



Groundbreaking ceremony: New Centre for Optobiology

At the end of August, the starting signal was given for the construction of the new Centre for Optobiology. Together with HU President Julia von Blumenthal, the Berlin Senator for Urban Development, Building and Housing, Christian Gaebler, the Senator for Science, Health and Care, Ina Czyborra, and the Charité CEO Heyo K. Kroemer took part in the official groundbreaking ceremony. The research building is being developed in close partnership with the Charité as part of the "Life Science" campus. On the approximately 3,800-square-metre site at the Campus Nord, laboratory and office workspaces for 110 researchers are planned. The currently expected construction costs of around 80 million euros will be mostly covered (approx. 68 million euros) by the federal government and the state of Berlin. Any potential additional costs will be borne by HU and the Charité.

[Read the full article](#)

[Learn more about the construction progress](#)

[View photo gallery](#)

Out of Sequence

University agreements: Presidiums recommend approval of amendment

The presidiums of Berlin's universities recommend their academic bodies approve the amendment to the existing university agreements with the Berlin Senate. After a cut of 142 million euros in university budgets in the current period, the amendment provides for renewed increases between 2026 and 2028. However, these increases fall well short of the originally agreed 5% annual funding growth. This follows over six months of intensive negotiations. The current draft is now under interdepartmental review within the Senate and will then require approval from the Berlin House of Representatives. Only after this step can the universities sign the amendment.

[Read the full article](#)

Research & Teaching

Circle U.: Interview with Communication Officer Franziska Helms

In the International Department Franziska Helms is responsible, among other things, for communications for the Circle U. alliance. In this EU-initiated programme, HU, together with eight other European partner universities, is testing a new level of cooperation in teaching, research, and administration. Helms, who has been involved for four years, discusses upcoming projects in the interview and explains why the exchange with the University of Belgrade is currently particularly important.

[Read interview](#)

CENTRAL Leadership Program: Closing event on 9 September

The International Department warmly invites you to the closing ceremony of this year's CENTRAL Leadership Programme (CLP). The programme brings together emerging talents from Central and Eastern Europe with representatives from academia, politics, and civil society to discuss socio-political and foreign policy challenges in Central Europe. The event takes place on 9 September from 4:00 p.m. in the HU Senate Hall. The keynote speech will be delivered by former *Süddeutsche Zeitung* correspondent Thomas Urban, followed by a panel discussion. Registration is open until 3 September via: events@hu-berlin.de.

[Find out more](#)

12th International Congress for Belarus Studies at HU

From 25 to 27 September, the 12th International Congress for Belarus Studies will take place at HU. The aim of the congress, organised jointly with several partners, is to build an international community of scholars, analysts, and experts focusing on Belarus, and to promote knowledge about Belarus at national, regional, and global levels within the academic world. The main working languages of the congress are Belarusian and English.

[Learn more about the congress](#)

Circle U. Postdoc Mobility Programme: Apply by 15th September

The Postdoctoral Mobility Fellowships are aimed at early-career researchers from Circle U. universities who wish to gain experience at a partner institution. During a research stay, fellows can, for example, get to know a potential future research group. Eligibility requires that applicants are employed at a Circle U. university, already have contacts at the host institution, and are invited by a senior colleague. Fellowships are awarded for stays of 5 to 30 days and include daily allowances and a lump sum for travel expenses. The application deadline is 15 September.

[Go to call](#)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Apply for Circle U. funding by 31 October

For the second time, Circle U. is offering funding for initiatives in the field of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I). Students, administrative staff, and researchers at Circle U. member institutions are invited to develop innovative projects that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within academic settings. A total of 12,000 euros is available per funding round, with up to 4,000 euros per individual project. Funding is granted for a maximum of one year. The deadline for applications is 31 October.

[Go to call](#)

From studies to doctorate: Apply for Humboldt Research Track Scholarships by 15 October

The Humboldt-Universität is once again awarding Humboldt Research Track Scholarships. This six-month scholarship supports outstanding graduates or students close to completing their Master's degree in preparing their doctoral project. To make the path to a doctorate more accessible for candidates with disabilities or chronic illnesses, applications from this group are given special consideration. Deadline: 15 October for funding starting 1 January, 1 February, or 1 March 2026.

[More information on scholarships](#)

Open Humboldt Freiräume 2026/27: Apply by 17 October

The Open Humboldt Freiräume funding line at the Zentrum für Kulturtechnik provides support for researchers developing collaborative projects with societal partners. Professors and academic staff may apply either for teaching relief in the summer semester 2026 or winter semester 2026/27 – or, newly added this year – funding for student assistant positions in 2026. The initiative is funded by the Berlin University Alliance. The application deadline is 17 October. Online info sessions are taking place on 16 September and 7 October.

[More information on Open Humboldt Freiräume](#)

Administration & Service

Photo gallery: Humboldt University welcomes new trainees

21 new colleagues have begun their training at HU. During a welcome event on 1 September, they were greeted by Vice President for Finance, Human Resources and Operations, Niels Helle-Meyer, and Head of Training, Carola Hahn. Afterwards, the new trainees explored the Campus Mitte in a team rally. They will train in six different professions and spend approximately three years at HU. We wish them all the best!

[View photo gallery](#)

Podcast tip: HU President in "Talking About Israel and Palestine"

The podcast "Talking About Israel and Palestine" is a project by the non-profit Gesellschaft im Wandel, founded by social activist and entrepreneur Shai Hoffmann. The aim is to reflect the diversity of opinions in German society on this complex and emotionally charged issue. On 22 August, HU President Julia von Blumenthal joined host Shai Hoffmann to discuss the role of universities in such debates – particularly in light of recent pro-Palestinian protests at HU. She addressed how to deal with threats and violence and how universities can create spaces for dialogue. The episode also touches on the student group "Tacheles" and their engagement with the topic.

[Listen to podcast](#)

Professional development: Suggest courses for 2026

The planning for the 2026 Professional Development Programme is underway. To ensure it meets the needs of staff, the team welcomes concrete suggestions for course topics. These can cover subject-specific content, work and communication techniques, qualifications for roles in university administration or academia, IT skills, health-related topics, or leadership challenges.

[Submit your suggestions as a comment](#) or via email to

berufliche.weiterbildung@uv.hu-berlin.de

Year-end closing: Important accounting deadlines

The Budget and Personnel Department kindly asks all responsible staff to observe the accounting deadlines for the 2025 year-end closing. To ensure a timely financial close, all relevant documents and transactions must be submitted or completed on time.

[View year-end 2025 deadlines](#)

[View year-end 2026 deadlines](#)

Berlin University Alliance

Table.Forum Grand Challenges: Responsible innovation

To tackle the major transformations of our time, we need sustainable solutions that are socially, economically, and environmentally viable within planetary boundaries. The responsibility that research holds towards society, and how society can be involved in finding solutions, will be discussed by Prof. Dr Sabine Ammon, philosopher at the Technical University of Berlin, and Dr Dr René von Schomberg, Science & Technology Studies scholar and philosopher at RWTH Aachen, in the third Table Forum Grand Challenges on 9 September at 12:00. The event will take place online and attendance is free of charge.

[Read more about the forum and register](#)

Personalia

Appointment: Verena Lepper becomes Head of Antiquities at the Getty Villa in LA

Prof Dr. Verena Lepper, Executive Director of the Institute for Ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic Religious History at HU, has been appointed Head of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. The collection comprises more than 45,000 items. In her new role, the renowned Egyptologist and Orientalist will also oversee the organisation, planning and delivery of special exhibitions and public programmes at the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

[Read article](#)

New Official Bulletins

Current issues of the Official Bulletins can be found [here](#). Further information: frauke.weiss@uv.hu-berlin.de