



Call for Applications

In association with the Udo Keller Stiftung Forum Humanum, the TRA 4 – Individuals, Institutions and Societies (University of Bonn) is offering up to 10 *Forum Humanum fellowships* to qualified doctoral and masters students from any department in the social sciences or humanities at the University of Bonn to participate in an event to be held at the recently founded *Institute for Philosophy and the New Humanities* at the New School for Social Research (NYC).

Researchers within the *TRA 4 – Individuals, Institutions and Societies* investigate how institutions mediate complex relationships between individuals and society and from there develop a new view of micro-phenomena (development of personality, agency, individualization) as well as macro-phenomena (world society, globalization). Sharing this research objective, the *Institute for Philosophy and the New Humanities* is founded on the premise that genuine knowledge acquisition, truth and objectivity are not the exclusive preserve of any single discipline or method. The concepts we deploy to understand and evaluate human cultural and scientific achievements also have to be placed within their broader social, political and intellectual context and therefore have to be approached from a truly interdisciplinary perspective. The Institute thus aims to bring together researchers from a variety of disciplines and draw on the resources of the social sciences, philosophy, and the humanities more generally, in order to pursue a collaborative understanding of the nature and goals of the humanistic and social scientific disciplines and to grapple with the challenges they face in light of the increasing prevalence of intellectual models imported from other disciplines.

This year's event will take place on *September 11-15, 2023* and will consist in a week-long series of seminars, guest lectures and workshops on the topic of "*Mind-Dependent Artifacts and Artifact-Dependent Minds — AI and the Human*". Artifacts are a primary object of study in the humanities. They are products and, thus, manifestations of human thought, action, and self-determination without which they cannot be understood. At the same time, human mindedness depends on artifacts, as well as other objects – a dependence that is itself manifest in the form of artifacts themselves. Our Fall 2023 Institute will consider ways in which human mindedness and the reality of artifacts are dialectically intertwined. Of special interest will be automatically or mechanically produced artifacts, as well as artificial intelligent systems that are neither mere inert causal models of human thinking nor independently minded (let alone, conscious) entities. The ontology of such products thus needs to be calibrated in light of the aforementioned mutual dependence of mindedness and artifacts.

Some questions our seminar will address include: How do AI-research and AI-systems structure and restructure the historical, diverse articulation of human mindedness? How does our understanding of these and other artifacts shape our self-conception at the most fundamental level? We will explore these issues in the ontology, epistemology, and humanistic study of AI and other artifacts together with distinguished keynote speakers, including:

Cameron Buckner (University of Texas, Houston)

David Chalmers (NYU)

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Stanford University)

Nandi Theunissen (University of Pittsburgh)

Kalindi Vora (Yale University)

IPNH co-directors **Markus Gabriel**, **Paul Kottman** and **Zed Adams** will also present lectures.

The Forum Humanum scholarship will cover travel and accommodation costs, as well as provide a small stipend for daily expenses. Applicants must therefore confirm both that they are committed to traveling to New York in September and that they are fully vaccinated. Access to the New School campus without full vaccination is not permitted.

To submit an application, please send a) an up-to-date CV and b) a brief statement outlining your interest in the event in light of your current research projects (max. 1 page), combined into a **single document**, by **28.02.2023** to **Mr. Jan Voosholz** (E-Mail: voosholz@uni-bonn.de)