

3rd Symposium at the Kunstkraftwerk Leipzig, © The Meráhki by Melly & Martin

Three Years of TransBIB: A Success Story!

What began as an idea in 2021 is today a nationwide network of 47 competence hubs and an AI-powered One-Stop-Shop used by more than 500 users from over 400 organisations. An outstanding record after three years.

The building blocks for a bio-based industry have long existed in Germany: new materials, biotechnological processes, facilities for scaling up and regions that are ready to get to work. What was missing for a long time was a place where all of this comes together. This is where TransBIB comes in. The idea was born in 2021, the concept was submitted to the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs in 2022, and funding was approved in 2023. Since then, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE) has supported the project with more than 5.5 million euros. For this, as well as for the trusting cooperation and dedicated support, the TransBIB team would like to once again expressly thank the BMWE, in particular Mr Kroymann and Mr Awenius and their teams. 14 project partners and four associated partners are working to bring bio-based innovations from the laboratory into industrial production faster.

Connecting, not duplicating

TransBIB connects Germany's bioeconomy regions – places where companies, research institutions and clusters are already working together on bio-based solutions. From the outset, one thing was clear: TransBIB should not create duplicate structures. Rather than adding yet another network alongside existing ones, it acts as an overarching meta-network that links existing initiatives and creates synergies. Participation is voluntary; each region decides for itself which topics and competences it contributes.

This approach is paying off: at the first symposium in Straubing in 2024, stakeholders from just over 20 competence regions came together; today, more than twice as many competence hubs belong to the network. Through them and the project partners, TransBIB reaches around 2.200 organisations. In the competence pool, 110 experts from science, industry and technology transfer share their knowledge. Since October 2026, they have also been exchanging ideas in a dedicated LinkedIn group.

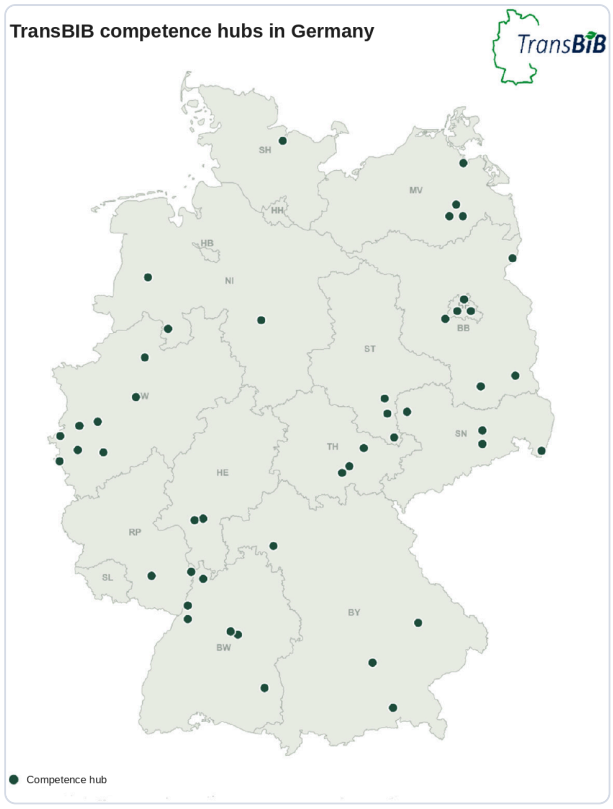

Figure 1: The 47 competence hubs in the TransBIB network

A home for bioeconomy knowledge

TransBIB's success and growth are also due to a bold decision taken during the project: the team switched the project from "analogue" to AI-assisted. Knowledge was not only to be collected in reports and lists, but to be directly accessible to all user groups. Since 30 September 2025, the **TransBIB One-Stop-Shop** (OSS) has been online – to the best of our knowledge, the first public AI tool for the bioeconomy. It makes visible and accessible what was previously fragmented: bioeconomy databases, certification schemes, scale-up facilities, access to key bioeconomy players and much more.

The OSS has quickly become a go-to resource for the industrial bioeconomy: users from all over Germany and ten other countries are registered with the OSS; since the beginning of 2026 alone, 240 new users have joined.

On the matching platform, launched at the same time, cooperation between bioeconomy stakeholders is initiated. 29 contact requests have already resulted in 17 successful matches. These mark the beginning of a deeper exchange in which the stakeholders involved share their contact details with each other and enter into direct dialogue.

TransBIB – the national scale-up network

One of TransBIB's priorities is to bridge the "valley of death" of scale-up: the gap between a successful laboratory experiment and industrial production, where many bio-based innovations fail. True to its motto "Making visible what already exists", TransBIB first took stock of the scale-up facilities in Germany. Today, 65 facilities, including their operators and available technology, are listed in the OSS. They can be found in a targeted way using AI and a faceted search.

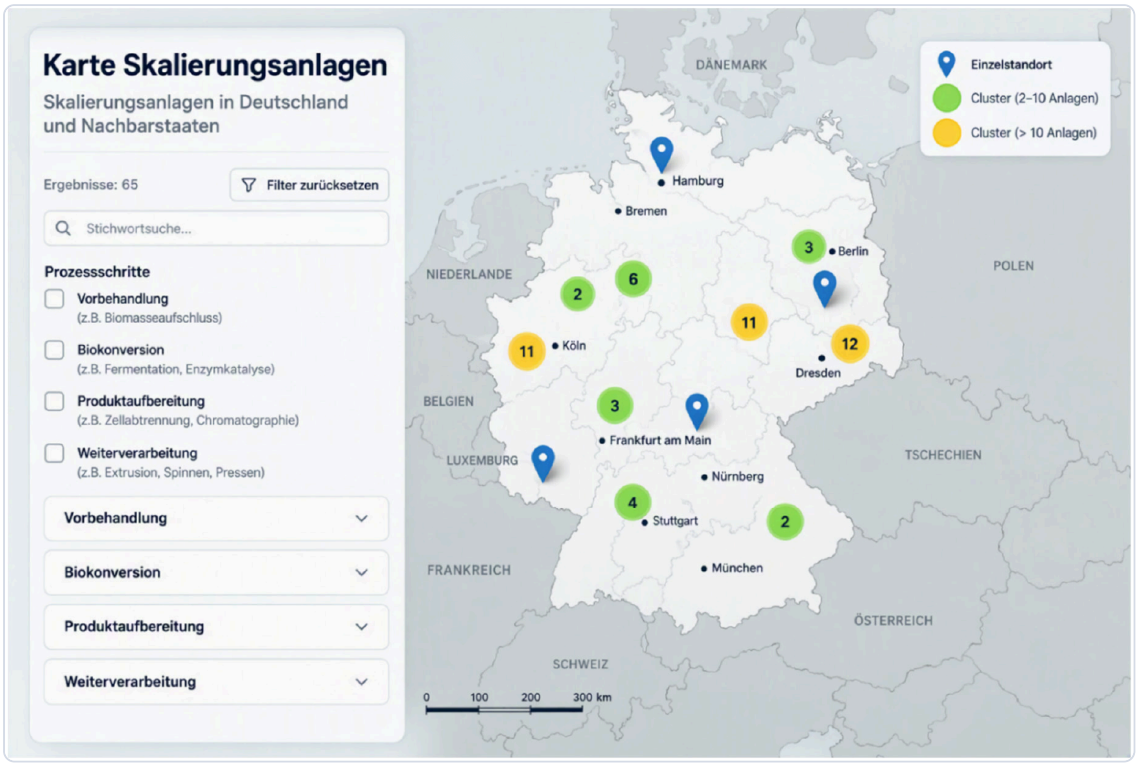

Figure 2: Schematic overview of the scale-up facilities in the TransBIB One-Stop-Shop, © TransBIB

Symposia as networking hubs

The energy of the network is most tangible at the annual symposia. At the kick-off in September 2024 at the TUM Campus Straubing, more than 100 participants from research, networks and industry came together. In June 2025 in Greifswald, the OSS was launched, and companies ranging from start-ups to industrial groups presented their bio-based ideas. The breadth of bioeconomy solutions was reflected in the contributions, from seagrass insulation to fully bio-based adhesives. In May 2026, the symposium in Leipzig featured 25 pitches at the Kunstkraftwerk. The programme was rounded off by four excursion routes to Bitterfeld-Wolfen, Zeitz, Leuna and Leipzig – to places where the bioeconomy is already being put into practice.

The added value of a personal meeting space is also evident from the repeated participation of stakeholders. The feedback speaks for itself, too: in the feedback forms, participants almost consistently gave the top score in all categories – 5 out of 5 points.

In addition to the national symposia, TransBIB has organised numerous regional networking formats in recent years. This has made it possible to introduce new regions to the industrial bioeconomy, stimulate local exchange and win further stakeholders for the network.

Knowledge put into practice

The bioeconomy is interdisciplinary and requires interface and translation work to initiate new collaborations and innovations. TransBIB translates the bioeconomy into the language of established industries. Six training modules are aimed at sectors including plastics, construction and automotive. The importance of certification schemes is reflected in four learning units that introduce the certification of bio-based products. In 13 Learning Lounges, experts shed light on key focus topics from different perspectives, including scale-up, life cycle assessments, novel foods and funding opportunities. Four reports on competence needs, guidelines on model regions and life cycle assessment, and two white papers – on the approval process for a biotech production plant and on de-risking bioprocess development – provide concrete guidance in the Knowledge Centre. The website also shows how much demand there is for these offerings: more than 5.000 visitors a month come to transbib.de for news, events and offerings related to the industrial bioeconomy.

TransBIB in figures

WHAT	AS OF 11/26
Competence hubs	**47**
Organisations in the meta-network	**around 2.200, of which almost 1.600 companies**
Experts in the competence pool	**110**
Registered OSS users	**523 from 413 organisations**
Bioeconomy databases	**190**
Certification schemes	**122**
Scale-up facilities	**65**
Offers and requests on the matching platform	**43**
Brokered matching requests	**17**
Training modules and learning units	**6 and 4**
Learning Lounges	**13**
National symposia	**3**
Visitors to transbib.de per month	**over 5.000**
Articles on transbib.de	**around 95**

What comes next

Anyone who wants to bring a bio-based idea into production today no longer has to start from scratch: data, facilities, partners and people on the same path can all be found in one place. This completes the first stage of the overall concept. Phase 1 was about collecting knowledge and making it visible, with a thematic focus on scale-up.

In the next step, this knowledge is to be put to use, and the focus is to shift towards production. Concrete projects and new value chains are to emerge from the pooled knowledge: from the initial idea to the right facility and the right partners, through to the question of where and how production can be set up. The competence hubs play a key role here, because it is in the regions that it is decided where bio-based value creation actually takes place.

The OSS is also being developed further: new data, improved search functions and even more targeted matching are intended to help turn contacts into cooperation. Experience from the symposia, Learning Lounges and working groups feeds directly into these improvements.

All of this is carried by the people in the network: the project partners, the competence hubs, the experts in the competence pool and everyone who contributes their knowledge and ideas. Our sincere thanks go to them for three years of committed collaboration.

Get involved: An OSS account is free of charge. Offers and requests can be posted on the matching platform; experts can register in the competence pool or join the LinkedIn group. Regions that would like to join the network as a competence hub can get in touch directly via transbib.de.

Three years of TransBIB have shown: when knowledge, people and regions come together, the industrial bioeconomy becomes achievable – and the next stage has only just begun.