

Technische Universität Dresden - Collaborative Research Centre 1759 "Habitability as a fundamental planetary process: Towards a paradigm shift away from our perception of the uniqueness of Earth" (CRC 1759)



TUD Dresden University of Technology, as a University of Excellence, is one of the leading and most dynamic research institutions in the country. Founded in 1828, it is a globally oriented, regionally anchored top university, focusing on the grand challenges of the 21st century. It develops innovative solutions for the world's most pressing issues. The Collaborative Research Centre 1759 "Habitability as a fundamental planetary process: Towards a paradigm shift away from our perception of the uniqueness of Earth" (CRC 1759) is coordinated at Freie Universität Berlin and investigates planetary habitability from an interdisciplinary perspective, bringing together planetary sciences, astrobiology, communication science, psychology, and theology. In a range of research and academic programs, CRC 1759 unites the natural sciences with the humanities and social sciences. This wide range of disciplines is a special feature not only of the Collaborative Research Centre, but also of TUD, facilitating interdisciplinarity and transfer of science to society. As a modern employer, TUD offers attractive working conditions to all employees in teaching, research, technology, and administration. The goal is to promote and develop their individual abilities while empowering everyone to reach their full potential. For TUD, diversity is an essential feature and a quality criterion of an excellent university. Accordingly, we welcome all applicants who are committed to contributing their achievements and productivity to the success of the entire institution.

Research Associate / PhD student (m/f/x)

(subject to personal qualification, employees are remunerated according to salary group E 13 TV-L) Within CRC 1759, at the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, Institute of Media and Communication, the Chair of Media and Communication/Science and Technology Communication offers, subject to the availability of resources, a position as Research Associate / PhD student (m/f/x) starting October 1, 2026. The position is limited until June 30, 2030. The period of employment is governed by the Fixed Term Research Contracts Act (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz - WissZeitVG). The position comprises 75% of the full-time weekly working hours and is officially situated in CRC 1759 project C05 "Colonisation", WP4 "Media Coverage of Moon and Mars Colonisation". The position also includes a coordinated contribution to project C03 "Biosignatures", WP3 "Biosignatures, Uncertainty, and Public Trust". The position offers the chance to obtain further academic qualification (usually PhD).

City: Dresden; Starting date (earliest): 01/10/26; Duration: The position is limited until June 30, 2030.; Remuneration: subject to personal qualification, employees are remunerated according to salary group E 13 TV-L; Reference number: w26-151; Closing date: 15/07/26

Tasks

- development and implementation of a doctoral research project in communication science on media coverage of Moon and Mars colonization, scientific uncertainty, risk, ethics and legitimacy
- collection, preparation and documentation of national and international media

corpora, including coverage of lunar and Martian exploration and colonization initiatives

- development and application of a coding framework for uncertainty, risk, ethical and legitimacy frames, building on established approaches in science communication research
- conducting mixed human-machine content analyses, including manual coding, coordination of coders, LLM-assisted coding and statistical reliability assessment
- conceptual and methodological contribution to C03/WP3 on biosignatures, uncertainty and public trust, in particular through experimental designs
- quantitative data analysis as well as preparation of publications for inter-/disciplinary audiences in Communication Science and adjacent fields
- presentation of research results at inter-/disciplinary workshops and conferences and active participation in CRC 1759 meetings and collaborations
- project management and academic self-administration

Requirements

- a university degree (Master) in Communication Science or a closely related field
- strong interest in science communication, public trust in science, uncertainty communication, astrobiology, space exploration and/or societal debates on Moon and Mars colonization
- very good knowledge of empirical social-science methods, especially experiments and content analysis; experience with computational methods, automated text analysis or LLM-assisted research is an advantage
- excellent command of English and German, both written and spoken
- ability to work independently, strong organizational skills and willingness to collaborate in an interdisciplinary research environment

What we offer

- an interesting and diverse role at a well-connected institute that conducts interdisciplinary and methodologically diverse research
- a clearly defined doctoral project embedded in CRC 1759, officially situated in C05/WP4 with a substantive contribution to C03/WP3
- close collaboration with researchers from planetary sciences, astrobiology, psychology, ethics, theology and communication science
- access to the CRC 1759 Integrated Research Training Group and its training, mentoring and networking opportunities
- flexible working hours to support work-life balance
- a wide range of professional development and continuing education opportunities

Application

TUD strives to employ more women in academia and research. We therefore expressly encourage women to apply. The university is a family-friendly university. We welcome applications from candidates with disabilities. If multiple candidates prove to be equally qualified, those with disabilities or with equivalent status pursuant to the German Social Code IX (SGB IX) will receive priority for employment.

Please submit your detailed application (in English only) with the usual documents including a cover letter, the names of three (postdoc positions) or two (doctoral positions)

referees, CV, copies of degree certificates and transcripts, all combined into a single pdf (max. 10 MB) quoting the reference number w26-151 by July 15, 2026 (stamped arrival date of the university central mail service or the time stamp on the email server of TUD applies) preferably via the TUD SecureMail Portal <https://securemail.tu-dresden.de> by sending it as a single pdf file to sven.engesser@tu-dresden.de or to:

TU Dresden, Institute of Media and Communication, Prof. Engesser, Helmholtzstr. 10, 01069 Dresden, Germany.

Review of applications will begin 15 July 2026 and will continue until all positions have been filled.

TUD is a founding partner in the DRESDEN-concept alliance.

Reference to data protection: Your data protection rights, the purpose for which your data will be processed, as well as further information about data protection is available to you on the website:

<https://tu-dresden.de/karriere/datenschutzhinweis>.

More information at <https://stellenticket.de/205215/TUBS/>

Offer visible until 15/07/26

