

Career Plan

Christine Nussbaum

My background:

I am an empirical neuroscientist with a specialization in perceptual psychology, and I am mostly interested in the human voice. In my future research, I strive to advance our understanding on voice perception via high-quality basic and applied research, with a multimodal and interdisciplinary perspective. Currently, my primary research interest lies with the perception of naturalness in voices, and I plan to pursue my habilitation on this topic.

My mission:

In the digital era, synthesized and artificial voices have already become an integral part of our daily life, and with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) it is hard to keep up with the pace of new innovations. Yet, how this affects perception and interaction across different areas of application is insufficiently understood. In my view, it can be harmful if understanding lags behind application, because negative side effects can be overlooked. This problem is currently debated in many contexts of AI. I want to address it specifically for the domain of voice perception. My approach is rooted in voice perception theory, while simultaneously bridging various disciplines where aspects of naturalness play a critical role, such as human, pathological, manipulated and synthesized voices. In that vein, I want to advance theory, back it up with robust empirical knowledge, and effectively communicate it to a widespread readership.

Besides my passion for research, I am a dedicated teacher with ten years of practical experience. I take my responsibility as a lecturer as important as my research and find great joy in teaching future generations of psychologists. I am actively involved in the current implementation of the reformed study program, where I am mainly concerned with the non-clinical master programs and I will continue to engage in current political debates around psychological education in Germany.

My long-term career goals:

I see my academic future in Germany. Especially in structurally weaker parts of Germany, we are currently facing increased political tension and an atmosphere of hostility and mistrust towards science. Now more than ever, we need people in these regions who embody a clear commitment to education, science, and the freedom of the mind. I want to be one of these voices. Coming from a small town in eastern Germany myself, I want to be an example that being home-rooted does not exclude being open-minded, international, future-oriented and interconnected. Therefore, upon completing my PRIME fellowship, I plan on returning to Germany and, in the long run, striving for a permanent research position.

Why DAAD PRIME:

In the past years, the Friedrich Schiller University Jena has provided me with an extraordinary environment to develop my skills as a voice researcher. But now, it is time for new horizons. The DAAD offers me the unique opportunity to gain new perspectives from a different research environment, collaborate with and learn from world-leading voice researchers, obtain new research skills regarding state-of-the-art voice synthesis, interconnect with the large interdisciplinary network in London and boost my independent research career. Equipped with these valuable experiences, I will return to Germany where I will continue my work on voice naturalness on an international level within the EU-wide [VoCS](#) network, the [VRU](#), and beyond.