



## Mission statement for the Knowledge Lab for Natural Science Collections and Object-Related Data (WiNoDa)

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### Preliminary note

Research projects seldom incorporate mission statements. One possible explanation could be the assumption that many aspects of project implementation, especially normative and ethical considerations, are already well understood, internalized, or expected to be addressed by other guidelines, such as those provided by the involved institutions or standards of good scientific practice.

However, for the project WiNoDa, there are three reasons why formulating dedicated guiding principles seems helpful:

- **Diversity of Institutions:** The collaboration involves multiple institutions, making it challenging to rely on institution-specific principles.
- **Supporting Role:** WiNoDa is not a dedicated research project but a knowledge lab. It aims to support long-term research by fostering literacy in data science and developing the necessary infrastructure and training concepts within the network.
- **Community Orientation:** The WiNoDa knowledge lab is designed to cater to the needs of an inter- and transdisciplinary target community. It seeks to communicate and present itself to the public in a manner that resonates with its audience.

The principles operate in two directions: internally, they provide coordination and guidance, while both internally and externally, they communicate the project's identity and help manage expectations.

Firstly, they serve as a tool for self-understanding and self-description.

Secondly, the mission statement positions the project within a broader context.

Thirdly, it serves as a continuous source of motivation by clearly articulating the overarching goals and context to everyone involved.

## Mission Statement

### Aims

**Promoting Research:** The WiNoDa project (Knowledge Laboratory for Scientific Collections and Object-Related Data) seeks to enhance research on scientific collections and their objects by imparting data science skills.

**Networking Expertise:** WiNoDa brings together the expertise of the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin and the German Archaeological Institute, integrating it with contemporary data science approaches.

**Opening Up Science:** Through national and international collaborations, as well as public engagement and open science formats, WiNoDa aims to increase the transparency of object-related research and enhance societal involvement in data-driven science.

### Community

WiNoDa is intended to be a hierarchy-free and participation-oriented learning and research space as well as a science-led community.

Membership in the community is determined by the subject-specific focus: scientific collections and object-related data from the history of the earth and humanity. In the knowledge laboratory, formal scientific hierarchies are put aside.

We promote communication on an eye level and consensual decision-making.

### Roles and responsibilities

- *Researchers:* Contribute their research questions to an interdisciplinary exchange.
- *Learners:* Take advantage of training and further education opportunities and use their feedback to help them refine those further.
- *Employees:* Implement the tasks in the work program together and coordinate the project organization and implementation.

The operational objectives, responsibilities and limits of these roles are respected.

### Multidisciplinarity

We assume that science is heterogeneous and characterized by different professional perspectives and research questions. This multidisciplinarity is deliberately seen as a strength.

A mutual, interdisciplinary transfer of expertise and knowledge is specifically promoted, taking into account different backgrounds, demands and competence profiles in science and research.

### Inclusiveness and motivation

WiNoDa is designed as an inclusive community.

It is ensured that all participants receive low-threshold access in accordance with established accessibility criteria and immediate feedback opportunities on WiNoDa's offerings.

The content and methods of conveying skills are prepared based on the needs of the target groups and adapted or further developed if necessary.

All members of the community are expressly encouraged to help shape the processes.

In order to motivate the community, offers for further discussion of the topics taught and networking opportunities are created.

### **Openness to development and constructive error culture**

We perceive the project as an ongoing process. The specifications of the work program provide the framework for action, within which the project emphasizes adaptability and flexibility. In line with a so-called error culture, mistakes are seen as a constructive foundation for development.

Regular evaluations and reflection discussions are conducted to further develop the processes and the community.

Opportunities for further development, connection, and networking arising from WiNoDa's work are actively encouraged.

All parties, including project employees, should be able to develop individually within WiNoDa according to their own needs, both in terms of their research topics and their general professional growth.

### **Aspiration of the project**

WiNoDa aims to develop and offer new, context-appropriate content and exchange opportunities for collection and object-related research.

The project fosters innovative research concepts, preparing them for integration into research without imposing rigid guidelines. The emphasis is not solely on science but also on the interaction between science and society.

Particular attention is given to promoting and conveying aspects of data and research ethics. This is especially relevant for impact- and application-oriented research, as well as open science and public engagement. Principles such as FAIR and CARE are particularly emphasized in training and placement processes.

### **Transparency and external representation**

WiNoDa fulfills its standards through extensive external representation and dedicated project communication.

The goal is to achieve maximum transparency in project work to meet the demands of Open Science.