Technische Universität Dresden - Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden

Technische Universität Dresden

In the Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden, researchers from the Social Sciences and Humanities as well as artists explore the relationships between technology, science, and society. The Lab was initiated by The Schaufler Foundation together with TUD Dresden University of Technology. The Lab's guiding theme for the upcoming third funding phase (April 2027–September 2030) is "Energy Cultures in Transition". The guiding theme is investigated from a humanities, cultural, social, and educational science perspective, explored through artistic practice, and communicated to the public. For the third funding phase, the Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden comprises eight doctoral fellowships and an annually changing Artist in Residence program. TUD embodies a university culture that is characterized by cosmopolitanism, mutual appreciation, thriving innovation and active participation. For TUD, diversity is an essential feature and a quality criterion of an excellent university. Accordingly, we welcome all applicants who would like to commit themselves, their achievements and productivity to the success of the whole institution.

Doctoral Fellowship in the field of Civil and Digital Law

The Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden offers, subject to the availability of resources, a Doctoral Fellowship for a period of 2 years, with the option of extension by 1.5 years, starting on April 1, 2027. The fellowship (EUR 1,850 per month, plus a grant for material costs of EUR 150 and, where applicable, a family supplement of EUR 315 per child) is aimed at early-career researchers in the field of Civil and Digital Law. Primary supervision will be provided by Jun.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Kaesling, LL.M., Juniorprofessorship in Civil Law, Intellectual Property Law, especially Patent Law and Legal Issues of AI.

City: Dresden; Starting date (earliest): 01/04/27; Duration: for a period of 2 years, with the option of extension by 1.5 years; Remuneration: EUR 1,850 per month, plus a grant for material costs of EUR 150 and, where applicable, a family supplement of EUR 315 per child; Reference number: s26-004; Closing date: 24/11/26

Tasks

The guiding theme Energy Cultures in Transition understands energy as a cultural phenomenon deeply inscribed in aesthetic, historical, political, ecological, economic, and socio-technological practices and systems. Building on the dynamically growing research fields of the Energy Humanities, Science & Technology Studies, and the Digital Humanities, the aim is to examine how modern energy regimes—from petromodernity, to nuclear culture, and post-carbon futures—have shaped not only material infrastructures but also subjectivities, power relations, progress narratives, geopolitical orders, ecologies, and knowledge systems, while simultaneously being shaped by them. Interdisciplinary perspectives from the social sciences, cultural studies, humanities, and educational research represented at the Schaufler Kolleg@TU Dresden enable the analysis of the multifaceted entanglements of energy, culture, and society. The focus is on questions concerning the representation, communication, and aesthetics of energy transitions and resource paradigms as well as continuities between resource economies and information economies, the relationships between energy, labor, environment, and consumer culture, and the role of colonialism, gender, nationalism, geopolitics, education, and social justice

in deciding energy futures and navigating collective transformation processes.
In the field of Civil and Digital Law, the following research areas and questions are of particular relevance to the guiding theme:

- Energy- and resource-intensive digital infrastructures as a subject of EU regulation
- Systemic risks of digital platforms and AI systems in the context of energy use, resource consumption, and ecological sustainability, particularly under the Digital Services Act and the AI Act
- Ecological sustainability as a European value and as an interpretative principle in digital law
- Law and legal culture as elements of energy and technology cultures, particularly the interactions between legal categories, technological development, societal transformations, and concepts of sustainability
- Territorial and extraterritorial limits of European digital regulation in addressing global ecological impacts

Tasks: Your tasks include independent research and academic further qualification with the goal of completing a doctorate at TUD, as well as writing a dissertation on a topic within the guiding concept "Energy Cultures in Transition" in the discipline of Civil and Digital Law. The fellowship requires a high degree of willingness to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue, particularly with the STEM partnerships of the Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden, as well as to conduct joint research with artists within the framework of the Schaufler Residency. In addition, engagement in the areas of science communication and outreach is expected. Shared office spaces will be made available to the fellows. Participation in the Kolleg's English-language training program is mandatory.

Requirements

You hold an above-average university degree in law and have prior knowledge of, or at least a strong interest in, the regulation of digital services and AI, as well as in the role of energy (cultures) and/or ecological sustainability. You have a strong ability to work in teams and enjoy interdisciplinary collaboration. As the training program is conducted in English, you have English skills at a minimum of C1 level. In accordance with the applicable doctoral regulations, the dissertation may be written in either German or English—if you choose to write it in German, corresponding German language skills are required. Beyond this, German language skills are desirable but not mandatory.

What we offer

The opportunity to pursue a doctorate within the Schaufler Kolleg with a structured qualification program and integration into an interdisciplinary research project. You will receive a fully equipped office workspace on the premises of TUD and access to an excellent research infrastructure, including participation in Research Studios and writing retreats. The Graduate Academy and other central institutions of TUD offer numerous further training and qualification opportunities. In addition, within the limits of the available project funds, the Schaufler Lab will cover the costs of conference travel.

Inclusion and equal opportunities are important to us. We therefore look forward to receiving applications from people regardless of gender, origin, sexual orientation, worldview, or disability. 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. The fellowship does not constitute an employment relationship.

Application

Application: Your detailed application, in German or English, should contain, in addition to the completed online application form (https://tu-dresden.de/gsw/schauflerlab/schaufler-kolleg/phase-3/anmeldung-registration), a letter of motivation, a curriculum vitae in tabular form including an account of your academic career, a copy of your most recent university degree certificate, an exposé of your research project including a work and time schedule (max. 20,000 characters).

Please send us your application documents, including the online application form, quoting the reference number s26-004, by November 24, 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 schaufler.lab@tu-dresden.de or to:

TU Dresden,
Schaufler Lab@TU Dresden,
Jun.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Kaesling, LL.M.,
Helmholtzstr. 10,
01069 Dresden, Germany.

Please submit copies only, as your application will not be returned to you. Expenses incurred in attending interviews cannot be reimbursed.

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.

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By post:
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