientific and science policy topics, in order to be able to participate in the political discussions. Therefore, issues that are important to society, such as demographic change, tackling contagious diseases or securing the energy supply, are presented comprehensibly in the form of information material or lectures.

In order to promote the interdisciplinary discussion between scientists and to disseminate their scientific findings, the Leopoldina co-organises symposia and meetings with universities, research

institutes and other academies. The symposia are interdisciplinary and convey current knowledge beyond the borders of the discipline, while the meetings discuss field-specific problems more extensively.

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▲ The “Nova Acta Leopoldina” reflects the spectrum of subjects represented in the Leopoldina.



▲ The final volume of the Goethe Edition was published in July 2011 and completed the edition.

## Scientific Publications

The Leopoldina makes its scientific discussions available to the public. Its journal, Nova Acta Leopoldina, reflects the academy’s spectrum of lectures, meetings and symposia. This journal represents the continuation of the first medical and natural scientific journal in the world and dates back to the year 1670. The journal Acta Historica Leopoldina is dedicated to the history of science, particularly that of the academy. The academy’s almanac has been published since 1990 and documents the activities of the Leopoldina during the respective calendar year.

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## Goethe Edition

The annotated historical-critical edition *Goethe – Works on the Natural Sciences* presents Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s work on the natural sciences in chronological order. In addition to all of Goethe’s writings on scientific subjects, the edition includes complementary material and testimonials and encompasses eleven volumes of text and 18 volumes of commentary that give a comprehensive picture of the numerous links between Goethe’s scientific and literary work and the intellectual and scientific trends of his era.

**For more information visit:**

[www.leopoldina.org/de/goethe](http://www.leopoldina.org/de/goethe)



*A view of the stacks of the library.*

## The Library

The Leopoldina library was founded in Nuremberg in 1731. With over 260,000 books, monographs and journals on natural sciences and medicine, it is a rich resource of traditional and modern knowledge. The focus of the collection is on publications about the history of science, particularly of natural sciences and medicine, as well as on publications by scientific societies and associations.

The comprehensive collection of works on natural sciences and medicine on six floors of stacks has accumulated mainly through the exchange of academy publications with partners all over the world and gifts from academy members.

The literature can be viewed or borrowed in the reading room of the Leopoldina in August-Bebel-Strasse 50a in Halle. External users may request materials by interlibrary loan. The electronic catalogue is available at <http://opac.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/DB=4/LNH=ENG/>.

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MATRICVLÆ  
Dominorum Collegarum  
Academia  
Casareo. Leopoldina  
Naturæ Curiosorum.

TOMVS PRIMVS.

*Document from the early days: the Leopoldina's first matriculation book from the year 1652.*

## The Archive

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As one of the oldest academy archives in the world, the Leopoldina's archive stores around 1,700 metres of documents dating from over 350 years.

The core collection of the Leopoldina archive includes matriculation records and minute books, curricula vitae, publication lists and portraits of the members, as well as series of correspondence and comprehensive administrative records of the academy. In addition, the archive stores some 50 bequests from important scientists, over 10,000 photographs featuring the history of the academy and science, and various works of art, such as paintings, drawings and medals.

With its collection on the history of the Leopoldina and its biographical materials, the archive offers science historians excellent research opportunities. An overview of the collection can be viewed at <http://midosa.leopoldina-halle.de/index.htm>.

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# The Fellowship Programme

Since 1997, the Leopoldina has supported outstanding young post-doctoral students by providing post-doctoral scholarships in its fellowship programme. These scholarships are available to German scientists who would like to work abroad (and to scientists from Austria and Switzerland who wish to conduct research in Germany). The programme makes it possible for them to carry out independent research for up to three years at a renowned scientific institution abroad (or in Germany).

The awarding of the fellowships and their financial endowment are based on the guidelines of the German Research Foundation. An awarding committee decides on the basis of peer-reviewed project proposals. To date, over 340 people have been supported in the programme, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Since 2009, the state of Saxony-Anhalt has contributed to the funding.

After they have returned from abroad, the academy offers its fellows further support, with the aim of facilitating their integration into the German science environment. This follow-up funding is limited to five years and helps its beneficiaries to present scientific results, maintain and develop contacts, and establish new cooperation projects. All of the fellows are offered a mentoring programme in which the members of the National Academy of Sciences provide expert guidance.

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*Leopoldina post-doc fellow Stephan Schulz with his colleague Jeanette Baker conducting research at Stanford University in California.*



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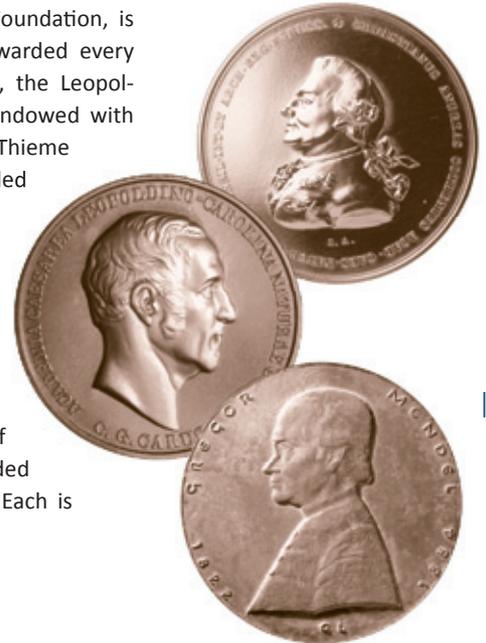
# Honours, Medals, and Prizes

The Leopoldina honours outstanding scientific achievements by awarding medals and prizes.

Apart from honorary membership, which is limited to a few individuals, the Cothenius Medal in gold, endowed by Christian Andreas Cothenius (1708-1789), personal physician to the royal Prussian court, is the Leopoldina's most important award. This medal is awarded for the outstanding lifetime achievements of a member of the Leopoldina. The Carus Medal is based on an endowment in honour of the XIII President of the Leopoldina, Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869). Since 1961, it has been complemented by the Carus Award, which is endowed by the founding city of the Leopoldina, Schweinfurt. Both are awarded for outstanding achievements in natural scientific or medical research. Since 1965, the Leopoldina has awarded the Mendel Medal – named after the founder of genetics, Gregor Mendel (1822-1884) – for special achievements in research in the field of molecular biology and genetics. The Schleiden Medal has been awarded for significant achievements in the area of cell research since 1955. Leopoldina members are honoured for major contributions to the benefit of the academy by the presidium's Medal of Merit.

Since 2009, the Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker Prize, endowed with € 50,000, is jointly awarded with the Stifterverband every two years. This prize honours scientists or research teams for outstanding scientific contributions and social commitment. The Leopoldina Early Career Award,

sponsored by the Commerzbank Foundation, is endowed with € 30,000 and is awarded every two years since 2010. Since 2007, the Leopoldina Thieme Prize for Medicine, endowed with € 15,000 and sponsored by the Thieme Publishing Group, has been awarded to young scientists who have produced significant new findings in the aetiology, pathogenesis, therapy and prevention of human diseases. There are two further awards, the Leopoldina Prize for Young Scientists and the Georg Uschmann Prize for the History of Science, which have been awarded since 1993 and 1997 respectively. Each is endowed with € 2,000.



*The Cothenius, Carus and Mendel Medals.*

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The chatter with which Kaiser Leopold I awarded the academy special privileges in 1687 is made of bound parchment with red satin binding and an imperial seal.



## A National Academy with a Long Tradition

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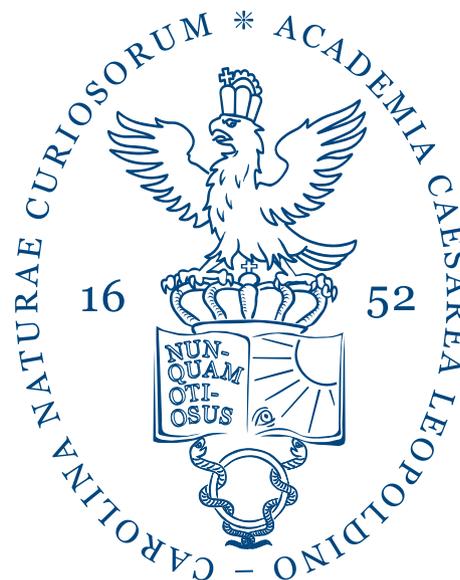
The Leopoldina, which was called *Academia Naturae Curiosorum* at the time, was founded by four physicians in 1652 in the Free Imperial City of Schweinfurt. Their aim was to deepen knowledge of the natural sciences and to improve communication between the natural scientists of that era.

In 1677, the independent academy was officially recognised by Kaiser Leopold I and was awarded special privileges in 1687. Since then, it has had the title of *Sacri Romani Imperii Academia Caesareo-Leopoldina Naturae Curoorum*, from which its current abbreviated name, Leopoldina, derives. Since 1878, the academy has been based in Halle upon Saale.

The period of the Third Reich left its marks on the academy too. Both members and directors of the academy succumbed to the Nazi regime. Academy members who were murdered in the concentration camps are commemorated by a stele on the academy premises at the Jägerberg in Halle. During the years of the GDR, the Leopoldina largely preserved its independence as a result of the courage and prudence of the members of its presidium. It selected its members without the exertion of state influence, particularly from what was then the Federal Republic of Germany and from other countries in the West. Following German reunification, it received the status of a registered association.

# The Presidium

The academy is run by a presidium. Members of the presidium are elected by the senate. Their term of office is five years and they can be re-elected once for a further term. The presidium usually meets once a month and prepares all of the academy's important decisions.



## Presidium

<b>President</b>	Jörg Hacker, Halle and Berlin	<b>Secretary General</b> (with a consultative vote)	Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug, Halle
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Gunnar Berg, Halle Bärbel Friedrich, Berlin Martin J. Lohse, Würzburg Ursula M. Staudinger, Bremen	<b>Former Council Members</b> (with a consultative vote)	Gunter S. Fischer, Halle Harald zur Hausen, Heidelberg Volker ter Meulen, Würzburg (XXV President) Benno Parthier, Halle (XXIV President)
<b>Class Secretaries</b>	Sigmar Wittig, Karlsruhe Philipp U. Heitz, Zürich Peter Propping, Bonn Frank Rösler, Potsdam	<b>Special Representative for Archives, Library and Long-term Projects</b> (with a consultative vote)	Heinz Schott, Bonn
<b>Members</b>	Helmut Schwarz, Berlin Georg Stingl, Wien Hans-Peter Zenner, Tübingen		

## The Young Academy

The Young Academy was co-founded by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the Leopoldina in June 2000. Its membership is restricted to 50 people. Outstanding junior scientists who have completed a doctorate are elected as members for five years.

The Young Academy's primary tasks are to further the notably interdisciplinary-focused scientific discourse among outstanding young scientists and to promote initiatives at the points of intersection between science and society.

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## Friends of the Leopoldina

On the initiative of the Leopoldina Presidium, Friends of the Leopoldina was founded in August 2007 with the objective of promoting the academy's science and research intellectually and materially. Its patron is Dr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, former Foreign Secretary of the Federal Republic of Germany and an honorary Senator of the Leopoldina. All interested parties are welcome to join the Friends of the Leopoldina.

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