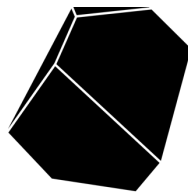




Call for applications: 1 Senior Fellowship »Imaginaria of Force«

The DFG Centre for Advanced Studies »Imaginaria of Force« awards 1 Senior Fellowship for the duration of 4-6 months in the winter term 2026/27:



Imaginarien der Kraft

Requirements:

The call for applications addresses experienced scholars (postdoctoral researchers from 4 years after their doctorate, habilitated scholars, professors and emeriti). The requirement for an application is a research project on concepts and discourses of force in the arts and/or cultural history or history of science.

Subject area of the call:

Hardly any field of cultural reflection can do without conceptualizations of force. Conceptions of religious or magical (creative force, magic powers), human (*vis animae*, impulse, willpower), political (*kratos*, *potestas*, power, rule, *charisma*), physical (gravity, attraction, energy), biological (procreative force, vital force, formative force), physiological (muscular force, perceptive force) or socioeconomic (labor force, buying power) forces refer to the dominance as well as to the plasticity of the concept of force and its derivatives. Since antique poetics and rhetoric, transmitted via the art and poetry doctrines of the Early Modern period, the arts in particular have strikingly often developed their performance profile with reference to the doctrines of force (creative force, imaginative force, *movere*). It is therefore all the more astonishing that the transitions and transfers between uses of the concept of force in the natural sciences, cultural studies, and the arts have hardly been investigated systematically. The aim of the CAS »Imaginaria of Force« is, to bring together a variety of disciplinary approaches to concepts of force and force-related concepts, in order to explore their emergence and transformations in the arts. Starting point is the observation that the term »force« (Greek *dynamis*, Latin *potentia*) denotes the ability to exert effects, but that forces themselves are not perceivable. They can only be detected indirectly by their effects. The arts and reflections on them, so a guiding thesis, constitute a privileged site of engagement with the sensory presence effects of non-sensory forces.



While the first funding phase (2019-2023) focused on the transitions between natural philosophy, natural science, and aesthetics, the second funding phase of the CAS (2023-2027) will set three new focal points. In the study of aesthetic forces, the focus is on 1) their affinity to the unquantifiable forces of the numinous, 2) the relationship between European and non-European concepts of force, and 3) the creative, artistic, and literary explorations of historical and contemporary practices of energy production and the energy landscapes that result from them.

The winter term 2026/27 focuses particularly on the annual theme of »transgression«. Forces are fundamentally threatened by their exhaustion, but at the same time they have an equally hard-to-control capacity for intensification, which has always attracted criticism of an excessive disruption of governing structures. This also contains a sense of scepticism towards the potential self-destruction of transgressive forces. Since the Early Modern period, the art discourse has therefore revolved around strategies aimed at the balance of forces, which promise both permanence and resilience through their moderation. At the same time, however, transgressions in many ways constitute the focal point and the actual goal of artistic productions.

We offer:

- 1 Senior Fellowship for experienced scholars
- Duration of the fellowship: 4-6 months between October 1st, 2026 – March 31st, 2027
- The amount of the stipend corresponds to the rates of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH)
- travel expenses for a single round trip to and from Hamburg
- a fully equipped office in the representative premises of the CAS »Imaginaria of Force« located close to the city centre
- library service

We expect:

- regular, active participation in weekly discussions and project presentations of the CAS as well as a presentation of one's own research project

Further information on the CAS »Imaginaria of Force« can be obtained from the website:

www.imaginarien-der-kraft.uni-hamburg.de/en.html



Universität Hamburg

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Application documents:

- Cover letter
- CV
- List of publications
- Outline of a research proposal with distinct reference to the topics of the CAS, preferably to the annual theme "Resistance" (max. 5 pages, excl. bibliography)

For queries and more detailed information, please contact Dr. Caroline Herfert:

caroline.herfert@uni-hamburg.de

Please send your application by e-mail (in a single PDF file) by September 15th, 2025 to:

imaginarien.der.kraft@uni-hamburg.de

Contact:

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