



Reference number 38/2024

Postdoctoral researcher (f/m/d) for DFG IRTG 2899/1 “Belongings: Jewish Material Culture in Twentieth-Century Europe and Beyond”

Founded in 1409, Leipzig University is one of Germany’s largest universities and a leader in research and medical training. With around 30,000 students and more than 5000 members of staff across 14 faculties, it is at the heart of the vibrant and outward-looking city of Leipzig. Leipzig University offers an innovative and international working environment as well as an exciting range of career opportunities in research, teaching, knowledge and technology transfer, infrastructure and administration.

The DFG-funded International Research Training Group (IRTG) “Belongings: Jewish Material Culture in Twentieth-Century Europe and Beyond”, a unique cooperation between Leipzig University (LU), the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow (DI), and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI), will commence its work in Leipzig in September 2024. The interdisciplinary programme brings together expertise in modern European and Jewish history, German and Slavic literary studies, philosophy, cultural studies, folklore and performance studies, and art history.

The IRTG is based on the idea that Jewish history can be reconstructed, narrated, and commemorated in a substantial and innovative fashion through the analysis of its world of objects. This includes objects that have been lost, imagined, longed for, or that have left a recognisable void as a result of the cataclysms of the twentieth century. The polysemous quality of the English term “belonging(s)”, which can mean both “being affiliated to a specific context” and “being owned”, serves as a framework for the IRTG’s exploration of individual and collective notions of the relationship between people and objects. The IRTG aims to scrutinise objects of Jewish provenance, as well as those that have proven meaningful to a particular Jewish community for cultural, religious, or economic reasons, among others.

While taking the Holocaust as the focal point of the topic, the IRTG will delve into the material worlds of the late nineteenth century and reach forward into the present, seeking new tools to provide nuanced insights into the diverse European Jewish worlds and their entanglements with their non-Jewish surroundings. The shift of centres of Jewish life in the twentieth century from Europe to the Americas and Palestine/Israel will also be considered.

Leipzig University seeks to fill the above position from **1 September 2024**.

The IRTG welcomes project proposals relating to one or more of its five **interdisciplinary research clusters**:

- “Practice” focuses on the everyday use of objects. Different forms of production, consumption, and practices ranging from the domestic to the public are analysed from the perspectives of *Alltagsgeschichte*, folklore studies, cultural and gender history (responsible PIs: Professor Maren Möhring, LU; Dr Dani Schrire, HUJI).
- “Ownership” reflects on the contested meanings of loss, recovery, or restitution of Jewish property and material heritage following its destruction and translocation during the Holocaust. Projects will focus on the shifting claims associated with objects and their role in (re)shaping Jewish life after 1945 (responsible PIs: Dr Elisabeth Gallas, DI; Professor Dirk van Laak, LU; Professor Yfaat Weiss, LU/DI/HUJI).
- “Text” focuses on the material lives, fragmentations, translations, dispersions and collections of texts in European Jewish cultures while also exploring the notion of materiality within Jewish literary and philosophical production (responsible PIs: Professor Dieter Burdorf, LU; Dr Aya Elyada, HUJI; Dr Enrico Lucca, DI; Professor Benjamin Pollock, HUJI).
- “Memory” builds on the connection between materiality, memory, and affectivity and will address the role of Jewish material culture in the process of shaping the memory and post-memory of the Holocaust in different historical or national contexts as well as literary narratives (responsible PIs: Professor Anna Artwińska, LU; Professor Manuela Consonni, HUJI).

- “Stage” explores the ways in which objects and works of art are staged, exhibited, and curated in different ensembles and environments. The spectrum of how the stories of Jewish objects are narrated, how they are identified, classified, and performed while being detached from original contexts, forms the core interest (responsible PIs: Dr Diego Rotman, HUJI; Professor Tanja Zimmermann, LU).

The postdoctoral researcher will take active part in the IRTG’s **qualification programme**, belonging to one of its clusters. The programme is built to ensure that postdocs achieve the highest quality of research, develop skills for a successful academic career, and build solid international networks. They will have a fixed-term contract in the programme to pursue an independent monographic research project (second book) in the field of Jewish material culture.

Postdocs in the “Belongings” IRTG will receive active support and mentoring from the PIs regarding career advancement and preparation for a tenure-track position, including courses specifically designed for their development at both universities; they will collaborate with the PIs in continually shaping thematic foci, methodologies, and theoretical discussions. They will accompany the group in Leipzig and Jerusalem for the first two years and will be fully involved in the programme in order to support the PhD group.

In the first two years, the programme includes an introductory seminar week, a two-semester mentored reading seminar, workshops to discuss research proposals and chapters, a summer school and a research colloquium. Funding is available for archival and research visits. Postdocs will be encouraged to gain teaching experiences at either LU/DI or HUJI.

Researchers of all nationalities with a doctoral degree up to five years old (documented submission of thesis no later than June 2024) in the aforementioned fields are invited to **apply for a postdoctoral researcher position**. As the working language of the programme is English, proficiency in this language is required. The monograph should be written in English.

About the position

- Fixed term from 1 September 2024 until 31 July 2029
- 100 % of a full-time position
- Planned remuneration: salary group E13 TV-L.

Duties

- Conducting research and writing a postdoctoral study (second book) within the IRTG’s research interests, broadening its theoretical/methodological perspectives
- Active and regular participation in the structured qualification programme
- Presentation of the researcher’s own research at workshops and conferences
- Active exchange with the group of doctoral researchers, international project partners and co-supervisors, including extended research stays at the partner university in Jerusalem
- Organisational duties (independent organisation of team meetings, co-organisation of workshops, research colloquia, conferences; preparation of reports).

Requirements

- Completion of a doctoral degree with excellent or very good results no more than 5 years ago (date on certificate; documented submission of thesis no later than June 2024)
- Explicit record in (Jewish) material culture studies and an outstanding academic record
- Demonstrated interest and experience in interdisciplinary research environments
- Very good command of English, equivalent to C1 (CEFR) or higher
- Desired: (passive) knowledge of Hebrew / German.

What we offer

- An exciting, interdisciplinary and international working environment with structured mentoring
- A wide range of opportunities to develop academic and further professional skills
- A modern workplace and attractive working conditions (mobile working)
- Flexible working hours and a family-friendly programme structure.

For further information about the IRTG’s programme and the recruitment process, please contact Dr Enrico Lucca (lucca@dubnow.de).

Please send your application in English with the usual documents – including a letter of motivation, a project proposal indicating two clusters that seem most suitable (max. 3–5 pages), English copies of university degrees (incl. PhD), and one letter of recommendation from a tenured researcher to be sent separately (directly to the given email address indicating the name of the candidate clearly) – quoting **reference number 38/2024**, as a single PDF file via email to: dekgko@uni-leipzig.de.

The **deadline for submission** of all application materials is **2 April 2024**. (Digital) interviews will be held in the first half of May.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee confidentiality and rule out unauthorised access by third parties when communicating by unencrypted email. Alternatively, you can send all documents by post to Universität Leipzig, Historisches Seminar/ Prof. Dr. Yfaat Weiss – persönlich – Schillerstraße 6, 04109 Leipzig.

We kindly request that you submit copies only, as we are unable to return application documents. Interview expenses will not be reimbursed. Leipzig University aims to increase the proportion of women in positions of responsibility and therefore expressly invites qualified women to apply. Severely disabled persons – or persons deemed legally equal to them under Book IX of the German Social Code – are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in the case of equal suitability.

Privacy information

If you choose to apply and send us your documents, you do so voluntarily. Any personal data contained within your application documents, or obtained during an interview, will be processed by Leipzig University – as the advertiser of the position – exclusively for the purposes of the selection process for the position advertised. It will not be passed on to third parties without your consent in the individual case. The legal basis for such data processing is Sect. 11(1) of the Saxon Data Protection Implementation Act (SächsDSDG) in conjunction with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The controller for the application process within the meaning of the GDPR is the addressee of the application, specified in the advertisement.

Your personal data will be stored for six months after the end of the recruitment process and then erased or destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations. You may refuse or withdraw your consent with effect for the future without giving reasons. In these cases, Leipzig University will not or no longer be able to process and consider your application. Under the GDPR, subject to the relevant statutory requirements you have the following rights vis-à-vis the addressee of the application with regard to your personal data: right of access (Art. 15 GDPR); right to rectification of inaccurate personal data (Art. 16 GDPR); right to erasure (Art. 17 GDPR); right to restriction of processing (Art. 18 GDPR); and right to object to processing (Art. 21 GDPR). If you have any questions, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Leipzig University (office: Augustusplatz 10, 04109 Leipzig). You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection.