



**NFDI4Objects**  
Research Data Infrastructure  
for the Material Remains of  
Human History

**Community Cluster**

## Objects as Information Carriers

**Chairs:** Ulrike Ehmig (BBAW-CIL), Bernhard Weisser (SPK-MK)

**SC Decision:** 16.02.2024

**Bodies Involved:** TA2 (SPK, LEIZA), TA4 (UBA), TA6 (KSW, MUAS); DAI Zentrale, DAI-AEK, SPK-IfM, BBAW (04), AdWH (18), UBA (36), UzK-DCH (52), UL-ÄM (54)

**External Linking:** NFDI4Memory, NFDI4Culture, Text+, Die Deutschen Inschriften des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit (Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften), Projekt: *disiecta membra* (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur Mainz), Exzellenzcluster 2176 Understanding Written Artefacts (Universität Hamburg), Ex-SFB 933 Materiale Textkulturen (Universität Heidelberg), Projekt: (Ir)reproducibility of Scientific Research in the Digital Humanities? (Universität Leipzig, Alte Geschichte, Universität Trier, Alte Geschichte), ubi erat lupa (lupa.at)

### Subject & Objective

The cluster aims to establish an open community representing both collecting and editing institutions as well as researchers from disciplines that deal with written artefacts as a material tradition from different areas and periods. The cluster focuses on objects as carriers of (semantic) information that can be expressed in texts, individual letters or signs. The overarching goal is to capture the interrelations between the materiality of an object, the respective object history and the semantic information conveyed by texts/letters/signs from the perspective of research data management. Needs, goals and feasibility are therefore to be defined in processes driven by the members of the cluster. These may include topics such as:

- qualification of research data through generally accepted and semantically coordinated authority files, vocabularies and ontologies developed by the community at the interface between textual, object-descriptive, visual and (geo-)spatial information.
- improving the interoperability of existing data collections and data discovery services.
- transfer of high-quality research standards from reference works (e.g. CIL, CSIR, IG, LIMC, RPC) to the semantic web.
- criteria for the development and systematic improvement of data collections / databases that record aspects of the materiality of written artefacts in a structured manner.



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### Out of Scope

The cluster is not an initiative for a new comprehensive transdisciplinary epigraphic database or for domain-specific databases on semantic textual information. No (new) ontologies will be created and no software solutions will be developed.

### Intended Work Results

As soon as the work tasks have been defined on the basis of input from the community, they will be processed in suitable Temporary Working Groups (TWGs).

- The aim of the first TWG is to compile a transdisciplinary catalogue of existing digital repositories and databases on written artefacts. Their evaluation is to take place against the background of the requirements for research decidedly focused on the materiality of the objects. To this end, a checklist will first be drawn up. The various applications are then analysed comparatively. During the analysis, the checklist can be repeatedly adapted to the findings obtained.

Further TWGs on the following topics are currently being discussed:

- TWG to determine the specific requirements of research data management in the field of ancient (Latin and Greek) epigraphy: Evaluation and definition of the need for standardisation, interfaces and the possibilities of integrating and linking object data.
- TWG to improve and implement specific standards, required metadata fields and specifications for collection management systems, especially in the area of semantic and object-related information.
- A TWG defines criteria for data exchange and the interoperability of databases with written objects, making their material character easier to research.
- TWG "Exemplary object history": The link between materiality and text in their temporal and functional framework is to be emphasised on the basis of reused and repurposed artefacts and the resulting requirements for the RDM are to be defined.



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## Abbreviations Used

The abbreviations used in the above proposal are used in NFDI and the relevant disciplines. They are resolved here:

AdWH = Akademie der Wissenschaften Heidelberg

BBAW = Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin

CC = Community Cluster

CIL = Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, BBAW Berlin

CSIR = Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani. Online: <https://www.corpusignororum.org/CSIR/Home>

DAI = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

DAI Zentrale = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Zentrale Wissenschaftliche Dienste, Berlin

DAI-AEK = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik, München

IfM = Institut für Museumsforschung, SPK Berlin

IG = Inscriptiones Graecae, BBAW Berlin

RDM = Research Data Management

KSW = Klassik Stiftung Weimar

LEIZA = Leibniz-Zentrum für Archäologie, Mainz

LIMC = Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae

MK = Münzkabinett

MUAS = Mainz University of Applied Sciences

UBA = Universität Bamberg, Lehrstuhl Architektur

UL-ÄM = Universität Leipzig Ägyptisches Museum

UzK-DCH = Universität zu Köln Digital Cultural Heritage

RPC = Roman Provincial Coinage. Online: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/>.

SPK = Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz

TWG = Temporary Working Group