Postdoc/Research Associate (all genders) – Center for Cognitive Science

Prof. Tom Wallis, Prof. Frank Jäkel and Prof. Charley M. Wu invite applications for **a three year Postdoc position (100% TV-E13)** to work on research related to human categorization, program induction, and / or generative grammars for shapes. **The deadline is March 15th, 2026.**

The Centre for Cognitive Science at the Institute of Psychology brings together interdisciplinary teams to pursue innovative research projects. This project is a collaboration between three groups in the Centre: Perception (Prof. Wallis), Models of Higher Cognition (Prof. Jäkel) and Computational Cognitive Science (Prof. Wu), and is funded via the Excellence Cluster "The Adaptive Mind" (TAM; https://theadaptivemind-excellencecluster.de). The project will study how human can flexibly trade-off similarity and rule-based mechanisms to make category judgments, by developing a generative grammar of shapes and casting the problem as one of program induction. In collaboration with other TAM partners, we aim to characterize behavior in these tasks across the lifespan.

Positions will be based at TU Darmstadt, Germany, with flexible starting dates. Salaries are competitive by U.S. and European standards and commensurate with experience and expertise (German pay scale TV-E13). The working language is English; fluency in German is not required, though the university provides free German language courses for interested scientific staff.

About us:

TU Darmstadt stands for excellent and relevant science. We shape far-reaching processes of global change—from energy transition to artificial intelligence—through outstanding scientific knowledge and innovative academic programs. Our cutting-edge research focuses on three fields: Energy and Environment, Information and Intelligence, Matter and Materials. With strong ties to the Frankfurt Rhine-Main metropolitan region (~18 mins to Frankfurt HBF by train), we have an exceptionally international orientation and actively support European integration.

About our department:

TU Darmstadt is one of Europe's leading institutions in cognitive science and artificial intelligence (csrankings.org), bringing together interdisciplinary research on cognition through the Centre for Cognitive Science and intelligent systems as a member of the European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems (ELLIS). The department provides a vibrant, inclusive research environment and encourages extensive collaboration with leading cognitive science and AI researchers, both locally (via the Hessian AI Center) and internationally.

Your profile:

- completed Doctoral degree in cognitive science, computer science, psychology, or related fields
- familiarity with Python, R, MATLAB or similar programming languages
- business fluent English
- excellent communication, analytic, problem-solving and software skills
- organizational skills, highly motivated, team-player

We offer:

TU Darmstadt offers varied and challenging assignments, freedom to work independently, the latest technologies, good collaboration between colleagues in partnership, needs-based training opportunities and customized personnel development.

The fulfillment of the duties likewise enables the scientific qualifications of the candidate.

- Development and organisation – comprehensive in-house training offers, including the opportunity for continuing education and development;
- Annual leave/educational leave – 30 days annual leave (full-time employment) and 5 days educational leave;
- Sustainable and mobile – eligibility to free public transport in the state of Hesse with the LandesTicket Hessen (Hesse StateTicket) in accordance with the currently valid collective agreement, in addition to opportunities to working mobile at times;
- Fit and healthy – free of charge preventive medical check-ups and a wide-ranging subsidised sports programme
- Work-life balance – flexible working time models, plus BGM (*Betriebliches Gesundheitsmanagement* – University Health Management);
- Pension scheme – supplementary public service pension scheme (VBL) in accordance with the currently applicable regulations;
- University bicycle
- Family-friendliness/compatibility of family/care/career – (university-run) childcare services, child allowance (based on the collective agreement), childcare programmes during school holidays

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General information, data privacy:

TU Darmstadt intends to increase the number of female employees and encourages female candidates to apply. In case of equal qualifications, applicants with a degree of disability of at least 50 or equal will be given preference. Remuneration is in accordance with the collective agreement for the Technical University of Darmstadt (TV - TU Darmstadt). Part-time employment is generally possible.

By submitting your application, you agree that your data may be stored and processed for the purpose of filling the vacancy. You can find our privacy policy on our webpage.

Contact:

Further questions about the position should be directed to Prof. Wallis (thomas.wallis@tu-darmstadt.de), Prof. Jäkel (frank.jaekel@tu-darmstadt.de) or Prof. Wu (charley.wu@tu-darmstadt.de).

Your application should contain a CV, letter of motivation, certificates and transcripts, and contact data from two people who could act as referees upon request.

Submit your application here: https://www.career.tu-darmstadt.de/tu-darmstadt/apply/53882