

RTG 2006 Curiosity

Applicant Information Event

20.12.2023 (12:00 - 14:00 CET)



A Göttingen tradition: After successfully defending their PhD students celebrate by climbing and kissing the “gänseliesel” statue in the town square

What exactly *is* an RTG?

Research Training Group (German: *Graduiertenkolleg* abbrev. *GRK*)

RTG's are

...established by universities to promote early career researchers

...funded by the German Research Foundation (German: *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, abbrev. *DFG*)

What does an RTG mean in “real-life” terms!?

- You start the PhD alongside a **cohort of peers**
=> a great support network from day 1!
- You profit from regular **interdisciplinary exchange** with your peers
=> Retreats, Summer schools, RTG-courses



Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft

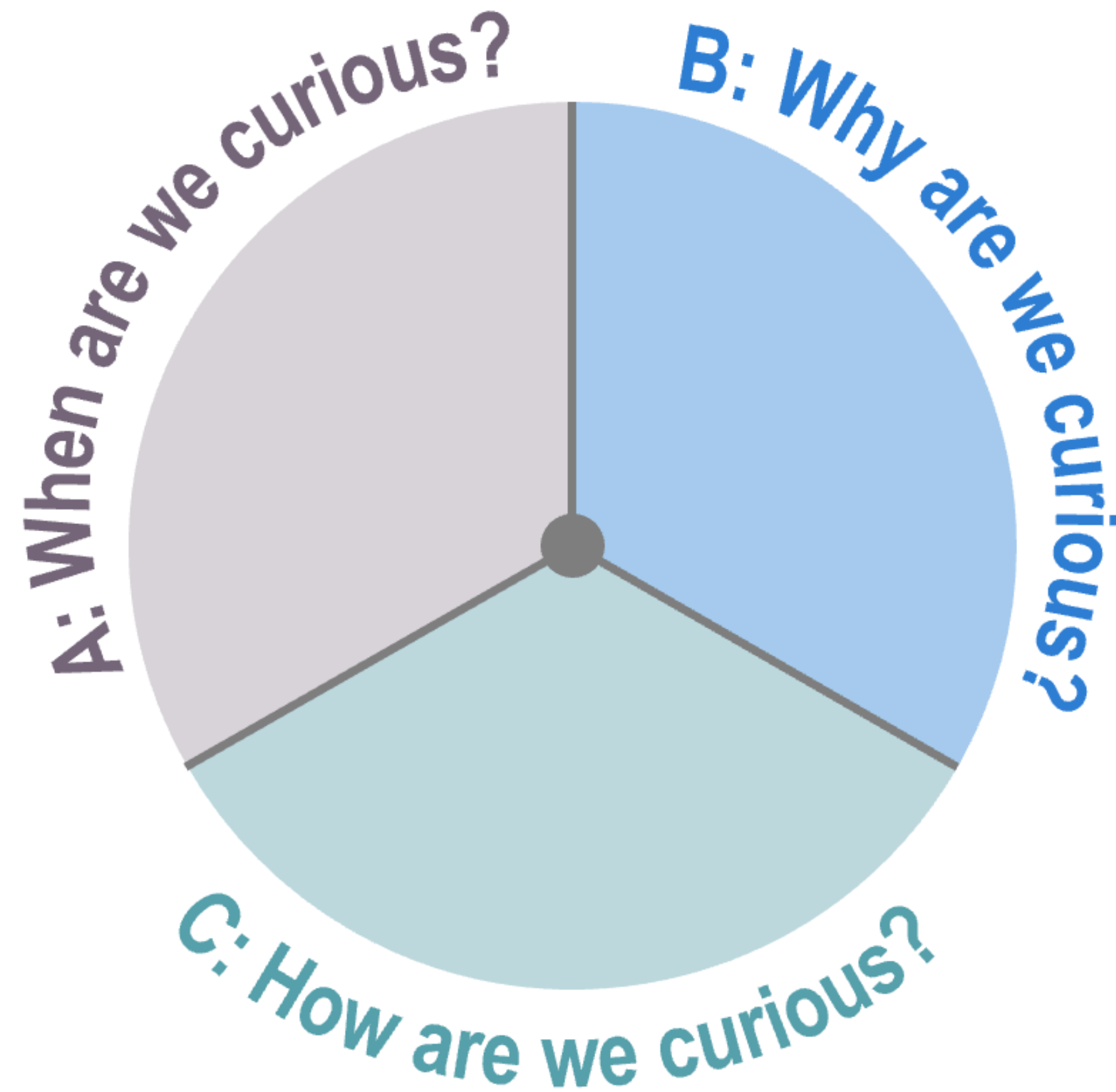
<https://www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/funding-opportunities/programmes/coordinated-programmes/research-training-groups>

The RTG 2906 Community



What is the goal of RTG 2906?

Train a group of doctoral researchers to work towards an integrative framework of curiosity



RTG 2906 seeks to better understand the **proximate** factors, **ultimate** goals and **neurocomputational** mechanisms underlying curiosity

Where can I find out more about the research goals of RTG 2906?

The screenshot shows the website for RTG 2906 Curiosity at Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. The page has a dark blue header with the university logo and name on the left, and the RTG 2906 Curiosity logo on the right. Below the header is an orange navigation bar with links for HOME, RESEARCH (highlighted), MEMBERS, STUDY, EQUALITY, and OPEN POSITIONS. A search bar and language selector (ENGLISH) are in the top right. The main content area is white and contains three research areas, each with a description and a link to more information. On the right side, there is a grey sidebar with logos for collaborating institutions (DPZ, EU, Max-Planck-Institut) and funding (DFG), along with the speaker's name and contact information.

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RTG 2906 Curiosity

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RESEARCH SUCHEN ENGLISH

RTG 2906 Curiosity will comprise of thirteen PhD projects, each of which is assigned to a primary research area, with links to other research areas:

Research Area A: [When are we curious?](#)

Projects in *Research Area A* examine the common denominators of situations in which individuals display curiosity and the factors underlying differences in the extent to which curiosity manifests across species and across development.

Research Area B: [Why are we curious?](#)

Projects in *Research Area B* seek to understand why individuals display curiosity by examining potential positive and negative consequences of curiosity-driven behaviour.

Research Area C: [How are we curious?](#)

Projects in *Research area C* examine the neuropsychological and neurocomputational mechanisms underlying curiosity in order to simulate biological curiosity in neural network models of cognitive function.

A collaboration with:

DPZ Deutsches Primatenzentrum Leibniz-Institut für Primatenforschung

EU Göttingen

MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT FÜR DYNAMIK UND SELBSTORGANISATION

Speaker
Prof. Dr. Nivedita Mani

Coordination Team
Email: rtg2906@uni-goettingen.de

Funded by:

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

Where can I find out more about the research goals of RTG 2906?

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RESEARCH > RESEARCH AREA A: WHEN ARE WE CURIOUS?

SUCHEN ENGLISH

Project A1: Developmental interplay of curiosity, meta-cognition and social learning

PRs: Hannes Rakoczy, Julia Fischer

Project A1 will explore the developmental interplay between curiosity, meta-cognition and social learning. Specifically, the PhD researcher will devise studies to test the hypothesis that curiosity-driven learning is boosted in social and collaborative learning contexts relative to individual exploration situations. Although the work will primarily focus on human ontogeny, there will be the opportunity to carry out comparative work with non-human primates.



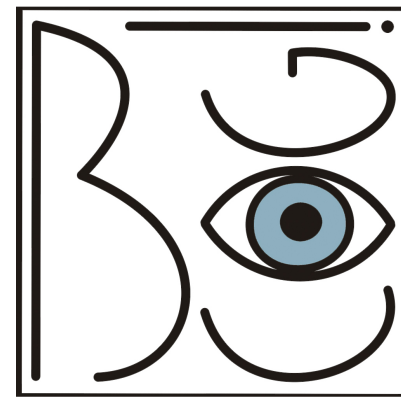
- Click [here](#) to download project poster

Make sure
to check
out the
posters

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/681639.html>

What is the RTG qualification programme all about?

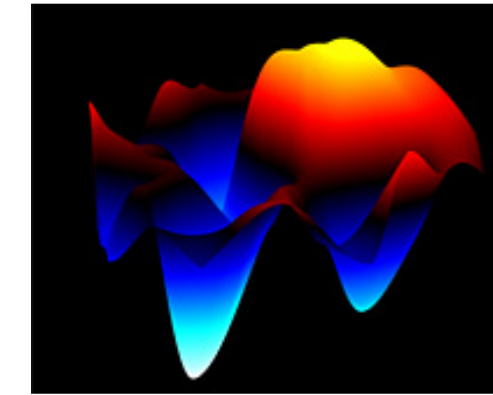
All doctoral researchers will be enrolled in a graduate program offered by the **Georg-August University School of Science (GAUSS)**:



Behavior and Cognition
(BeCog)



Systems Neuroscience



Theoretical and
Computational
Neuroscience

BUT RTG 2906 offers doctoral researchers a tailor-made qualification programme:

- => Mix of compulsory and elective courses
- => Need to collect 20 Credits across 5 modules

Note. The GAUSS graduate program requirements align with those of the RTG 2906 qualification programme!
i.e. if you fulfil the RTG 2906 qualification programme requirements, you will fulfil those of the respective GAUSS graduate programme

Qualification programme: core modules

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scheme in which researchers from different backgrounds pair up to coach one another through difficult phases in their projects.

4. Science communication

These courses train the doctoral researchers in scientific writing and presentation skills. A small subset of these courses are compulsory (e.g., the scientific writing course). Doctoral researchers can earn credits for this module by presenting their work at national and international conferences.

5. Management

This module encompasses a broad range of courses, e.g., courses that deal with the topics of leadership, conflict management, intercultural competence, work-life balance, career planning.

Short stays abroad (1C)

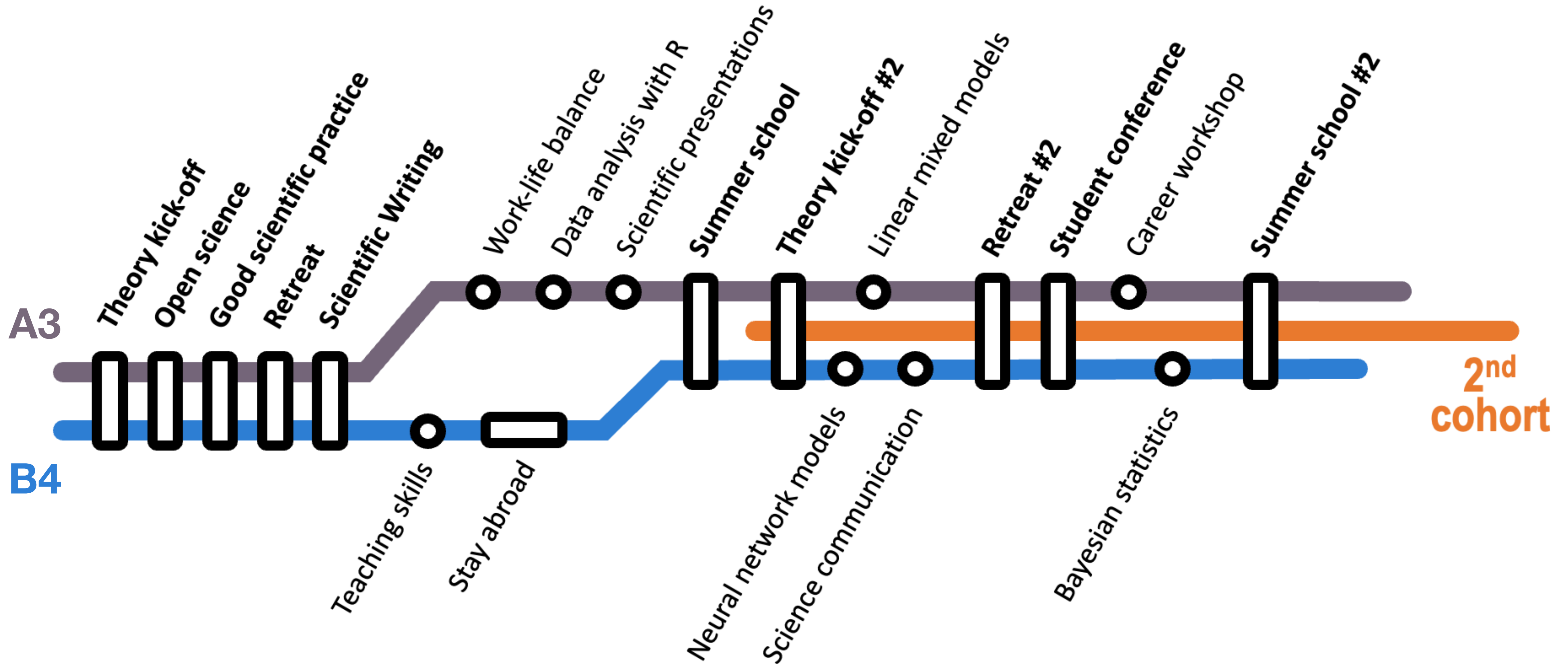
Researchers are encouraged to arrange short stays abroad with international research groups and non-academic partners outside Göttingen.

You can find out more about the qualification programme [here](#)

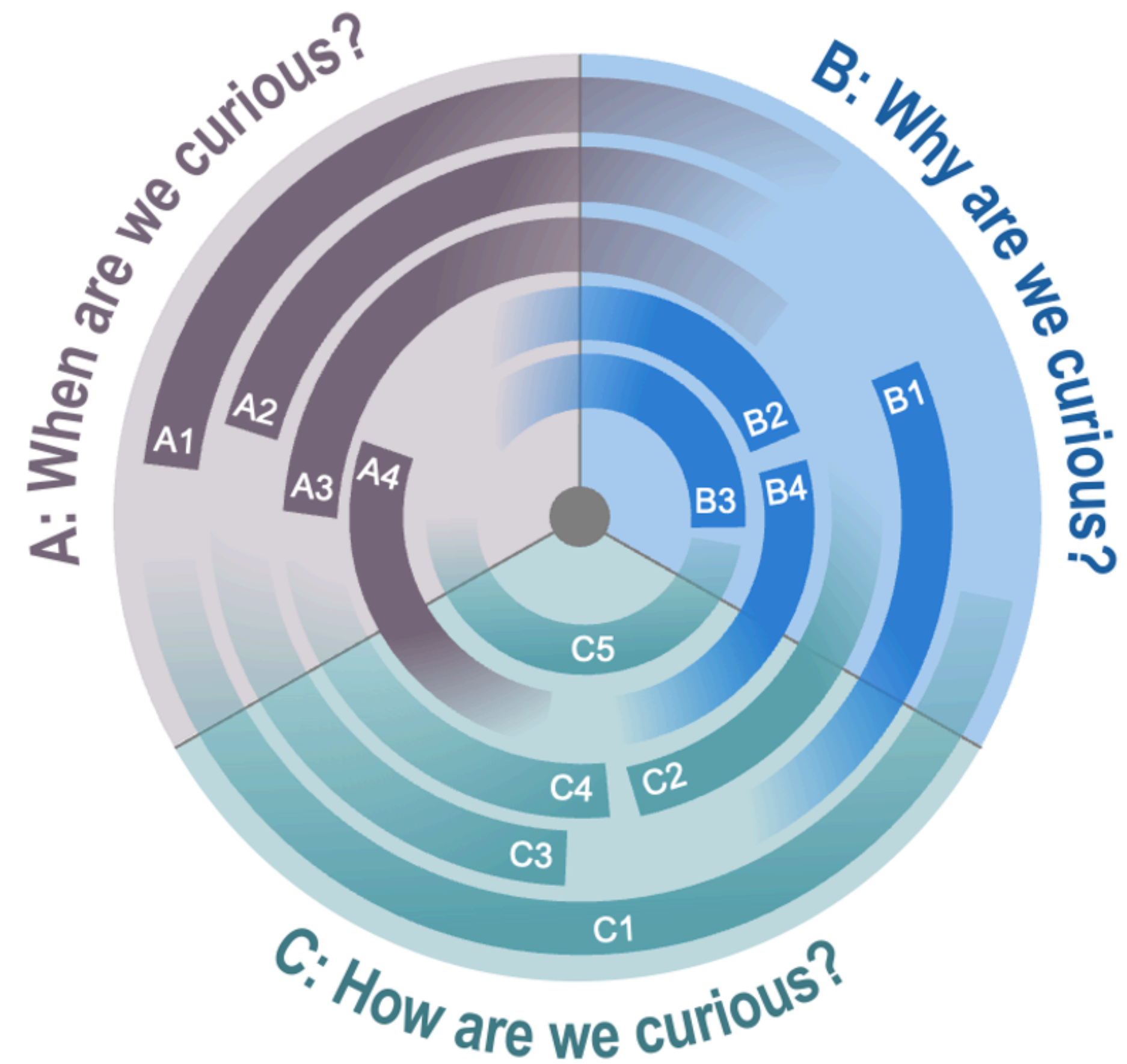
Poster
available
here



This is what your PhD *could* look like:



Research areas



2 Postdoc projects consolidate links between projects

Postdoctoral positions (2)

Postdoc 1

Bridges developmental and comparative perspectives
e.g., bridge non-verbal and verbal domains

ManyCuriosities

Generalisability

Postdoc 2

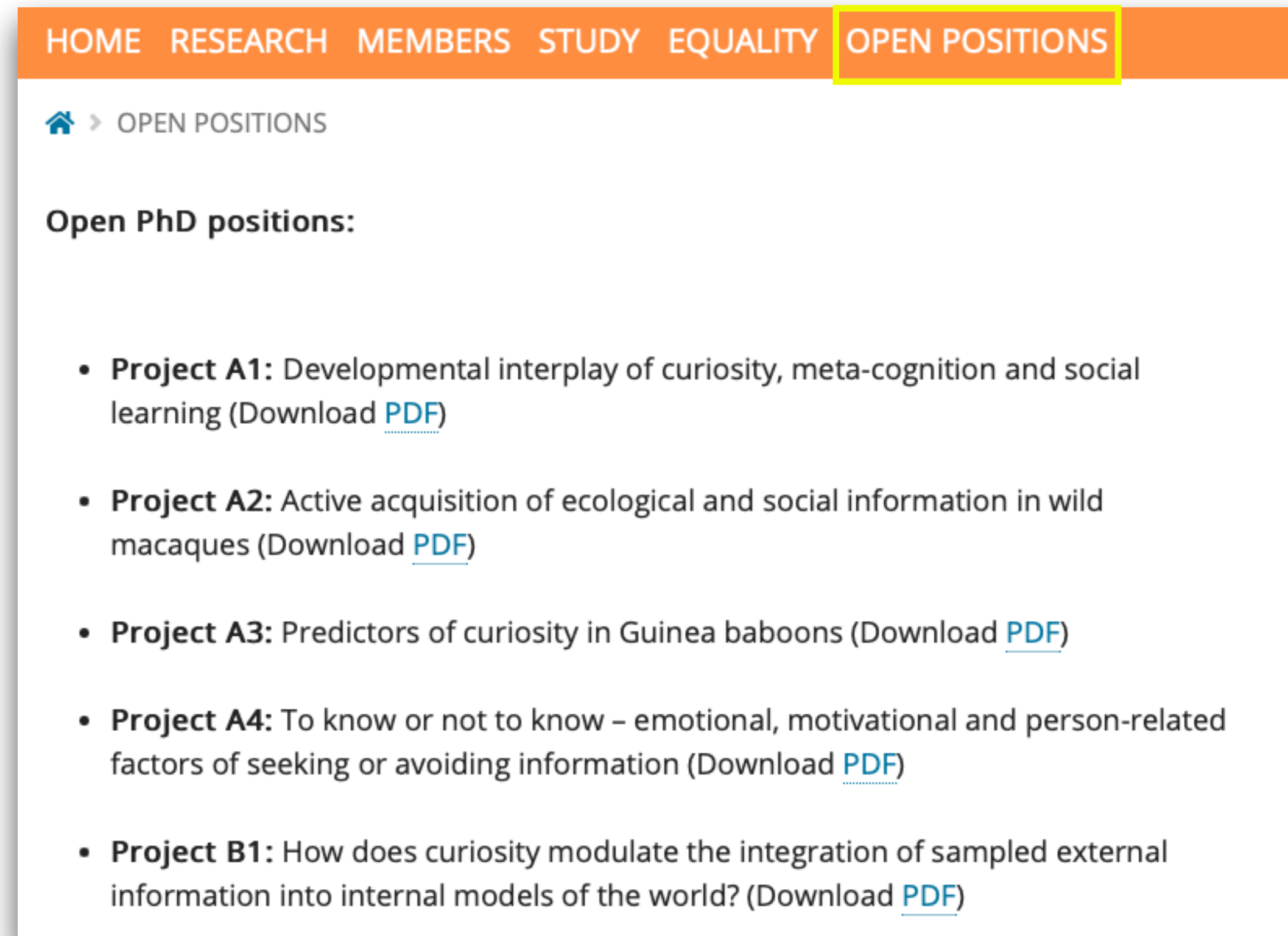
Develops new ML-enabled experimental paradigms in cognitive science
e.g., curiosity in freely moving subjects with head-mounted eye tracking & model data using artificial vision systems

Curiosity-Score

Benchmarks

I'd like to apply - how do I go about this?

1. Download the advertisement PDF from the RTG website:



HOME RESEARCH MEMBERS STUDY EQUALITY **OPEN POSITIONS**

[HOME](#) > OPEN POSITIONS

Open PhD positions:

- **Project A1:** Developmental interplay of curiosity, meta-cognition and social learning (Download [PDF](#))
- **Project A2:** Active acquisition of ecological and social information in wild macaques (Download [PDF](#))
- **Project A3:** Predictors of curiosity in Guinea baboons (Download [PDF](#))
- **Project A4:** To know or not to know – emotional, motivational and person-related factors of seeking or avoiding information (Download [PDF](#))
- **Project B1:** How does curiosity modulate the integration of sampled external information into internal models of the world? (Download [PDF](#))

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/open+positions/681638.html>

I'd like to apply - how do I go about this?

2. Read the “How to apply” section in the PDF *carefully*

- For Projects A1, A2, A4, B1, B3, B4, C5, Postdoc 1 (Dev. Psych.), Postdoc 2 (Machine Learning) you need to **submit your application online via the University Portal** (each project has a unique Portal link)

E.g., this is the portal link for Project A1:

Please upload your application in one pdf file including the usual documents until 1/15/2024 on the application portal of the university using this link:

<http://obp.uni-goettingen.de/de-de/OBF/Index/74255> or more information get in touch with Nivedita Mani directly via E-Mail:

Nivedita.Mani@psych.uni-goettingen.de, Tel. +49-551-39-23617 .

- For projects A3, B2 and C1, we ask you to **submit your application by email or post**
 - For Project A3 and B2, please send your application to bewerbung@dpz.eu
 - For Project C1, please send your application to cschwie3@gwdg.de

What documents do I include in my application?

1. A Motivation Letter
2. A Curriculum Vitae
3. Degree Certificates*
4. Language Certificates*



Please aggregate your PDFs into one file ahead of submission!

**Certified copies*

Definition of certified copy: A duplicate of a document that has been verified as a true reproduction of the original by an authorised individual or organisation e.g., the Registrar's office of the University, a public notary, a local court, or a German embassy

Note. In case it is not possible to make certified copies of your certificates by 15.01.2024: proceed with your application and just submit a normal scan of your certificates -> should your application move into the next round, we will need to see certified copies

FAQ: Do I need to provide you with references/contact information of referees?

A: Not at this stage but if your application moves into the next round, we will ask for this information (so it doesn't hurt to already line this up)

What does a “good” motivation letter look like?

- A good motivation letter is **well-structured**, it should have:
 - An opening paragraph
 - => Introduce yourself and give us a skeleton overview of what the letter contains
 - Body paragraphs
 - => outline your reasons for applying, **why are you a good fit for this particular project?**
 - => What skills/experience do you possess that qualify you for the position? Hint: **give concrete examples**
 - A clear conclusion
 - => Bring your letter to a close and reiterate your interest before signing off
- A good motivation letter is **concise** (ideally not longer than two pages)
- Remember to **proofread** grammar and spelling - first impressions count!

What does a “good” CV look like?

- A CV provides the reader with a concise overview of your life achievements to-date
- A strong CV might include the following sections:
 1. Personal details/Contact information
 2. Research objective or Personal Profile
 3. Education (listed in reverse chronological order)
 4. Professional appointments (work experience related to the position, list in reverse chronological order)
 5. Research publications (if applicable)
 6. Awards and Honours
 7. Grants (if applicable)
 8. Conference contributions
 9. Teaching experience (if applicable)
 10. Additional activities (e.g., “Service and outreach” activities)
 11. Languages and skills (e.g., Software knowledge)

Formatting tip -> be consistent (e.g., if using DD.MM.YYYY, don't switch to DD/MM/YYYY)
But don't lose yourself in the formatting - the content is what counts...

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I am interested in multiple projects; can I submit an application to more than one project?
2. I don't 100% fulfil the profile requirements, should I still apply?
3. I don't speak German but the job advertisement says German language skills would be advantageous, should I still apply?
4. I have my own idea for a project on curiosity and would rather do this than what the project suggest, should I still apply?
5. I have not completed my Masters yet, but will be done by Autumn 2024, can I apply?

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Open PhD positions:

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FAQ

PhD FAQ can be downloaded [here](#)

Postdoc FAQ can be downloaded [here](#)

Answers to these questions and more can be found here:

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/open+positions/681638.html>

Applications are due:

15.01.2024

