



Reference number 39/2024

4 doctoral researchers (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 the 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 positions from **1 September 2024**. One additional doctoral researcher will be employed through the Dubnow Institute.

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 envisioned **qualification programme** for the doctoral researchers in the framework of the IRTG is built to ensure that candidates successfully complete their PhD within a 4-year time span, build a vibrant international research network, and are well prepared for a career in academia or other related professions. The first cohorts from HUJI and LU/DI start with a joint first year of the programme in Leipzig. The second year is envisioned to take place in Jerusalem. The doctoral researchers will have joint German-Israeli supervision.

In the first two years, the programme includes an introductory week-long seminar, 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. The researchers will have the option to gain professional experience through a practical semester or teaching, if feasible within their research. An important part of the programme is intensive language training (funded through the programme) during the first five semesters in Hebrew/German respectively and possible additional training in project-specific languages. Courses in academic key skills will also be offered.

Researchers of all nationalities with a master’s degree (or equivalent with written thesis; in all cases submission of respective thesis no later than June 2024) in the aforementioned fields are invited to **apply for a doctoral researcher position**. As the working language of the programme is English, proficiency in this language is required. Dissertations generally should be written in English.

About the position

- Fixed term from 1 September 2024 until 31 August 2028
- 65 % of a full-time position (each position)
- Planned remuneration: salary group E13 TV-L.

Duties

- Conducting research and writing a doctoral thesis
- Active and regular participation in the structured qualification programme as a member of one of the clusters
- Presentation of the researcher’s own research at workshops and conferences
- Active exchange with international project partners and co-supervisors, including longer research stays at the partner university in Jerusalem
- Organisational duties (co-organisation of workshops, research colloquia, conferences; preparation of reports).

Requirements

- University degree with excellent or very good results qualifying the applicant to commence a doctorate (master’s, *Staatsexamen* or equivalent) in a relevant subject area
- Initial project idea/proposal fitting the IRTG research programme
- Willingness to participate and contribute actively to an interdisciplinary and international research programme
- Fluent English communication skills (spoken and written).

What we offer

- An exciting, interdisciplinary and international working environment with structured supervision
- A wide range of opportunities to develop academic and further professional skills; a close relationship with museums, archives, and libraries that preserve and exhibit Jewish material culture, to encourage collaboration outside the University at an early stage in the doctoral researchers’ careers
- A modern workplace and attractive working conditions (mobile working)
- Flexible working hours and a family-friendly programme structure.

For further information about the graduate 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 pages), English copies of university degrees (or proof of submission date no later than June 2024), and two letters of recommendation from tenured researchers to be sent separately (directly to the given email address indicating the name of the candidate clearly) – quoting **reference number 39/2024**, 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.