

Call for Applications: International and Interdisciplinary Spring School

**HUMAN DIFFERENTIATION:
UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL MAKING OF HUMAN
CATEGORIES**

April 2–10, 2025

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

Focusing on the role of differentiation and its significance for lived experience, the Collaborative Research Center 1482 “Studies in Human Differentiation” [Humandifferenzierung] invites you to apply for a spring school at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany in April 2025.

This year’s spring school pays specific attention to the processes of differentiation and categorization and traces them along different axes, such as dis/ability, gender, sexuality, race, religion, age, class or human/non-human (such as animals or machines). By taking the temporal variability of processes of differentiation into account, we ask: how is difference textured, diluted, and performed? The spring school thus ties into a variety of contexts and relates to different fields, such as spatial planning, the formation of institutions, verbal and non-verbal communication, technology, diverse forms of representation, and other cultural practices.

Drawing from a wide range of disciplines, the spring school provides an innovative and interdisciplinary environment, based on the input and experiences of the scholars of the Collaborative Research Centre at Mainz as well as international speakers and, most importantly, the presence of international doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. The program not only offers focused workshops and keynotes by renowned speakers from different disciplines, but also provides the chance for self-directed writing retreats as well as an inspiring leisure program in the vibrant student city of Mainz.

Together, we want to investigate questions such as:

- How are differentiations between people constructed and which markers are they based on?
- What are the historical and geo-political contexts of specific kinds of differentiation?
- Which institutions, technologies, and infrastructures govern practices of differentiation?
- What are the effects of differentiation and how might they impact access to public resources, discourses and social participation?
- What are the (inter-)personal, cognitive dimensions of differentiation and how do they relate to affect?
- Which contexts – places/spaces/times – and purposes of differentiation can be identified?

With keynote lectures, workshops, and discussions by

Mia Bay, Mehita Iqani, Angelika Linke, Anna Ripatti, Mithu Sanyal, Ashley Shew, Anne Schult, Ori Schwarz, and Robin Smith as well as Gabriele Schabacher and other members of our CRC.

Application

We are excited to host an interdisciplinary and international group of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. We therefore welcome applications from all disciplines (in the cultural and social sciences as well as the humanities). To apply, please send us a short description of your current project (between 1 and 2 pages) and a CV in English. In your description, please outline your topic, methods, current stage in the process, and how your project relates to the overarching topics of the spring school. How do you imagine your project will benefit from discussions of approaches, methods, theories, or case studies regarding practices of human categorization?

Please submit the above-mentioned documents in one PDF-file via e-mail to springschool1482@uni-mainz.de until October 1st, 2024.

Please check our homepage for updates:

https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de/en/event/spring_school_2025

Accessibility

We are dedicated to provide a spring school that is as accessible as possible to every participant. Please use your application to let us know about specific access needs and further support requests, for instance regarding our conference space and schedule or childcare options, so we can include them specifically in our planning.

Mirjam Kreuser (m.kreuser@uni-mainz.de) and Miriam Brunnengräber (m.brunnengraeber@uni-mainz.de) will be responsible for the accessibility coordination and can be approached specifically concerning access questions before and during the conference.

Funding

Participants are responsible for organizing and financing their own travel and accommodation. If funding cannot be provided by the participant's home institution, the CRC will do its best to provide logistical and financial support.