



## FRIAS Express - April 2025

Dear FRIAS Community,

With the inspiring lecture by Nobel laureate Anne L'Huillier still fresh on our minds, we at FRIAS are looking forward to a hot summer full of exciting event highlights. Between the very first installment of the Freiburg Horizons series organized by a FRIAS Project Group, the first Staudinger Lecture featuring a Nobel Prize-winning author, and a timely German-American conference on human rights, there's much to look out for. Curious about more news from FRIAS? Enjoy the read!

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## FRIAS Welcomes Nobel Laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah



On 24 July 2025, Abdulrazak Gurnah, recipient of the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature will deliver the 32nd Hermann Staudinger Lecture at the University of Freiburg. Titled "Living Together," his talk will reflect on understandings of "togetherness," on the relationships between "us" and "them," and on the role of literature in this phenomenon. We extend our most special thanks to the [Friends of Freiburg University - Alumni North America](#), without whose generous donation this event would not have been possible.

[Read more](#)

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## HRRC Conference 2025: Human Rights in the Balance: Safeguarding Social and Environmental Sustainability



FRIAS will host the 4th conference of the Connecticut/Baden-Württemberg Human Rights Research Consortium (HRRRC) from 17 to 18 June 2025. In the face of today's growing social polarization, widening inequality, and deepening environmental crisis, the conference will reflect on human rights as an interdisciplinary issue. While registration for the full programme has already closed, the public keynotes by the Head of the German Human Rights Office, Dr. Nicola Wenzel, and by Prof. Dr. Anja Seibert-Fohrt, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, are open to all.

[Read more](#)

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## Freiburger Horizonte – 1945 | 2025: Nachkriegszeiten



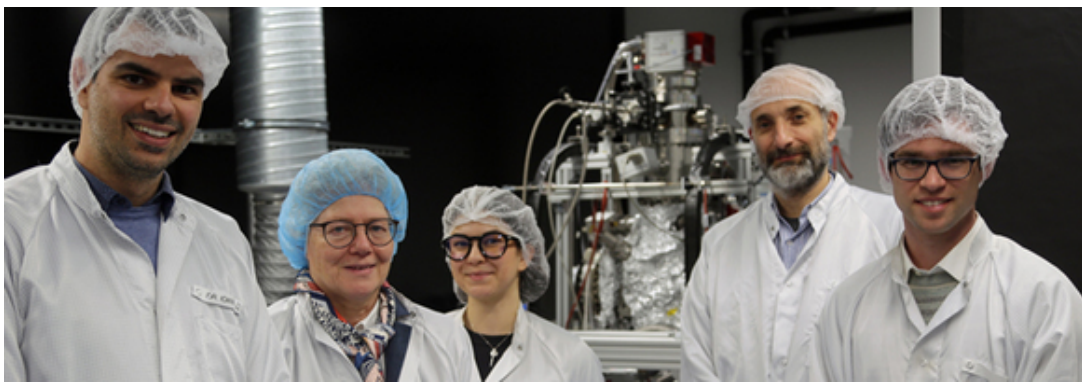
Die Freiburger Horizonte starten mit einer Podiumsdiskussion zum Thema Nachkriegszeiten in das neue Semester. Die Veranstaltung am 28. April 2025 um 19 Uhr wird von der FRIAS Projektgruppe „Nachkriegszeiten: Pluralität – Temporalität – Re/Konstruktionen“ organisiert. Die Podiumsdiskussion ist zugleich Auftakt der Ringvorlesung „Nachkriegszeiten“. Mehr Informationen folgen in Kürze. In der zweiten Veranstaltung der Freiburger Horizonte am 28. Mai 2025 stellt der Politikwissenschaftler und FRIAS Fellow Karsten Schubert sein Buch „Lob der Identitätspolitik“ vor.

[Mehr zur Podiumsdiskussion \(Deutsch\)](#)

[About the FRIAS Project Group \(English\)](#)

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## Insights into Attosecond Science with Nobel Laureate Anne L’Huillier



During the semester break, Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Anne L'Huillier (Lund University) visited the University of Freiburg to deliver the Hermann Staudinger Lecture, sharing insights into her groundbreaking in the field of ultrafast physic. Ahead of the lecture, she visited the Attosecond Lab of Prof. Giuseppe Sansone, where she met with local researchers working on joint projects with Anne L'Huillier.

[More Impressions and Video Documentation](#)

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## Focus on our Fellows



## News, Publications & Awards

A glimpse into some recent achievements of our fellows and alumni. Do you want to tell us about news, publications, awards or anything else that could be interesting for the FRIAS Express? Please let us know via [communications@frias.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:communications@frias.uni-freiburg.de).

The **FRIAS Colloquium** in the summer semester will start on 28 April 2025 with a talk by historian Robert Lee (University of Cambridge) titled "Expansion and Expulsion in Early Nineteenth Century America." The colloquium is primarily aimed at our fellows. Guests are welcome to attend upon registration via [events@frias.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:events@frias.uni-freiburg.de).

**Elmira Akhmetova's** book "[Muslim Women in Science, Past and Present](#)" was published in February by Cambridge University Press. She was an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow from December 2021 until May 2023.

**Felicitas Opwis** (FRESCO Fellow 2021-25) published a book called "[Ethics and Legal Analogy \(Qiyas\) in 5th/11th Century Legal Theory](#)". Since January, she has also been appointed "Sultan Qaboos Bin Said Professor of Arabic Language and Culture" at Georgetown University.

**Niels Grüne** (Marie S. Curie FCFP Fellow 2015/16) successfully completed his habilitation process in October 2024 with the study "„Verkäufer in Rebus publicis“. Korruption als politisches Argument und Konfliktfeld in der Frühen Neuzeit," which is partly based on [the work he did at FRIAS](#). He was also promoted to Associate Professor of Modern History at Innsbruck University in November 2024.

Distinguished Fellow and recipient of the Balzan Prize 2018, **Jürgen Osterhammel** and Akira Iriye just completed a six-volume series on "[A History of the World](#)," published by Harvard University Press.

During his time at FRIAS, **Daniel Duzdevich** (Marie S. Curie FCFP Fellow of 2023/24) wrote a paper that was recently published in Astrobiology, titled "[Simple Lipids Form Stable Higher-Order Structures in Concentrated Sulfuric Acid](#)".

**Matthias Kranke** (YAS Fellow of 2023/24) has been appointed Junior Professor of Global Sustainability Governance at the College for Social Sciences and Humanities of the University Alliance Ruhr.

Starting May 1, **Birgit Hopfener** (Guest Researcher 2024/25) I take on a visiting professorship (Vertretungsprofessorin) in modern and contemporary art history at the University of Freiburg.

**Alison M. Downham Moore** (Marie S. Curie FCFP Fellow of 2019/20) was promoted to full professor at Sydney Western University and elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

**Saskia Abrahms-Kavunenko** (Marie S. Curie FCFP Fellow of 2023/24) was awarded an Associate Professorship at the Hakubi Center for Advanced Research at Kyoto University.

## Departures and Arrivals at FRIAS

The following fellows are new at FRIAS or have left us/will leave us soon:

### Arrivals

#### Alumni

Prof. Dr. Markus Stock (University of Toronto, Medieval German Literature)

### Departures

Prof. Dr. Onookome Okome (University of Alberta, African Studies/Literature and Cinema)

Dr. Linus Ubl (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Medieval German Literature and Culture)

Prof. Dr. Giuseppe Sansone (University Freiburg, Attosecond correlation spectroscopy and coherent control of molecular dissociation)

Prof. Dr. Chikodili Collins Ajibo (University of Nigeria, Law)

Dr. Berit Callsen (University of Osnabrück, Romance Cultural Studies)

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## From FRIAS to Freudenberg



In the latest edition of our series, former Early Career Fellow Dr. Atreyee Banerjee shares her journey from academic research at the Max Planck Institute to her current role as a Scientific Innovator in the tech industry. She reflects on the transition from academia to industry and the wide range of career paths open to researchers.

[Read the interview](#)

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## Directors' Corner

This year, the [FRIAS magnolia tree](#) bloomed early, but its beauty only lasted ten days – a short and sweet highlight that didn't quite lift the optimism I expressed in the last DC. The devastating wars in Gaza and Ukraine, along with the ongoing challenges in global politics, economics, and climate change, continue unabated. FRIAS and our research community are not unaffected by these issues, on the contrary. We have been welcoming Ukrainian fellows since the beginning of 2022, and we are pleased that another fellow from Ukraine will join us in October 2025 in a collaboration with the Virtual Ukraine Institute for Advanced Study ([VUIAS](#)), established in Berlin. At the same time, we've also received note from the first U.S. researchers cancelling their FRIAS visits, as well as from early-career researchers requesting a stay at FRIAS and possibly considering leaving the U.S.

There is much to be done. On 17 June and 18 June 2025, the German-American conference "[Human Rights in the Balance: Safeguarding Social and Environmental Sustainability](#)," will address the intersection of research freedom and human rights. For this event, we are honored to welcome Petra Olschowski, the Baden-Württemberg Minister of Science, Research, and the Arts, to the University of Freiburg.

Although the semester break meant a pause in the regular programme, it also brought some highlights. In late February, Johanna Pink and her research partners, Ervan Nurtawab and Ayesha Qurrat ul Ain – both Humboldt Fellows at FRIAS – gave us an inspiring tour of their exhibition "[The Global Qur'an: The World of Qur'an Translations](#)." In March, recipient of the 2023 Nobel Prize in Physics, Anne L'Huillier, delivered an engaging [Staudinger Lecture](#) on the study of electron dynamics. In April, one of our FRIAS Conferences focused on "[Material Matters: Unveiling the Dynamics of Reuse in Pre-Modern Texts, Images, and Carriers](#)," featuring manuscript collections and fascinating 'hands-on sessions' at museums in Freiburg and Basel.



And there's more to look forward to: the arrival of alumni/ae and FRESCO fellows in May and June and the fellows' spring retreat on May 2, addressing the challenging topic of 'relevance in research'. This is followed by a 2025 highlight at FRIAS: The 2021 Nobel Laureate in Literature Abdulrazak Gurnah's Hermann Staudinger Lecture on June 24 2025, entitled "Living together". This will be the first Staudinger Lecture delivered by a Nobel Laureate in this field. Last but not least: In October 2025, we will launch the "[Young Academy for Cultures and Societies Research](#)" focusing on the compelling theme "[The Good Life – What is a Good Society?](#)".

Is this enough to inspire optimism? I am not sure. Nevertheless, we will continue to do our best to support those advancing knowledge and research innovation, while upholding the responsibilities of an Institute for Advanced Study. Now, more than ever, it should become clear: Research must go beyond mere interpretation and understanding of the world.

With warm greetings to all members of the FRIAS community,

Ralf von den Hoff



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