



## Green light for Optobiology Center: Construction work begins on North Campus

At a time characterised by massive cost-cutting measures in the university sector, a positive decision has been made on the subject of university construction: the main committee of the Berlin House of Representatives has given the green light for the new optobiology research building on the North Campus. The construction costs will be borne jointly by the federal government and the state of Berlin. The new Optobiology Center of HU and Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin will provide space for cutting-edge interdisciplinary research. 110 scientists will research the interaction between light and organisms as well as medical light applications on 3,900 square meters of floor space. Construction work under the direction of the Senate Department for Urban Development, Building and Housing will begin at the end of February with the demolition of the old stables. During the four-year construction period, there will be restrictions on the North Campus. From 3 March, access to the North Campus via Claire-Waldoff-Straße and Reinhardtstraße/Panketer/Bunker will be closed.

[Find out more about construction planning and research content](#)

## Administration & Service

### Capital city allowance: Universities and trade unions at odds

The capital city allowance collective agreement is a supplementary collective agreement to the collective agreement for the federal states, which was negotiated in November 2024 and will come into force on 1 April 2025. Whether this also applies to Berlin's universities is controversial. From the point of view of the Berlin universities and the Municipal Employers' Association, employees of the universities are not entitled to the bonus, as this is not a collective agreement covered by the takeover clauses. Therefore, no bonus will be paid to university employees as of 1 April. Unlike the Senate Administration itself and the state authorities, the Berlin Senate does not grant the universities and colleges any additional funds to finance a capital city allowance. The trade unions, on the other hand, are calling for the allowance to be paid. They rejected the universities' proposal to clarify the legal issue in a test case. The universities continue to press for a quick clarification.

### Demonstration: For fewer cuts and more solidarity

On 22 February, many representatives of Berlin's universities responded to the call to take to the streets for good studies and secure employment as well as solidarity-based funding for Berlin. In particular, they criticised the drastic funding cuts by the Berlin Senate and the potential impact on universities. A broad alliance of trade unions, associations and initiatives had called for the "Berlin is uncuttable" demonstration. Around 5,000 people demonstrated in front of the Rotes Rathaus.

[Read the message on the intranet](#)

### International Women's Day: Women's General Assembly on 13 March

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Central Women's and Gender Equality Officer cordially invites all women\* at HU to the Women's General Assembly. Every year, the event provides a stage for gender equality issues and an opportunity for women at this university to exchange ideas and network. The event will take place on 13 March from 13 to 15 in the Senate Hall, Unter den Linden 6, and is entitled: "Mastering challenging situations in everyday (university) life calmly!". In the interactive training session with health coach Nicole Langer, strategies for more balance and resilience will be taught. Afterwards, all attendees are invited to round off the afternoon with a small reception and get into conversation with each other.

[Further information on the women's plenary session](#)

### Employee Self Service: Digital retrieval of salary documents

Since January 2023, Humboldt-Universität employees have been able to retrieve their salary statements, social security registration certificates and income tax statements for previous calendar years (from 2023) via the Employee Self Service (ESS). The electronic wage tax statement for the 2024 calendar year and the 2024 annual social security return are also available in the ESS. It is not possible to retrieve documents in the ESS for periods prior to 1 January 2023.

[Read more about the ESS](#)

## Research & Teaching

### Picture gallery: Opening of the BUA travelling exhibition

Manuela Bojadžijev is Professor of Migration in Global Perspective at the Institute for European Ethnology and the Berlin Institute for Empirical Integration and Migration Research (BIM). Dr Yong-Mi Rauch is a literary scholar and head of the Department of Historical Collections at the HU University Library. The two Humboldtians have in common that they are involved in projects sponsored by the Berlin University Alliance (BUA). On 19 February, they presented their work as part of a 'Meet the Scientist' discussion - an event to mark the opening of the current BUA touring exhibition, which is currently on display in the main building of Humboldt-Universität. The exhibition was opened by HU President Julia von Blumenthal and runs until 27 February.

[View the picture gallery and read the follow-up report](#)

### Academic freedom: HU joins the declaration of the Gender Studies Association

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin has endorsed the current declaration by the Gender Studies Association 'Resolutely countering attacks on the freedom of research and teaching'. The declaration was prompted by demands from the AfD to stop funding gender research. The Fachgesellschaft Geschlechterstudien views this demand as an attack on academic freedom, which is an indispensable component of democracy. Any restriction of academic freedom would not only harm academia, but society as a whole. Scientists at HU have been dealing with issues of women's and gender studies for more than four decades. Research and teaching in the field of gender studies in all participating disciplines at HU is now coordinated by the Centre for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies (ZtG), which brings together expertise from all areas.

[Read statement](#)

### History meets the future: Ancient plaster relief shows climate change

The unique plaster relief of the Swiss Aletsch Glacier was created in the early 19th century. It was made by the carpenter and topographer Joachim Eigen Müller and was once in the Kunstkammer of the Berlin Palace. Today, only a section remains, which is on display in the Humboldt Forum. A video combines the 3D model, which accurately recreates the Aletsch Glacier before it was destroyed by industry and tourism, with maps and data from climate research. The video shows how the glaciation of the Alps has decreased and expanded again over the millennia during alternating warm and cold periods - and how the ice has been melting ever faster since the beginning of the 20th century as a result of man-made global warming. In the 'International Year of Glacier Conservation', the film calls on us to do everything we can to stop climate change. The United Nations is also using the year to remind us that the melting of glaciers also jeopardises water supplies.

[Watch video about Aletsch Glacier](#)

### Workshop: Promoting learning communities in hybrid settings

Learning as a social form thrives on collaboration and dialogue within a group. At universities, the group composition is heterogeneous and learning communities develop and change dynamically. But how can this principle be implemented in hybrid teaching/learning settings in which students interact with each other on site and online? A workshop is dedicated to the specific challenges and opportunities of learning communities in synchronous hybrid settings. It will take place on 20 March from 9 am to 13:00, also in a hybrid format, at the Berlin Centre for University Teaching and Online via Zoom.

[Find out more about the event and register](#)

### Staff Week: Diversity, innovation and entrepreneurship

How can educational activities be designed to be inclusive and promote diversity and equal opportunities? Aarhus University invites academic and administrative staff to the Circle U. Staff Week in Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The programme offers concrete tools, practical insights and a network that can help to successfully implement concepts for equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion. The event will take place in Aarhus from 27 to 29 April and the application period ends on 6 March. Participation is free of charge, travel expenses can be covered by Erasmus+ mobility grants.

[Find out more and apply](#)

### Research in Paris: Funding for collaborative projects

The Visiting Researchers Programme of the Université Paris Cité invites researchers to France for collaborative projects in the humanities and social sciences. The aim is to initiate joint projects. Visiting researchers are paid travel expenses and a daily allowance for a maximum of 15 days. Stays as part of the programme can take place in the year following the application (2026) in the period from January to July or between September and December. Interested researchers can contact colleagues at the Université Paris Cité. They can then submit a joint project proposal for the guest stay by 9 March.

[Go to the call for applications](#)

### Invitation: German course for international guest researchers

The Humboldt International Campus offers international guest researchers at the HU a free German course at A2 level. Participation is open to doctoral candidates and postdocs who are doing research at HU in the summer semester. The course expands vocabulary and grammar for more confidence in everyday situations. Interactive exercises strengthen oral and written language skills. Participants can also take part in cultural events. The course takes place from 7 to 14 July, Mondays from 16 to 18:30. The registration deadline is 7 March.

Register for the German course by e-mail: [humboldt.perspectives@hu-berlin.de](mailto:humboldt.perspectives@hu-berlin.de)

### University Pearl 2025: Science meets business

This year, the Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft is once again funding small research projects. Once a month, the association will honour an innovative, exemplary project with the Hochschulperle award. At the end of the year, the University Pearl of the Year, endowed with 3,000 euros, is selected from the twelve projects. For 2025, the focus is on research in collaboration with companies. Applications are possible at any time.

[Read more about the call for applications and apply](#)

### Adlershof Dissertation Prize: Research in a nutshell

Three young researchers will present their dissertation topics in short, easy-to-understand presentations on 20 March from 15:00 at the Erwin Schrödinger Centre on the Adlershof campus. The most convincing presentation to the audience and the jury will win the Adlershof Dissertation Award, which is endowed with 3,000 euros.

The prize has been awarded by Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, WISTA Management GmbH and IGAFa since 2002. It honours excellent dissertations that have been written in Adlershof in the last 18 months. The nomination alone is worth 1,000 euros.

[Find out more about the young researchers](#)

## Berlin University Alliance

### Doctorate: Kick-off retreat for new doctoral candidates

Young researchers at the beginning of their doctorate are invited to a three-day kick-off retreat. Experienced trainers impart practical knowledge on project planning and science communication as well as information on the science system and important contact points. There will also be plenty of opportunities for dialogue and networking with doctoral candidates from all disciplines from all over Berlin. The kick-off retreat will take place in March at the Hotel & Spa Sommerfeld.

[For German-speaking group: 24-26 March registration](#)  
[For English-speaking group: register 26-28 March](#)

### Event: Shaping AI responsibly

Can artificial intelligence and open knowledge strengthen each other? How free should this knowledge be? To what extent can these technologies be designed to be fair, sustainable and socially robust? These key questions will be the focus of an event organised by the Berlin University Alliance in cooperation with the Weizenbaum Institute and Wikimedia Deutschland on 25 March from 10 am to 8 pm. The focus will be on knowledge exchange and networking within academia as well as cooperation between academia, business and civil society. The event will conclude with a panel discussion with representatives from politics, business and academia. The event 'Yes, we are open! Shaping Artificial Intelligence with Responsibility' will take place at the Weizenbaum Institute, Hardenbergstraße 32, 10623 Berlin.

[Find more information and register](#)

## Personalia

### Retirement: Karsten Roth and Peter Otten say goodbye

Karsten Roth and Peter Otten are taking their well-deserved retirement and leaving the Computer and Media Service (CMS) at Humboldt-Universität. Both have contributed significantly to the development and stability of the IT infrastructure over decades with their expertise and reliability. Karsten Roth has been part of the IT department since 1973 and has accompanied technological change for over half a century. He always combined his expertise with an open ear for the needs of users. Peter Otten has supported the hardware service since 2000. Particularly known for his 'printer knowledge', he rescued countless devices. With his calm, focused manner and his commitment to the loan pool, he also ensured that work equipment was available quickly and reliably. The CMS team would like to thank both of them for their many years of service and wish them a fulfilling retirement.

### New official bulletins

Current issues of the Official Bulletins can be found [here](#). Please send inquiries about AMBs to: [frauke.weiss@uvu.hu-berlin.de](mailto:frauke.weiss@uvu.hu-berlin.de)