



Leibniz Centre for
Agricultural Landscape Research
(ZALF)



LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

DEAR APPLICANTS, WELCOME TO LEIBNIZ CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESEARCH (ZALF) AND LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY!

The mission of the [Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research/ Leibniz-Zentrum für Agrarlandschaftsforschung \(ZALF\)](#) is to deliver solutions for an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable agriculture – together with society. As a contribution to overcoming global challenges such as climate change, food security, biodiversity conservation and resource scarcity, the ZALF develops and designs crop systems, integrated in their landscape contexts, that combine food security with sustainability. Therefore, we process complex landscape data with a unique set of experimental methods, new technologies and models as well as socio-economic approaches.

The ZALF will establish a new [Innovation Center for Agricultural Systems Transformation \(IAT\)](#) in 2026. The IAT is a comprehensive strategic extension of ZALF for living lab research in a co-design mode. In addition to expanding its main location in Brandenburg, Müncheberg, three new locations will be established in Hesse (Giessen, Kassel and Geisenheim). In total, the planned strategic extension includes the establishment of 19 new working groups dealing with various production systems, the development of novel value chains as well as the assessment, monitoring and modelling of living lab dynamics. Research is planned in five regional living labs in Hesse and Brandenburg. The IAT will also cooperate intensively with ZALF's existing program areas and platforms and thus contribute to inter- and transdisciplinary research on agricultural landscapes to support sustainable transformation of agricultural and food systems.

It is the mission of the [School of Sustainability](#) at Leuphana University to inspire and promote a just and sustainable future. We aim to provide students, professors and the community the competencies and opportunities to transform society towards sustainability at all levels. To this end, we seek to conduct excellent, internationally recognized, problem-oriented inter- and transdisciplinary research and teaching within the field of sustainability science. Our sustainability education aims to teach and integrate key competencies that include problem-solving skills and the ability to collaborate with experts and actors.



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THE SCHOOL OF SUSTAINABILITY AT LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY LÜNEBURG AND THE LEIBNIZ CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESEARCH (ZALF) JOINTLY INVITE APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING FULL PROFESSORSHIP:

LIVING LABS IN AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES (W3)

The professorship is a joint appointment between Leuphana University and the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF). ZALF will establish a new Innovation Center for Agricultural Systems Transformation (IAT) in 2026. The IAT is a comprehensive strategic extension of ZALF for living lab research in a co-design mode. At Leuphana, the professorship will form part of the Sustainability Education and Transdisciplinary Research Institute (SETRI) at the School of Sustainability.

The professorship is deeply embedded in the domain of transformation research as part of the international scientific community, with a focus on new forms of participation and governance within transdisciplinary research settings. The core focus of the research is on transformation of agricultural landscapes as part of the whole agri-food system. The main objective of this professorship is to investigate the potential of living labs, as an institutionalized format of collaboration between practice and science, for advancing a spatially explicit sustainability-oriented transformation of agri-food systems. The development of living lab environments for this purpose is based on co-problem-solving, co-designing, and co-testing of solutions and related research and mutual learning. The possibility of joint experimental testing of solutions, the long-term analysis of systemic changes through the interlocking of innovations on different spatial and temporal scales offers a basis for combining excellent basic research with applicable research outputs.

The professorship unites two perspectives on living labs within transformational research:

- 1) The contextual, structural and institutional settings of living labs and processes that are part of living labs, and
- 2) The transformative potential of living labs, with a specific focus on agricultural landscapes, to explore the diverse intersections between science and society.

In order to align our understanding of specific living labs in agricultural landscapes with the broader demand for more generalizable solutions, the professorship will use case-based learning - also in international settings and project consortiums to integrate research results in a systematic approach and/or meta-analytical research approach. An international comparative approach of living labs in agricultural contexts is expected to develop generalized insights on the subject matter, and to embed the IAT research in the growing international communities on living lab research and transformation research in the context of agriculture and food systems.

For this position, we are seeking a committed researcher at an advanced career stage who shows excellence in research and teaching as well as unique ideas to visibly impact their field as well as society. You have extensive experience in developing research on living labs and transformation research in the area of agri-food systems at the frontier of transdisciplinary approaches, documented by an excellent peer-review publication record in international journals as well as an established own research network.



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You have experience in acquiring third-party funding, ideally including successful acquisitions from renowned third-party funding programs (e.g. DFG or comparable). In addition, you will present a viable future third-party funding strategy.

We expect the applicant to co-lead the IAT based on documented experience in coordinating inter- and transdisciplinary research groups as well as interactions with stakeholders and actors outside of academia, such as land managers or local authorities. Furthermore, you have an excellent command of English and are demonstrably able to teach courses in English. If you do not speak German, you are willing to learn it within a reasonable period. The position is filled as a joint professorship (>Jülicher Modell<). The professorship is co-leading the IAT and as well as a research group working at ZALF with a teaching load of 2 hours of teaching per week per semester at Leuphana. The position is mainly based at the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) in Müncheberg.

You can document prior teaching experiences in seminars, and ideally also lectures, in the subject areas of this professorship. Your research topics can be ideally integrated into the School of Sustainability's teaching programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels, including teaching in the Environmental Sciences B.Sc. major (Umweltwissenschaften, including the international Global Environmental Sustainability Studies GESS program), and contributing to teaching students in transdisciplinary projects and lead the larger lectures that are preparing these projects. Ideally you have supervised theses on B.Sc. and M.Sc. levels and Ph.D. students.

The professorial position will be filled in accordance with pay grade W3 (university full professorship). Formal requirements are based on § 25 of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG) and include a university degree and a Ph.D. in a discipline relevant to the open position for example in social sciences or environmental science or others; your aptitude for teaching, and your ability to engage in independent academic research, as demonstrated by the above-average quality of your dissertation as well as additional academic achievements obtained, i.e. in the course of being an assistant professor, during your postdoctoral lecture qualification (German: Habilitation) or other achievements recognized as being equivalent to a postdoctoral qualification.

At Leuphana you will find an academic community that is open to changes in perspective and cultivates the dialogue among the different disciplines as well as between research and practice. With spirit and initiative, we address the challenges of civil society in the 21st century. Pursuing our idea of liberal education, our students are enabled to think, question and act upon it. Our professors foster the awareness of gender and diversity aspects in teaching as well as research.

Leuphana University is an equal opportunities employer. The university aims to increase its number of female professors. Qualified women are especially invited to apply. Severely disabled applicants and applicants with equivalent status will be considered preferentially in accordance with the applicable legal provisions.

For further information, please contact the Dean of the School of Sustainability, Prof. Dr. Harald Heinrichs (Harald.heinrichs@leuphana.de), Prof. Dr. Henrik von Wehrden (henrik.von_wehrden@leuphana.de) at the Sustainability Education and Transdisciplinary Research Institute (SETRI), the Director of ZALF, Prof. Dr. Frank Ewert (frank.ewert@zalf.de) or Prof. Dr. Bettina Matzdorf (bettina.matzdorf@zalf.de) co-head of ZALF program area Land Use and Governance.



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Please submit your application (without submission of an application photo) consisting of the following materials in two separate PDF files: a) motivation letter, CV, full publication list, copies of academic degrees, and b) three relevant publications. Please enclose the completed [application form](#) (as Excel file) with your documents. Guidance on the required application materials can be found [here](#).

Applications should be sent preferably by email using the key word **“Living Labs” (W3)** to beko@leuphana.de or to the President of Leuphana University Lüneburg, Post Box 2440, Lüneburg D-21314 by **July 13, 2025**. Please be aware that we cannot return application documents sent physically.

By submitting your application, you consent to your data being stored and processed for the purpose of the recruitment process. Please note our Data Protection Notice for Applicants (in [English](#) or in [German](#)).



BECOMING A PROFESSOR AT LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY LÜNEBURG

YOUR APPLICATION

When applying for a professorship at Leuphana, please be aware that the formal requirements are prescribed by law and cannot be overruled by the selection committee. Your documents should provide a concise insight into your unique scientific profile and how you and your achievements will contribute to Leuphana University. When reviewing the publications you handed in, the selection committee would like to grasp your scientific aptitude, the quality and the scope of your work. Hence, you are invited to select three publications in order to showcase your versatility and suitability for the open professorship. Also, if identified in your CV, the committee will take events impeding your academic advancement into account such as illness, childbirth, or care. Please do not include a picture in your CV.

WE ARE SELECTING CAREFULLY

The appointment of a professor in Germany is a formal process that typically takes between 6 to 12 months and involves several steps. A selection committee (Berufungskommission) is established especially for the purpose of selecting the most promising candidates. It consists of professors, students as well as scientific and administrative staff. After the application deadline, the committee takes the time to thoroughly review the applications and publications and to invite the most suitable candidates to a personal interview, including a scientific presentation and a test lecture. At that stage, they may also ask you to provide further details such as research or teaching concepts. Usually, the best three candidates are then assessed by professors from other universities based on their application documents. Considering these assessments, the committee ranks the candidates according to suitability and recommends them for appointment. The list is final after passing the university boards: Department Council, University's Senate, Presidential Committee and Board of Trustees. Only after that, the first candidate is invited to take up negotiations regarding resources and remuneration, receiving a letter of appointment. Should the offer be turned down by one candidate, the person following on the list is contacted.

BEING A PROFESSOR IN GERMANY

As a professor in Germany, you will have the privilege of being elevated to civil servant status if you meet the personal requirements (i.e., pass an official medical examination, provide a certificate of good conduct). This status is beneficial in terms of salary, pension, health insurance and employment security when compared to other academic employment. The salary follows a state pay scheme (*W-Besoldung*), for full professors it allows for individual bonuses depending on their performance.

The civil service status is established not by an employment contract, but by a “certificate of appointment”. If appointment as a civil servant is not possible, you will be employed under contract. A separate agreement between you and Leuphana, which is subject of the negotiation preceding your appointment, will define the resources and services provided by the university as well as the contribution you will make to research, teaching, and the development of Leuphana University.