

- —How did the Universe begin?
- -What is the origin of life?
- -Will artificial intelligence ever be able to surpass the human brain?
- —What will be the mathematics of the 22nd century?
- —What is the future of humanity?

The RIKEN interdisciplinary **Theoretical Mathematical Sciences** (iTHEMS) program is an international research platform applying mathematics as a common language in collaborations at the forefront of research in physics, chemistry, biology, medical science, engineering, information science, computational science and mathematics. Our mission is to develop fundamental ideas based on free thinking.





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Encouraging interdisciplinary research

The natural sciences are split into various fields such as physics, chemistry, and biology, and the level of specialization is constantly growing, leading to ever finer divisions of research areas. Different disciplines also choose their research subjects and methods for attacking problems differently. Furthermore, technical terms are used in different ways, making it difficult for researchers in different fields to communi-

different fields, we are often struck by a commonality of ideas and concepts. In practice, when researchers in different fields talk to one another, it becomes apparent that mathematical methods for solving problems can be used beyond fields. The RIKEN Interdisciplinary Theoretical and Mathematical Sciences Program (iTHEMS) aims to make break-





throughs by exchanging scientific ideas between researchers in theoretical and mathematical sciences.

Utilizing modern mathematics

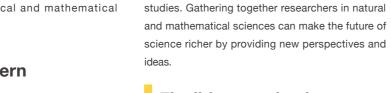
At iTHEMS, we are working toward the full-scale utilization of modern mathematics to actively promote interdisciplinary research.

Currently, most of the mathematics used in theoretical science was created in the 19th century to the However, if we look at the logical structures of first half of the 20th century. Mathematics has become extremely abstract since the middle of the

has accumulated powerful techniques and methods. This abstract framework has the potential to

solve many open problems in natural science. Moreover, the abstract framework of modern mathematics may lead to yet unknown

mathematical connections among phenomena in physics, biology, and



Flexible organization

Scientists within iTHEMS carry out high-level research independently based on their own interests. Rather than having a solid team or group structure, iTHEMS uses new platform called the "Research Cell". A cell is like a small roundtable with a chal-

Mathematics is a common language of theoretical

Currently, we have four cells: "Extreme Universe", "Life and Evolution", "Mathematics and AI" and "Future Geometry". Researchers can join any of the cells they are interested in and interact with others from different disciplines. Additionally, cells can be created, divided, or fused together. The most

important element of iTHEMS is the ideas of individual researchers who drive the evolution of cells, iTHEMS and the future of



Facilitating daily interactions

Collaboration among researchers beyond disciplines is a challenging task. Sometimes the technical terms

used in a field may sound like a foreign language to researchers in other fields, creating a barrier to effective communication.

One way to overcome these barriers is to have a place for researchers to interact on a daily basis and talk about each other's research in easy-to-understand terms. One of the efforts to create such an environment is the coffee meeting which is

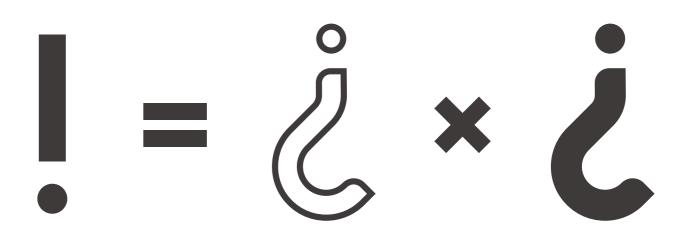
held every Friday at noon. At the coffee meeting, we ask one iTHEMS member to give a 15-minute presentation,

followed by free discussion over lunch. Since the researchers are from different fields, the presenters needs to explain their work in plain terms. Getting a clear understanding of each other's research can lead to collaborative proj-

At iTHEMS, researchers at the forefront of various fields stimulate one another and try to develop new ideas that will become the foundation for science a century from now. Stay tuned to see what kind of science emerges from iTHEMS!



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iTHEMS RIKEN Interdisciplinary Theoretical and Mathematical Sciences Program

