Dear Readers,

This year, once more it will be possible to propose projects that show great promise for becoming considered in the context of the German Excellence Initiative. In the light of this, it seems appropriate to remember that the Research Academy Leipzig (RAL) was founded in response to the Excellence Initiative. As such, the RAL continues to promote, and to create an environment for, top level doctoral research.

Last year, again we awarded prizes for outstanding achievements of doctoral research, and again we were sorry about not being able to give the RAL Dissertation Award to all who deserved it. Equal opportunities as well as the reconcilability of family duties and doctoral research being primary concerns, for the first time the RAL bestowed the Katharina Windscheid Prize. The aim of this prize is to appreciate and therefore further promote the pursuit of outstanding doctoral research while being involved in a number of other challenging duties and responsibilities, such as concerning children. These concerns as well as the appraisal of the annual report, presented to the Faculty Board at the annual meeting, will play an important role in the forthcoming evaluation of the RAL. Regarding this, I believe we can confidently go on.

The RAL regularly promotes its aims also at the European Career Fair in Boston, Massachusetts. This year, Professor Rudolf Rübsamen, Stefanie Müller and Dr David Hamm represented the RAL in Boston.

Lastly, we should mention that by now we are in good company with our concept. On 15 May 2009, the RAL and a few comparable institutions founded UniWiND/GUAT, the “German University Association of Advanced Graduate Training”. From 22 to 24 February 2010, the first GUAT conference will take place in Leipzig. (Further information can be found here: www.uni-leipzig.de/~uniwind)

Best Wishes for 2010!

Yours faithfully, Stephan Luckhaus

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**RAL Award ceremony 2009**

On 7 December 2009, for the first time the Katharina Windscheid Prize was awarded at the annual meeting. The aim of this prize is to appreciate and therefore further promote the pursuit of outstanding doctoral research while being involved in a number of other challenging duties and responsibilities, such as concerning children. Therefore, the prize is a further opportunity to fulfil and advance the equal treatment and family-friendly policies of the university. Already for the third time, the RAL Dissertation Award for outstanding dissertations that were produced within the classes of the RAL was awarded. The awardees 2009 are: Dr Michaela Ungerer (Katharina Windscheid Prize), Dr Christian Patzig (Mathematics/Computer Science and Natural Sciences), Dr Bernhard Englitz (Life Sciences), Dr Adamantios Skordos (Humanities and Social Sciences).

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**RAL at the Absolventenmesse Mitteldeutschland (career fair for Central Germany)**

On 3 November 2009, the Cluster Biotechnologie – Life Sciences Mitteldeutschland presented graduate programmes and Excellence Initiatives of Central German universities. The research academy of the Universität Leipzig informed degree holders in natural sciences about their career perspectives. Within this initiative, the Central German research landscape of life sciences was introduced as an attractive field of activity.

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**Citavi campus licence – reference management and knowledge organisation**

Together with the University Library of Leipzig and the University Computing Centre, the RAL provides a campus licence for Citavi, an innovative tool for managing references and organising knowledge. Students and staff members can request a licence key. Further information can be found here: http://www.citavi.com/uni-leipzig
Approval for the 2nd funding period of the Research Training Group (RTG) “Function of attention in cognition”

The positive behaviour during the report colloquium, the previous research projects as well as the successful postgraduate training of the RTG “Function of attention in cognition” convinced the reviewers and the DFG (German Research Foundation). They have approved a further 4.5 year funding period (until autumn 2014). Hence, the RTG lead by Professor Matthias Müller has fundraised 2.2 million euros for outstanding and interdisciplinary postgraduate training. Twelve workgroups of the institutes for Psychology (I) and for Biology (II) as well as of the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences participate in this RTG.

IMPRS NeuroCom Inauguration

On 15 October 2009, the International Max Planck Research School on Neuroscience of Communication: Function, Structure and Plasticity (IMPRS NeuroCom) was inaugurated. So by now, the IMPRS NeuroCom programme provides supervision and teaching for 22 doctoral students. The inauguration day started with an introduction of the IMPRS “Human origins”. Since the research foci of the IMPRS NeuroCom and the IMPRS “Human origins” are closely related, cooperation between these two schools is planned (e.g. joint courses and seminars). Afterwards, the IMPRS students visited the Wolfgang Köhler Primate Research Centre, a joint project of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (MPI EVA) and the Zoo Leipzig. In the afternoon, Professor Rudolf Rübsamen presented the newly established acoustic free-field laboratory and about the RAL. The day finished with an inauguration party in the foyer of the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences. The social gathering enabled students and faculty members to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere. The highlight of the evening was the official ceremony and personal welcome of each doctoral student by Professor Wolfgang Prinz (spokesperson) and Dr Antje Holländer (coordinator).

Graduate Centre Life Sciences

PhD Workshop China

From 11 to 13 December, Professor Bernd Abel and Professor Pablo Esquinazi of the graduate school BuildMoNa took part in a PhD Workshop in Peking, organised by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). The fair’s guests included highly qualified and motivated students who are interested in doing doctoral research abroad as well as representatives of Chinese universities. The graduate school was represented by a lecture as well as at the DAAD stand. The aim is to attract excellent Chinese postgraduates that are likely to receive a grant from the China Scholarship Council (CSC).

2nd BuildMoNa Annual Reception

On 9 December, BuildMoNa celebrated its second anniversary. Professor Dietrich Hesse (Max Planck Institute of Microstructure Physics, Halle) gave a lecture called “Nanostructured ferroelectric and multi-ferroic epitaxial perovskite heterostructures”. At this event, the BuildMoNa Award was given to doctoral researchers to recognise their outstanding scientific achievements. Denise Zwanziger (Institute for Biochemistry) received the first prize for her doctoral dissertation, in which she identified a new cancer marker. Her results contributed to the publication “Breast cancer diagnosis by neuropeptide Y analogs: from synthesis to clinical application”, that was published as a “very important paper” (VIP) in the peer-reviewed scientific journal Angewandte Chemie. Jens Glaser (Institute for Theoretical Physics) received the second prize for his research achievements and the subsequent publication “Tube width fluctuations in F-actin solutions” (submitted to Physical Review Letters), in which he introduces a new perspective in polymer dynamics. The theoretical works of Stefan Schnabel (Institute for Theoretical Physics), investigating low-temperature behaviour of polymers by means of Monte Carlo computer simulations, were recognised by awarding him the third prize.

3rd BuildMoNa Symposium

From 29 to 30 March, for the third time internationally renowned guest lecturers will speak about recent research in the field of self-organisation and nanostructures at the scientific symposium of the graduate school BuildMoNa. Among the lecturers of the third symposium are the following professors: Robert S. Averback (University of Illinois, USA), Kartik Ghosh (Missouri State University Springfield, USA), Oliver Zerbe (University of Zurich, Switzerland), Sergio I. Molina (Universidad de Cádiz, Spain), David A. Leigh (University of Edinburgh, UK), Hauke Harms (Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany) and Dr Jesús Zúñiga Pérez (Centre de Recherche sur l’Hétéro-Epitaxie et ses Applications, France). The doctoral students of BuildMoNa will present the status quos of their works by posters. Out of molecules and nanostructures, the doctoral students produce complex materials that are intelligent and adaptable as well as environmentally friendly and cost-effective, often similar to living matter. Possible areas of application are biosensors, cell manipulation, artificial textures and nanophotonics. All interested persons are invited to this symposium. Further information can be found here: www.buildmona.de.

CompPhys09 Workshop, November 2009

From 26 to 29 November 2009, for the 10th time this workshop on computational physics took place in Leipzig. As in previous years, the idea of the workshop was to provide a forum for an informal exchange of ideas and to meet in a relaxed atmosphere. One of the main topics of interest in many discussions was computer simulations of physical systems beyond equilibrium. Such systems are widely spread. They play an important role, both in the quantum world as well as in biological processes.
Workshop on complex analysis
On 2 and 3 December, young researchers from Germany, France and Sweden reported on their recent research results at the workshop “Complex analysis and geometry”. These two-day series of lectures were organised by Professor Judith Brinkschulte and financially supported by the Research Training Group “Analysis, geometry and interaction with natural sciences”.

Closing report of the Research Training Group (RTG) “Knowledge representation”
Firstly approved for three years by the DFG (German Research Foundation) and the SMWK (Saxon Ministry for Arts and Sciences), the RTG “Knowledge representation” started in autumn 1998. Founded as one of the first classes of the RAL, the RTG has fully utilised the resources obtainable within the maximum length of funding (nine years plus one year). The topics of this RTG have been the representation and the processing of knowledge. It aimed to combine fundamental questions in knowledge representation with tangible applications in areas of business informatics and medical informatics. All in all, 45 doctoral students and five postdocs have been members of “Knowledge representation”, among them 16 foreign and eight female members. While 32 students submitted a dissertation, seven abandoned their works and six are still working on their dissertations.

Graduate Centre Humanities and Social Sciences
Reader “Key thinkers of globalisation”
In February 2010, Professor Ulf Engel and Professor Matthias Middell will edit the reader “Theoretiker der Globalisierung” (key thinkers of globalisation). The reader will contain contributions of doctoral students of the Research Training Group (RTG) “Critical junctures of globalization” and of the International Postgraduate Programme (IPP) “Transnationalization and regionalization from the 18th century to the present”. On the basis of the works of relevant theorists, the students provide an overview of thinking traditions in which globalisation was conceptualised. In doing so, they use research results of the RTG “Critical junctures of globalization” as well as the results of numerous cooperations with representatives of various academic disciplines. In the near future, the reader will also become published in English language.

Retreat of the Research Training Group (RTG) “Critical junctures of globalization”
On 6 and 7 December 2009, the RTG “Critical junctures of globalization” held a retreat in Wittenberg. Apart from reviewing the reader “Theoretiker der Globalisierung”, the doctoral students were invited to present and discuss their dissertation projects and their already existing results. The retreat ended with a guided tour around the historic centre of Wittenberg.

“Critical junctures of globalization” – Review
The subsequent proposal for the RTG “Critical junctures of globalization” has already been submitted to the DFG (German Research Foundation). This proposal will be reviewed at the report colloquium on 30 March 2010. Four external reviewers will discuss the dissertation projects and the already existing results with the proposers, the doctoral students and their supervisors. The review will be accompanied by a poster presentation of all dissertation projects.

World Orders Revisited
In spring, the graduate centre will publish the book “World Orders Revisited”. This miscellany will contain various articles about doctoral research projects considering aspects of world orders. It will be a summary of the contributions delivered by doctoral students of various European and extra-European doctoral programmes at the international summer school 2008.

“Mathematical Sciences” (PbF 2)
Buchmesse-Akademie 2010, football fever and complex systems
The workgroup of Professor Wolfhard Janke takes part in the Buchmesse-Akademie 2010 with a contribution statistically considering football fever. Is it possible to mathematically model games results? Does football fever play a role?
Date: Saturday 20 March 2010, 2 00 pm.

Ladyzhenskaya Lecture Leipzig
On 28 April, the series “Ladyzhenskaya Lecture Leipzig” continues and will take place for the fifth time. This time, the lecture will be held by the mathematician Thaleia Zariphopoulou. She is the first holder of the Man professorship of quantitative finance at the University of Oxford. Further information can be found here: www.math.uni-leipzig.de/ MANW

Series of workshops of the Research Area
On 13 January, the series of workshops of the Research Area “Mathematical Sciences” took place again. Professor Wolfhard Janke and Professor Rüdiger Frey gave lectures called “Formation/dissolution of equilibrium droplets” respectively “Nonlinear Black-Scholes equations for option pricing illiquid markets: associated control problems and properties of solutions”.

“Brain, Cognition and Language” (PbF 4)
Pan-European network researches glia cells
Professor Andreas Reichenbach, of the Paul Flechsig Institute for Brain Research, organises a new pan-European network of researchers. The Marie Curie Initial Training Network Edu-GUA is devoted to the study of glia cells. These are involved in virtually every aspect of nervous system function. Neurons and glia exchange chemical signals that are essential for the normal function of the nervous system, and are crucial in disease. The main objective of Edu-GUA is to train promising young researchers for careers in basic as well as in translational research, including clinical application and industry. Among several German universities and the Max Planck Society, the network partners include industrial partners as well as research institutions from France, Sweden, Israel and Slovenia.
**FAKTEN & ZAHLEN**

Last half-year, the following doctoral students of the Research Academy completed their projects and received a degree.

**GC Mathematics/Computer Science and Natural Sciences**


**GC Humanities and Social Sciences**

“Transnationalization and Regionalization”: Adam Skordos, Elena Temper, Michaela Ungerer, Muhammad Zaman.

**GC Life Sciences**


We cordially congratulate all alumni on their success!

**STAFF MATTERS**

**Director elections – GC Mathematics/Computer Science and Natural Sciences**

Professor Stephan Luckhaus was elected as director of the Graduate Centre “Mathematics/Computer Science and Natural Sciences” for a further period of three years. Professor Roger Gläser was appointed as his deputy.

**New Coordinator of the GC Humanities and Social Sciences**

Since January 2010, Maren Seidler coordinates the activities of the GC Humanities and Social Sciences. She deputises Dr Martina Keilbach while on parental leave until the end of this year and organises the IPP “Transnationalization and regionalization”. Contact details: Maren Seidler, Emil-Fuchs-Str. 1, m.seidler@uni-leipzig.de. Also since January, Janine Kläge is contact person for all doctoral students of the RTG “Critical Junctures of globalization”. Contact details: Janine Kläge, Emil-Fuchs-Str. 1, janine.klaege@uni-leipzig.de.

**New member of PbF 4: Professor Tania Singer**

Since January 2010, Professor Tania Singer is director of the department of Social Neuroscience at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences. The focus of the Department of Social Neuroscience is on the understanding of the foundations of human social behaviour. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, Singer and her colleagues investigate the neuronal, hormonal and developmental foundations of human social cognition, social and moral emotions such as empathy and compassion, envy, revenge, fairness as well as emotion regulation capacities and their role in social decision making.

**DATES**

**Events**

First conference of the “German University Association of Advanced Graduate Training” (GUAT/UniWiND) “Junge Forschende der Zukunft: Die Qualifizierung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses in Deutschland – Stärken, Schwächen, Chancen” (Young researchers of the future: the qualification of young researchers in Germany – strengths, weaknesses, chances)

Date: 22 – 24 February 2010

**Interdisciplinary Qualification Programme**

**Presentation skills**

Dates: 26 – 27 January 2010

Lecturer: Markus Schubert

**Patent law workshop**

Date: 8 February 2010

Lecturers: Roland Krause (patent expert, Universität Leipzig) and Gerd Stötter (patent agent, Dresden)

**Reference management (Citavi)**

Dates: 22 – 24 February 2010

Lecturer: Anja Kaiser

Further dates: 19 – 21 April 2010

**Writing and publishing research part I**

Dates: 11 – 12 March 2010

Lecturer: Dr Dorothea Sommerfeldt

Registration: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/forschung/ral

**GZ Mathematik/Informatik und Naturwissenschaften**

BuildMoNa Module 2010

2009-M09 Hybrid systems: (Bio)Hybrid systems
2 – 3 February 2010

2009-M07 Complex nanostructures
15 – 16 March 2010

2009-M10 Multifunctional scaffolds
30 March – 1 April 2010

Further information and registration: www.buildmona.de

9th German Open Conference on Probability and Statistics

2-5 March 2010, new campus Augustplatz, Hörsaalgebäude

Further information: www.gocps-leipzig2010.com

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

Angebot für Stipendiensuchende

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) offers an interactive information platform:

www.stipendienlotse.de