

# Dr. Michael Gaebler

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## Education

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- Oct 2013 Dr. rer. nat. (PhD), **Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin**  
"Physiology of emotional & self-related processing in social anxiety disorder"  
Grade: *magna cum laude* | Dept. of Psychology
- Nov 2008 Master of Science (with distinction), **University College London**  
Grade: 1.0 | Field of study: Dual Masters Brain and Mind Sciences
- Sept 2007 Diplôme Interuniversitaire, **École Normale Supérieure & Université Paris VI**  
Grade: *mention bien* | Field of study: Dual Masters Brain and Mind Sciences
- Sept 2006 Bachelor of Science, **Universität Osnabrück**  
Grade: *excellent* | Field of study: Cognitive Science
- July 2005 Exchange year, **McGill University**, Montreal  
GPA: 3.61/4.0 | Field of study: Cognitive and Neuroscience
- July 2000 A-levels (Abitur), **Scheffold Gymnasium**, Schwäbisch Gmünd

## Appointments

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- since 2024 **International Max Planck Research School on Cognitive Neuroimaging**  
[Faculty member](#)
- since 2024 **COST-Action "An evolutionary view to understanding affective states across species (AFFECT-EVO)"**  
[Member of the management committee](#)
- since 2020 **Innovationsfond of the Gemeinsamer Bundesausschuss (G-BA)**  
[Member of the expert pool](#)
- since 2018 **Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Dept. of Psychology**  
[Member of the ethics committee](#)

## Experience

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|-----------------|---|
| since 03/2018   | <b>Max Planck Institute for Cognitive &amp; Brain Sciences, Leipzig</b><br><i>Group Leader, Mind-Body-Emotion Group, Dept. of Neurology</i> |
|                 | 01/2021-08/2022: 3 months full- & 16 months part-time paternal leave<br>03/2018-02/2019: 12 months part-time paternal leave                 |
| 07/2015-02/2018 | <b>Universität Leipzig</b><br><i>Postdoc, Leipzig Research Centre for Civilization Diseases</i>   |
|                 | 08/2017-02/2018: 3 months full- & 4 months part-time paternal leave   |
| 03/2014-06/2015 | <b>Max Planck Institute for Cognitive &amp; Brain Sciences, Leipzig</b><br><i>Postdoctoral Researcher, Dept. of Neurology</i>               |
| 11/2013-12/2013 | <b>Korea University, Seoul</b><br><i>Visiting Researcher, Dept. of Brain &amp; Cognitive Engineering</i>                                    |
| 03/2010-09/2013 | <b>Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin</b><br><i>Doctoral Researcher, Dept. of Psychiatry &amp; Psychotherapy</i>                          |
| 03/2009-12/2009 | Volunteering and travelling around <b>the world</b>   |
| 02/2009         | <b>Roland Berger Strategy Consultants</b> , Berlin & Copenhagen   |
| 10/2001-07/2002 | Studium Generale, <b>Leibniz Kolleg Tübingen</b>  |
| 08/2000-07/2001 | Civilian Community Service, <b>Hospital Diakonissenanstalt Flensburg</b>  |

## Scholarships and prizes

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|---------|--|
| 2024    | Award for excellent teaching 2024, Dept. of Education & Psychology, Freie Universität Berlin                                   |
| 2019    | "Best demo" award for project <b>VReha</b> at the <b>International Conference on Virtual Rehabilitation (ICVR)</b> , Tel Aviv. |
| 2013/14 | Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin - Postdoc Scholarship   |
| 2013    | Poster prize at <b>Emotions: Nature, Recognition, Culture</b> , Bochum.  |
| 2010-14 | Travel grants (e.g., Barbara Wengeler or GSK Foundation)   |
| 2006-8  | University College London - Tuition Fee Scholarship  |
| 2007/8  | German Academic Exchange Service - Graduate Scholarship  |
| 2004/5  | CREPUQ - Tuition Fee Scholarship for McGill University   |

## Grants as (co-)PI

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- 2025-2028 DFG-funded project "Examining the mechanisms that integrate cardiorespiratory interoception with active sensing (INTACT)"
- 2023-2026 DFG-funded project "Increasing eyewitness identification accuracy in lineups using 3D interactive virtual reality (3DIL)"
- 2023-2026 BMBF-funded project "Technology-assisted motor rehabilitation for patients with Rett Syndrome (TeMoRett)"
- 2023-2026 BMBF-funded project "Objective & hybrid assessment of cognitive & fatigue-associated Post-COVID symptoms with multimodal tools (EPSILON)"
- 2021-2025 Project "Neurocognitively-guided modelling of virtual humans for enhanced realism in immersive media (NEUROHUM)", funded by the Max Planck Society-Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft collaboration
- 2021-2022 BMBF-funded project "Mobile immersive virtual reality for a sensitive digital diagnostics of spatial neglect (3DIA)"
- 2020 EU-funded project, (XR4ALL initiative). "Exite-O-Meter: A Unity plugin to include bodily signals in XR development & evaluation"
- 2017-2021 BMBF-funded project "Virtual worlds for digital diagnostics & cognitive rehabilitation (VReha)"

## Grants as collaborator

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- 2024-28 COST-Action "An evolutionary view to understanding affective states across species (AFFECT-EVO)" (Main proposer: T. Smulders, Newcastle University)
- 2022-24 BBSRC International Partnership: "ManyFaces - int. network of face researchers" (PI: L. DeBruine, University of Glasgow)
- 2023-28 ANII - MPG Research Group at Universidad de la República, Montevideo, Uruguay: "Brain-body basis of social conflict approach-avoidance in depression & health" (PI: V. Gradin)
- 2023 Internationalization grant at Università di Torino, Italy: "Minimally invasive & continuous rating of affective experience in immersive VR" (PI: S. Carletto)

## Didactic and leadership training

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- March 2024 **Max Planck Society - IMPRS on Cognitive NeuroImaging**  
2-day seminar *Doctoral Supervision: Methods & Tools* [[Certificate](#)]
- May 2019 **Max Planck Society**  
1-day seminar *Leadership in Science* at the LeadNet Symposium
- March 2015 **Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin**  
3-day didactics course *Lehre lernen (Learning how to teach)* [[Certificate](#)]

## **Service to the profession**

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### **Reviewer or selection committee**

#### **Journals (selection)**

*Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Psychophysiology, Psychological Medicine, Trends in Neurosciences, NeuroImage, Translational Psychiatry, BMC Psychology, Anxiety, Stress & Coping, Learning & Memory, Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, PLOS ONE, Consciousness & Cognition, Psychopathology, Current Trends in Psychological Science, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*

#### **Conferences**

*Organization for Human Brain Mapping, MindBrainBody Symposium, Jahrestagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Neurorehabilitation (DGNR), International Conference on Disability, Virtual Reality & Associated Technologies (ICDVRAT)*

#### **Prizes**

*XR Research Awards 2021*

#### **Graduate schools**

*Berlin School of Mind and Brain, Einstein Center for Neurosciences Berlin, International Max Planck Research School on Neuroscience of Communication, Max Planck School of Cognition*

#### **Dissertations reviewer & thesis advisory committee**

*Dr. Madis Vasser (University of Tartu, Estonia; 12/2020), Dr. Nicolai Wolpert (Ecole Normale Supérieure Paris, France; 06/2021), Dr. Tim Möller (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin; 11/2024), Dr. Sui Karjalainen (Jyväskylä University, Finland; 01/2025), Maria Azanova (University of Leipzig; ongoing); Tydings McClary (International Max Planck Research School LIFE; ongoing)*

#### **Grants and grant agencies**

*Swiss National Science Foundation, Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), National Science Center Poland, BioTechMed Graz, European Research Council, Austrian Science Fund*

## **Membership**

### **Academic societies**

*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie (DGPs) - Fachgruppe Biologische Psychologie & Neuropsychologie and Interest Group Open & Reproducible Research, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychophysiologie & ihre Anwendung (DGPA), Organization for Human Brain Mapping (OHBM), Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR)*

## (Co-)Supervision - doctoral and postdoctoral researchers

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ongoing | Dr. Aleksandra Piejka (Postdoc): <i>Loneliness and interpersonal distance perception</i>  |
| ongoing | Alexandros Kastrinogiannis (Postdoc): <i>Face identification in 3D interactive lineups</i>  |
| ongoing | Mia Neubauer (MD): <i>Differentiation of neuropsychological Post-COVID symptoms using heart rate variability</i>  |
| ongoing | Agata Patyczek (PhD): <i>Arousal, stress, and other affective states over the lifespan</i>  |
| ongoing | Elias Reinwarth (PhD): <i>Psychophysiology of affective states during motor learning</i>  |
| ongoing | Anthony Ciston (PhD): <i>Videobased assessment of cardiorespiratory activity</i>  |
| ongoing | Antonin Fourcade (PhD): <i>Multi-modal affective computing in naturalistic settings</i>   |
| ongoing | Felix Klotzsche (PhD): <i>Assessing human cognition in immersive setups</i>   |
| ongoing | Marta Gerosa (PhD): <i>The influence of heart-brain interactions on the sense of agency</i>   |
| 2023-25 | Dr. Sam Verschooren (Postdoc): <i>External, internal, interoceptive attention</i>   |
| 2025    | Simon Hofmann (PhD): <i>Explainable deep learning models for human neuroimaging</i>   |
| 2025    | Marie Uhlig (PhD): <i>Brain changes after psychosocial stress and their relation to other stress markers</i>  |
| 2021    | Janis Reinelt (MD): <i>Mind-brain-body interactions after acute psychosocial stress</i>   |
| 2021    | Stella Kunzendorf (MD): <i>The psychophysiology of heart-brain-interactions: how active information sampling is modulated across the cardiac cycle</i>  |
| 2021    | Deniz Kumral (PhD): <i>Variability in heart and brain activity across the adult lifespan</i>  |
| 2019    | Johanna Grosse Rueschkamp (PhD): <i>Short-term changes in positive affective experiences and their relation to interindividual differences in subjective well-being</i>   |
| 2017-19 | Dr. Johanne Tromp (Postdoc): <i>Immersive virtual reality for cognitive testing &amp; training</i>  |
| 2018    | Anne Rohner (MD): <i>Consequences of chronic and acute stress on the heart rate variability of men and postmenopausal women of the same age.</i>  |
| 2017    | Anne Schrimpf (PhD): <i>Weight-related stigmatization &amp; its impact on behavioral adaptations, affect, &amp; parasympathetic activity during social information processing – a cross-cultural comparison</i> |

## (Co-)Supervision - students

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ongoing | Can Bolat (MSc Cognitive Neuroscience, Freie Universität Berlin)        |
| 2025    | Marta Vardzieli (MSc Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)    |
| 2024    | Emilia Hildebrand (BSc Medical Engineering, Ernst-Abbe-Hochschule Jena) |
| 2024    | Lucy Roellecke (MSc Cognitive Neuroscience, Free University Berlin)     |
| 2024    | Benjamin Dupré (MSc Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)     |
| 2023    | Agata Patyczek (MSc Cognitive Science, University of Vienna)            |
| 2023    | Elias Reinwarth (MSc Cognitive Science, University of Vienna)           |
| 2020    | Alex Masurovsky (MSc Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)    |
| 2019    | Annemarie Scholz (BSc Psychology, Universität Potsdam)                  |
| 2018    | Simon Hofmann (MSc Cognitive Science, Universiteit van Amsterdam)       |
| 2017    | Felix Klotzsche (MSc Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)    |
| 2017    | Alberto Mariola (MSc Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)    |
| 2016    | Rebecca Jost (BSc Psychology, Fernuniversität Hagen)                    |
| ongoing | 17 lab rotations or internships and 12 student assistantships           |

## Talks (selection)

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- 10/2025 *Towards a naturalistic affective neuroscience using immersive technologies*  
Keynote at the 2nd "[Würzial](#)" XR-Meeting, Würzburg.
- 06/2025 *How we use immersive virtual reality in affective neuroscience and cognitive neurology*  
Keynote at the [MindXR Meeting](#), Berlin.
- 06/2025 *Investigating and enhancing the neurocognitive realism of 2D and 3D faces*  
Talk at the 50th Psychologie und Gehirn, Würzburg.
- 10/2024 *Brain-heart dynamics and their link to naturalistic affective experience*  
talk and symposium; Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR), Prague.
- 09/2024 *Investigating and enhancing the neurocognitive realism of 2D and 3D faces;*  
53rd Congress of the German Psychological Society (DGPs), online.
- 07/2024 *Heart-brain interactions and their link to (socio-)emotional processing.*  
Invited talk at SFB1528-Cognition of Interaction, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.
- 11/2023 *Towards naturalistic affective neuroscience using immersive virtual reality.*  
Invited talk at LMU München (CVBE Research Lab and Crowd Cognition Group)
- 09/2023 *Heart-brain coupling and its role for perception, action, and emotion.*  
Invited talk at Università di Torino. [[slides](#)]
- 06/2023 *Advancing the study of mental states with (mobile) ECG: challenges, advantages, and practical approaches.* Talk at the [48. Psychologie und Gehirn](#). [[slides](#)]
- 10/2022 *Neuroscience beyond the brain: Linking heart-brain interactions to perception, action, and emotion.* Invited talk, Center for Cognitive Neuroscience Berlin, FU Berlin. [[Video](#)]
- 09/2022 *Linking heart-brain interactions to perception, action, and emotion.*  
(Virtual) talk at the Department of Decision Neuroscience and Nutrition, Institute of Nutrition, Potsdam-Rehbrücke. [[slides](#)]
- 04/2022 *Using immersive virtual reality in affective neuroscience & cognitive neurology*  
invited to the Center for Advanced Technologies in Rehabilitation at Sheba Medical Center, Tel Aviv (virtual). [[slides](#)]
- 06/2021 *Somatosensory perception & active visual sampling vary across the cardiac cycle*  
Talk at the (virtual) [46. Psychologie und Gehirn](#) [[slides](#)]
- 03/2021 *How to analyze heart-brain interactions and their link to behavior.* Workshop at the (virtual) [MindBrainBody Symposium 2021](#) [[slides](#)]
- 12/2020 *Virtual worlds for digital diagnostics & cognitive rehabilitation; Stereopsis 2020* [[video](#)]
- 09/2020 *The immersive Virtual Memory Task to assess spatial memory capacities using VR*  
at 35. Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Neuropsychologie [[slides](#)]
- 01/2020 *Heart rate variability: physiology, practice, & psychology*  
invited to the Technische Universität Dresden [[slides](#)]
- 06/2019 *Linking heart rate variability to emotions, acute stress, and the brain*  
at the 45. Psychologie und Gehirn, Dresden [[slides](#)]
- 06/2019 *Neuroscience of Emotions*, invited to the Geneva Centre for Security Policy [[slides](#)]
- 03/2019 *Linking subjective affect and neurophysiology in 3D movies and immersive VR*  
at the Meeting of the Video Quality Experts Group (VQEG), Berlin [[slides](#)]
- 01/2019 *What do the cognitive & brain sciences know about how we perceive (virtual) reality?*  
invited to Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg [[slides](#)]
- 10/2018 *Immersion from the viewpoint of the cognitive and brain sciences*  
at 5th Kurt-Schwitters-Symposium für Designtheorie, Hannover
- 06/2018 *VR and the brain – what do we know about how we perceive virtual reality?*  
invited to the Hochschule Hannover
- 09/2016 *Mind-body-emotion interactions in healthy aging*  
symposium at 50. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie, Leipzig
- 07/2015 *A psychophysiological investigation of existential feelings in depersonalization disorder*  
at 23rd Annual Meeting of the European Society for Philosophy & Psychology, Tartu
- 09/2014 *Emotionsverarbeitung & -regulation im zentralen und autonomen Nervensystem*  
at 49. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie, Bochum
- 03/2014 *Physiology of emotion & self-relatedness in depersonalization disorder*  
at Deutscher Kongress für Psychosomatische Medizin & Psychotherapie, Berlin

## Science communication (selection)

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### Public appearance

- since 2014 social media scicomm (Twitter: [@michagaebler](#), bsky: [mgblr.bsky.social](#))
- 10/2024 Anniversary lecture "Heart & Brain"; 20 Jahre Kinderuni, Heilbronn. [Insta reel](#)
- 01/2024 Session for high-school students (St.-Ursula-Gymnasium Düsseldorf, online), "What can the neurosciences contribute to epistemology?"
- 10/2022 TV feature (incl. interview snippets) in 3sat NANO (Oct 4, 2022; starting at 15 min)
- 02/2022 Interview with the podcast [SIGGRAPH Spotlight](#): Episode 52 - Emotions in VR.
- 08/2020 Talk *What you think and what you feel* for children at [Kinder College](#) (online) [[slides](#)]
- 05/2020 Production of an image film on *Virtual realities for digital diagnostics & cognitive rehabilitation*. [[video link](#)]
- 07/2019 Public discussion at [Leonardo LASER Talks Nomad](#) at Factory Berlin
- 09/2018 Panelist *Your brain and VR: Feeling is believing* at DIGILITY, Köln [[video recording](#)]
- 11/2018 Public discussion *VR and the brain* during the [Berlin Science Week](#) [TV snippet]
- 07/2018 [Curator for one week](#) of the SciComm Twitter account [Real Scientists DE](#)
- 07/2018 Public discussion *The neurophysiology of feelings* at the [Silbersalz Festival Halle](#)
- 04/2018 Public talk *VR und das Gehirn* at the [Zeppelin Museum Friedrichshafen](#)
- 02/2018 Public talk *VR in Neurowissenschaften und Psychologie* at the [3IT Berlin](#)
- 11/2016 Public discussion *Digitaler Salon: Internet der Sinne* at the [HIIG Berlin](#)  
[DRadio Wissen feature] [[video recording](#)]
- 05/2016 Public talk *Wie das Hirn mit Stress umgeht* at [Urania Berlin](#)
- 06/2015 Public talk & experiment "Vom Reflex zur Reflexion - Wozu das Gehirn?"  
at [Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften Berlin](#)
- 09/2014 Interview with [Deutschlandradio Kultur](#) on our fMRI study with 3D movies
- 2010 Scientific advisor for the documentary movie [Die Falten des Königs](#)  
(Matthias van Baaren, Österreich 2010)

### Scientific collaborations (selection)

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|-------------------------|---|
| HU Berlin               | Peter Eisert, Marcel Brass, Sven Ohl          |
| Charité Berlin          | Carsten Finke                                 |
| TU Berlin               | Klaus-Robert Müller, Sebastian Möller         |
| Fraunhofer HHI          | Anna Hilsmann, Sebastian Bosse, Paul Chojecki |
| BHT Berlin              | Felix Biessmann, Kristian Hildebrand          |
| PHB Berlin              | Guido Hessellmann                             |
| U Birmingham (UK)       | Heather Flowe, Melissa Colloff                |
| U Stirling (UK)         | Anna Bobak                                    |
| U Victoria (CA)         | Stephen Lindsay                               |
| U Torino (IT)           | Sara Carletto, Francesca Malandrone           |
| U Balearic Islands (ES) | Alex Galvez Pol                               |
| U Frankfurt             | Christian A. Kell                             |
| U Köln                  | Julian König                                  |
| U Montevideo (UY)       | Victoria Gradin                               |

### Publications

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Full list on [google scholar](#)