

At the University of Göttingen -Public Law Foundation-, Graduiertenkolleg 2906 Neugier, there is a position as

PhD position in Computational Neuroscience: Curiosity [C3] (all genders welcome)
Entgeltgruppe 13 TV-L/100%

to be filled. Starting date is 8/1/2026. The position is limited to 7/31/2029.

As part of a research network that has been established at the University of Göttingen in 2024 - *Research Training Group (RTG) 2906 Curiosity* - we advertise here a PhD position for an initial period of three years, with a very strong possibility of extension for a further year. The project is expected to commence on August 1st, 2026.

Across eleven projects, scientists in the second cohort of the RTG 2906 will investigate the neuropsychological, biological, and computational underpinnings of curiosity. The network comprises a highly interdisciplinary consortium of psychologists, biologists as well as systems and computational neuroscientists who will work together to answer three broad research questions: (A) *When* are we curious? (B) *Why* are we curious? and (C) *How* are we curious? The PhD position advertised here will explore how and under which conditions neural networks or artificial agents should change their learning rules and strategies to optimally implement curious learning. The PhD researcher will work together with Viola Priesemann, her group, and the interdisciplinary RTG PIs and doctoral researchers, making use of statistical physics, artificial agents (including LLMs), and/or information theory to investigate the basic principles of curious learning.

Your profile:

- M.Sc. degree (or equivalent) in one of the quantitative sciences e.g., Physics, Neuroscience, Engineering, Data Science, Mathematics, Machine Learning
- Programming or analytical skills
- Proficiency in English (at least B2; proof of language capability might be needed once the candidate is accepted); German language skills are not required

What we offer:

- A highly interdisciplinary and collaborative, team-oriented research environment at the University of Göttingen and the Max Planck Institute for Dynamics and Self-Organization
- Structured supervision by an interdisciplinary Thesis Advisory Committee
- High performance computing infrastructure
- Enrolment in a training programme comprising compulsory and elective courses suited to individual needs and goals, as well as regular retreats and summer schools
- The possibility to participate in teaching if one is interested
- Ample funding for conferences and external laboratory visits

RTG 2906 is based in Göttingen, a university town with 28,000 students across all disciplines. The Göttingen Campus has its overarching research foci in living networks, sustainability, and dynamics of change, and includes four Max-Planck Institutes, the German Primate Center, the Campus Institute for Data Science, and the Campus Institute for Dynamics of Biological Networks. The eleven doctoral projects are spread across these Göttingen Campus institutes. The group of Viola Priesemann is located at the Max Planck Institute for Dynamics and Self-Organization, with close ties to the University of Göttingen, and the Cluster of Excellence Multiscale Bioimaging.

How to apply:

Detailed information on the application process, the research project and the training programme are available on the RTG webpage (<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/rtg2906>). As part of the online application process you will be asked to upload a motivation letter and certified copies of your degree and language certificates. There will be a total of eleven open PhD positions in RTG 2906; in case you are applying for more than one position, please indicate this in your cover letter (n.b. applying for more than one position is in no way detrimental to your application). Please note that you must apply to each position separately.

- For questions about the position, please contact Prof. Dr. Viola Priesemann (website: <http://www.viola-priesemann.de>, mail: application.priesemann@ds.mpg.de)

If you have any questions about the application process, you can write to rtg2906@uni-goettingen.de

The University of Göttingen is an equal opportunities employer and places particular emphasis on fostering career opportunities for women. Qualified women are therefore strongly encouraged to apply in fields in which they are underrepresented. The university has committed itself to being a family-friendly institution and supports their employees in balancing work and family life. The University is particularly committed to the professional participation of severely disabled employees and therefore welcomes applications from severely disabled people. In the case of equal qualifications, applications from people with severe disabilities will be given preference. A disability or equality is to be included in the application in order to protect the interests of the applicant.

Please upload your application in one pdf file including the usual documents until 2/15/2026 on the application portal of the university using this link: <http://obp.uni-goettingen.de/de-de/OBF/Index/76191>. For more information get in touch with Aleksandra Bovt directly via E-Mail: abovt@uni-goettingen.de, Tel. +49 5513927963 .

Please note:

With submission of your application, you accept the processing of your applicant data in terms of data-protection law. Further information on the legal basis and data usage is provided in the [Information General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)

