



DEAR APPLICANTS, WELCOME TO LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY!

Leuphana is a young university that lays emphasis on innovation, rather than tradition. It is continuously aspiring to create a space stimulated by a collective search for knowledge and sustainable solutions. Our success is based on the creativity and energy of our professors and academic staff. We encourage researchers to cross disciplinary boundaries, take responsibility and impact society. We convey this understanding to our students in teaching, research projects and campus life.

At Leuphana, every course of study is built on a holistic approach. The emphasis is on socially relevant issues instead of subjects. For our students, this means engaging in different scientific approaches from day one.

The **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences** continues an almost thirty-year tradition of teaching and research in cultural studies at Leuphana University of Lüneburg. At the faculty, more than one hundred scholars from disciplines such as art history, literary studies, media studies, philosophy, sociology, geography, political science and history teach and conduct research in a total of six institutes. The faculty currently offers three majors („Cultural Studies“, „Political Science“, and „Digital Media“) and four minors („Philosophy“, „Digital Media / Information Technology and Culture“, and „Political Science“) at Leuphana College and four master's degrees („Kritik der Gegenwart. Arts - Theory - History“, „Media and Digital Cultures“, „Culture and Organization“ and „Theory and History of Modernity“).

THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AT LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY OF LÜNEBURG INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING FULL PROFESSORSHIP:

DIGITAL CULTURES (W2)

You conduct research in the field of Digital Cultures with an international profile that is genuinely rooted in the Humanities and/or Social Sciences, and broad methodological and systematical expertise. In doing so, you will productively enrich the existing theoretical and historical, philosophical and sociological approaches at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Centre for Digital Cultures with unique perspectives that will contribute to a deeper understanding of digital cultures. These may include genealogical and historical approaches, qualitative and ethnographic research as well as methods that focus on specific phenomena and are source-oriented, such as software studies, infrastructure research, studies in organization and labor, critical data and network analysis, critical code studies, feminist technoscience, disability studies or science and technology studies.

Within this framework, you will on the one hand devote yourself to studies on particular subject areas and historical and/or contemporary phenomena, such as the formation of sociality, the question of the political, the economic or the ecological, or affectivity in digital cultures. On the other hand, you will contribute to the diagnosis and (re-)description of digital cultures through theoretical, methodological and political impulses, for example with regard to questions of critique in (and of) digital cultures, the genealogy of digital cultures, research methodologies appropriate to the subject matter, digital research infrastructures, fundamental theoretical concepts of understanding Digital Cultures, or the relationship between digitality, decoloniality and difference.

As a researcher with an interdisciplinary orientation and anchored in international research discourse, you significantly support the development of the Humanities and Social Sciences at Leuphana with an independent, unique profile and contribute to their reformulation in the context of Digital Cultures. To this end, you have a systematic understanding of Digital Cultures based on your broad knowledge of the media-historical foundations of digital cultures and/or their cultural and social theoretical as well as methodological reflection. In addition, you already acquired experience in productive collaboration within interdisciplinary research networks and projects. Your research is noticed in national and international professional discussions. You demonstrate this, among other things, through frequent publication activities in relevant national and international journals and publishing houses. You are experienced in the acquisition of external funding.

You have appropriate teaching experience and enjoy teaching in cross-disciplinary curricula. For the leadership tasks associated with the position in the English-language BA major „Digital Media“, experience with international study programs is required. If you do not have German language skills, you are willing to acquire them within a reasonable time frame. You are also willing to actively participate in interdisciplinary research networks within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences as well as other scholarly initiatives at Leuphana. It is further required that you will take part in the academic self-administration.

The requirements for employment (paygrade W2) are based on § 25 of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG), and include: a university degree; the particular ability to conduct in-depth independent scientific work, which is usually documented by an outstanding dissertation corresponding to the profile of the professorship; additional academic achievements, usually in the context of an associate professorship, a second book, or proven as achievements equivalent to a second book; pedagogical and didactical competence based on experience in using innovative teaching methods.

Upon first nomination, the appointment may be limited to five years. For applicants who are already working as a professor at a university, a tenure-track appointment is possible. In exceptional cases, this also applies to applicants appointed for the first time.

In its personnel structure, Leuphana University of Lüneburg focuses on promoting young academics and aims to increase the number of female professors. It strongly invites qualified female scholars to apply. Handicapped applicants will be given priority in the recruitment process within the framework of legal regulations.

For further information, please contact the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof. Dr. Ulf Wuggenig (ulf.wuggenig@leuphana.de), or the Director of the Institute for Culture and Aesthetics of Digital Media, Prof. Dr. Claus Pias (claus.pias@leuphana.de).

Please ensure that your application includes the following documents and merge them into two PDF files for electronic delivery: a) cover letter, curriculum vitae, copies of academic degrees, and b) three subject-relevant publications (essays, book chapters).

Please submit your application by **August 1, 2021**, using the keyword **Digital Cultures**, to beko@leuphana.de or to the Office of the President of Leuphana University Lüneburg, P.O. Box 2440, 21314 Lüneburg, Germany. 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](#)).

CONTEXT OF THE PROFESSORSHIP

The emergent research field of digital cultures is characterized by a program of cultural theory devoted to the interactions of media-technological development and cultural practices and forms. Digitality is understood as a bundle of „historically new possibilities of constitution and connection“ (Felix Stalder), and thus as a „culture machine“ (Ed Finn) that shapes culture and is itself culturally shaped. This corresponds to a plural understanding of culture. However, plural understandings of culture as symbolic systems, discourses, horizons of meaning, language games, material registers and embodied practices, now need to be linked to the ubiquity and impact of digital technologies. Digital cultures are in this sense characterized by the self-evidence and ubiquity of digital media technologies. They are characterized by transformed as well as new ways and practices of being together, acting and perceiving.

In contrast to the techno-deterministic economic and political discourse of „digitization“, according to which existing cultural forms and processes must urgently be „digitized“, a culture-theoretical program assumes that the "digital transformation" has already taken place and that ways of thinking, feeling, acting, arguing and ordering have become established that cannot be conceived without digital media technology. The discourse of "digitization" as well as its translation into dominant approaches of „digital humanities“ and „digital sociology“ driven by digital methods are themselves symptoms of this „digital cultural change“ that already began in the mid-20th century with systems theory and operations research, the „black box epistemology“ of cybernetics as Peter Galison called it.

Numerous publications attest to the emergence of the international research field of „digital cultures“ and a growing interest in a cultural-theoretical approach to digitality. As expected in a new field of research, the theoretical, methodological and qualitative differences are considerable - e.g. between German-language and Anglophone cultural theory, between „diagnostic“, historical and conceptually driven research. Examples of monographs are: The historical works *The Triumph of Profiling* (Andreas Bernard), *Being Digital* (Nicolas Negroponte), *Wege in die digitale Gesellschaft* (Frank Bösch) and *Wie die Welt in den Computer kam* (David Gugerli); first attempts at systematic theorization such as *The Digital Condition* (Felix Stalder), *Digitale Gefolgschaft* (Christoph Türcke), *Theorizing Digital Cultures* (Grant Bollmer), *Digital Culture* (Charlie Gere), *Critical Theory and the Digital* (David Berry), and *Digital Cultures* (Milad Doueiri); epistemologically oriented works such as *Muster* (Armin Nassehi), *4.0* (Dirk Baecker), and *Protocol* (Alexander Galloway); and a range of phenomenologically oriented research on, for example, *Global Digital Cultures* (Aswin Punathambekar, Sriram Mohan), *Algorithmic Cultures* (Jonathan Roberge, Robert Seyfert), *Digitality and The Logic of Control* (Sebastian Franklin), *Making Digital Cultures* (Martin Hand), and *Performing the Digital* (Martina Lecker et al.). An extensive debate on „post-digital aesthetics“ in activist and artistic contexts also deals with the ubiquity of digital modes of work and infrastructures as a new mainstream that also shapes supposedly analog cultural production (Florian Cramer).

As a genuine culture-theoretical field of research, digital cultures examine the complex interplay between media technologies and the „cultural shaping of the world“ (Frühwald et al.). Although media technologies play a decisive role in this process, this shaping cannot be reduced solely to the digitization of individual areas of knowledge and life or to a mediatization of communicative action. The field thus has a decidedly interdisciplinary character, as is also reflected in recent calls for professorships with a denomination such as „Digital Cultures“ (Bauhaus Universität Weimar), „Everyday Media and Digital Cultures“ (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz), „Media Studies, Focus on Media and Digital Cultures“ (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg), „Digital Humanities“ (Paderborn University), „Digital Cultures“ (TU Dresden), or „Media Cultural Studies with a Focus on Digital Cultures“ (University of Passau). In addition to professorships in media studies (which are open to perspectives from cultural and social theory), there are research profiles that are originally designed as *Kulturwissenschaften* (in the German-speaking tradition), i.e., open to humanities scholars and social scientists who consider themselves to research in cultural theory. Internationally, a proliferation of research centers can be observed, which - analogous to Lüneburg's Centre for Digital Cultures - have dedicated themselves to interdisciplinary work. Examples include the Research Group for Digital Culture at the University of Bergen, the Centre for Digital Culture at King's College London, the Digital Cultures Research Centre at the University of the West of England Bristol, the Digital Culture Group at the University of Copenhagen, the Center on Digital Culture and Society at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Digital Cultures Research Group at Monash University (Australia).

This configuration of the research field (and its institutionalization through professorships) also has to do with the 10-year focus on digital cultures at Leuphana University of Lüneburg itself. This refers to media studies (with its focus on media theory, media history, and media aesthetics) as well as disciplines such as sociology, cultural anthropology, political economy, and the history of culture and knowledge. The research field of digital cultures is also driven by more recent, international (and already interdisciplinary) „studies“, in particular Science and Technology Studies, New Media Studies, Software Studies, Infrastructure Studies, Feminist Technoscience, Organization Studies, Critical Code Studies.

Overall, digital cultures are an emergent, interdisciplinary field that is comparatively open to experimentation and can be connected to various disciplines. Since Leuphana is considered an important voice in this field, the establishment of a professorship specifically profiled for this field is an imperative; it is of considerable „strategic“ evidence for the development of the faculty. Moreover, the professorship's positioning is prototypically *kulturwissenschaftlich*, which is particularly in line with the orientation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In line with the strategic importance of the professorship for this research context, the successful applicant is expected to conduct original research on digital cultures in close coordination with the activities in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Centre for Digital Cultures.

BECOMING A PROFESSOR AT LEUPHANA UNIVERSITY LÜNEBURG

TIPS FOR 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 a number of steps. A selection committee (Berufungskommission) is established specially 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 on the basis of 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 with regard to 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. If the position you are applying for is not designated as temporary, appointment for life is intended after a probation period. 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.