

Belongings: Landecker International Doctoral Program Jerusalem-Leipzig Doctoral Fellowships in the Study of Jewish Material Culture in Twentieth-Century Europe and Beyond

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem invites applicants for a unique **doctoral program** in Jewish Studies. The first cohort of “Belongings: Landecker International Doctoral Program Jerusalem-Leipzig,” a cooperation between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI), Leipzig University (LU), and the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow (DI) in Germany, commenced its work in Leipzig in August 2024. **A second cohort is due to start in August 2025.** With the help of generous funding from the Alfred Landecker Foundation and the DFG (The German Research Foundation), the program offers interdisciplinary training to doctoral students in the fields of in modern European and Jewish history, German and Slavic literary studies, philosophy, cultural studies, folklore and performance studies, and art history.

The duration of the doctoral program is for four years. Each doctoral fellowship will include **a monthly stipend of 6500 NIS, basic research and travel funds, and working space.** The fellows will benefit from academic and professional mentorship by a diverse international faculty and staff, affiliation to a cutting-edge, interdisciplinary cohort of doctoral students, and the opportunity to acquire career skills at the interface between the university and a range of cultural institutions.

"Belongings" is an International Research Training Group (IRTG) that proceeds from the idea that Jewish history can be reconstructed, narrated, and commemorated in substantial and innovative fashion through the analysis of its world of objects. This includes objects that were lost, imagined, longed for, or that left a recognizable void due to the cataclysms of the twentieth century. The polysemous quality of the English term "belonging(s)," which can mean both "being affiliated to a specific context" and "being owned," serves as a framework for the IRTG's exploration of individual as well as collective notions of the relationship between people and objects. The IRTG aims to scrutinize objects of Jewish provenance, but also those that proved meaningful to a specific Jewish community for cultural, religious, or economic reasons, among others. While understanding the Holocaust as the centre of gravity for the topic, the IRTG delves into the material worlds of the late nineteenth century and reaches forward into the present, seeking new tools to offer nuanced insights into the diverse European Jewish worlds and their entanglements with their non-Jewish surroundings. The shift of the centres of Jewish life in the twentieth century from Europe to the Americas and Palestine/Israel is likewise taken into account.

“Belongings” welcomes project proposals relating to one or more of its five **interdisciplinary research clusters**:

- **"Practice"** concentrates on the everyday use of objects. Different forms of production, consumption, and practices that range from the domestic to the public



are analyzed from the perspective of *Alltagsgeschichte*, folklore studies, cultural and gender history (responsible PIs: Prof. Maren Möhring, UL; Dr. Dani Schrire, HUJI)

- **"Ownership"** reflects upon the contested meanings of loss, recovery, or restitution of Jewish property and material heritage after its destruction and translocation during the Holocaust. Projects will focus on the shifting claims connected to objects and their role in (re)shaping Jewish life after 1945 (responsible PIs: Dr. Elisabeth Gallas, DI; Prof. Dirk van Laak, UL; Prof. Yfaat Weiss, UL/DI/HUJI)
- **"Text"** focuses on the material lives, fragmentations, translations, dispersions and collections of texts in European Jewish cultures while also exploring the notion of materiality within Jewish literary and philosophical production (responsible PIs: Prof. Dieter Burdorf, UL; Dr. Aya Elyada, HUJI; Dr. Enrico Lucca, DI; Prof. Benjamin Pollock, HUJI)
- The connection between materiality, memory, and affectivity stands at the center of the Cluster **"Memory"**, which addresses the role played by Jewish material culture in the process of shaping the memory and post-memory of the Holocaust in different historical and national contexts and narratives responsible PIs: Prof. Anna Artwińska, UL; Prof. Manuela Consonni, HUJI)
- **"Stage"** explores the way objects and art works are staged, exhibited, and curated in different ensembles and environments. The spectrum of how the stories of Jewish objects are narrated, how they are identified, classified, and performed while being detached from original contexts, forms the core interest (responsible PIs: Dr. Diego Rotman, HUJI; Prof. Tanja Zimmermann, UL)

The **Qualification Program for the Doctoral Researchers** in the framework of the IRTG is built to enable candidates to complete their PhD within a 4-year-time span, to build a vibrant international research network, and to be well-prepared for a career in academia or other related professions. The second cohorts from HUJI and LU/DI will divide their first two years between Jerusalem and Leipzig (in the light of security considerations, decisions about which year will be spent in each locations will be made in the coming months). The doctoral researchers will have joint German-Israeli supervision.

During its first two years, the program entails an introductory week-long seminar, a two-semester mentored reading seminar, a research proposal and chapter workshop, a summer school, as well as a research colloquium. Funding is available for archival and research stays worldwide. The researchers will have the option to gain professional experiences through a practical semester or teaching, if feasible within their research. An important part of the program is intensive language training (funded through the program)

during the first five semesters in Hebrew/German respectively and possible additional training in project-specific languages. Courses in academic key skills will also be offered.

Researchers of all nationalities holding a Master's degree (or equivalent with written thesis; in all cases submission of respective thesis no later than June 2024) in the aforementioned fields are welcome to **apply for acceptance to the doctoral program**. As the working language of the program is English, proficiency in this language is required. As a rule dissertations are to be written in English.

Requirements

- Completion of Master's Degree program with Thesis (minimum 85 grade average, 90 thesis)
- Initial project idea/proposal fitting the IRTG research program
- Willingness to participate and contribute actively to an interdisciplinary and international research program
- Very good written and oral English language skills

Expectations

- Conducting research and writing a doctoral thesis
- Active and regular participation in the structured qualification program as member of one of the clusters
- Presentation of own research at workshops and conferences
- Active exchange with international project partners and co-supervisors, including research stays at the partner university
- Organizational tasks (co-organizing of workshops, research colloquia, conferences; compilation of reports)

What we offer

- An exciting, interdisciplinary and international working environment with structured supervision
- A wide range of opportunities for the acquisition of academic and further professional skills; a close relationship with museums, archives, and libraries that preserve and exhibit Jewish material culture, to encourage collaboration outside the university at an early stage in the doctoral researcher's careers
- A modern workplace and attractive working conditions (mobile working)
- Flexible working hours and a family-friendly program structure

For further information on the doctoral program and the recruitment process please contact: Rosenzweig@mail.huji.ac.il.

The **deadline for submission** of all application materials is **March 31, 2025**. Interviews via Zoom for short-list candidates are planned for the first half of **May, 2025**. Successful candidates will be

guided through the registration process of the Authority of Research Students at Hebrew University. Final acceptance into the "Belongings" program is contingent upon acceptance through the Authority of Research Students.

Application process

1. Complete the [online application form](#)
2. **The following documents should be uploaded** via the Documents Upload page (please send your application in English):
 - a letter of motivation.
 - a CV.
 - a project proposal indicating two clusters that seem most suitable/desired (max. 3 pages).
 - English copies of university degrees.
3. **Two letters of recommendation**, from tenured researchers- should be uploaded according to these guidelines
4. To complete the submission process go to the Submission Status page and follow the guidelines