

IVERSITY...

... uses the potential of the internet to **link and contextualise knowledge**. It supports **study- and research-related networking** of scientists and students. The platform is subdivided into three categories: **Research, Teaching, and Practice** which are linked by the Social Community: iversity.org

courses.iversity

Teaching

E-Learning platform and network for students and alumni

research.iversity

Research

Online tools for collaborative working and publishing in research groups

practice.iversity

Projects and E-Portfolio

Organisation of practice projects and e-portfolios, integrating academic and practical experience

iversity.org

Background

Since 2008, an interdisciplinary team has been developing iversity. It is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology's EXIST Program. So far, more than 10.000 scientists, tutors and students from more than 80 universities use the platform.



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courses.iversity facilitates web-based implementation of *courses* as well as the organisation of student *project groups* and the development of *e-portfolios*. The platform employs web2.0 functionality to provide *networking and publication* possibilities within and across university boundaries.

courses.iversity is subdivided into three sections:

1. Blended learning

Study material and discussions for courses, communication among teachers and students, online publications.

2. Projects

Students' project groups in academics and extracurricular practice.

3. Profiles

The student profiles let students connect and build up an academic and practical record in an e-portfolio.

The social community of iversity improves cohesion among students and their *identification with the university and faculty*, which increases the student retention rate and also builds up an *alumni community*.

Scientists' everyday activity is to find, collect, exchange and publish information.

Also essential to their work is professional networking within the academic

community. iversity facilitates all this by connecting it on one single platform.

On iversity researchers can work together in open or password protected work

groups, announce and organize conferences and network with colleagues from

various disciplines and institutions.

Online communication within research groups often relies on cumbersome email

exchange. Instead, exchanging data with iversity allows effortless compiling and

archiving of information by topics, dates and keywords.

Single contributions and announcements - like publication dates or calls for papers

- can be published directly from inside a group's private domain. Currently, such

publications often have to be imported to a project's homepage by system adminis-

trators. With iversity, each collaborator in a research project can update the group's

public site. This gives each team member the chance to easily contribute to the

success of the whole group.

Conventional tools for online collaboration constitute isolated solutions imple-

mented by single universities or research projects. In contrast, iversity embraces

the possibilities of the web and adapts them to academia's specific needs and high

security demands. As a result, iversity provides an easy-to-use scientific infrastruc-

ture for academic collaboration. Researchers can share a common platform with

colleagues from their institutions as well as from other universities and disciplines

to communicate, collaborate and publish within a wide academic network.

Because of varying needs in different academic disciplines, customised systems and

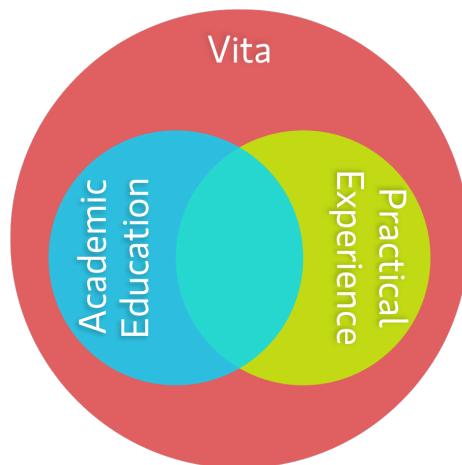
interfaces are available.

practise.iversity

Projects and E-Portfolio

Organisation of practice projects and an e-portfolio, linking academic education and practical experience.

None of the hitherto existing academic web sites appreciates the variety and quality of students' projects. iversity's practise site (www.iversity.de/project) provides the broad spectrum of student activity with an adequate space for representation. Depending on the study programme or faculty these encompass cultural, social or business oriented projects.



At the same time iversity constitutes an interface to the labour market for graduates. Practical skills and experience are acquired during extra-curricular activities in most study programmes. iversity bridges this gap by integrating academic education and practical experience into a single e-portfolio: a meaningful personal vita for students. Based on their e-portfolios students can align with peers having similar interests to form project- and work groups, if these allow for this in their privacy settings.