

UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE RUHR



TRANSATLANTIC RUHR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

July 25 - September 20, 2025





Dear Fellows, Friends and Partners,

It gives me great pleasure to share with you this year's cohort and highlight their impressive internships.

Our 2025 fellows represent all three universities of the University Alliance Ruhr: Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen.

They bring diverse academic and personal backgrounds to the New York and Washington DC metropolitan areas as well as Bethlehem and Easton in Pennsylvania, gaining valuable insights and practical experience through placements at our trusted host organizations.

The **Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship Program** is committed to fostering inclusive global collaboration, strengthening academic and professional competencies, and building enduring connections. The program reflects our broader mission of internationalization and advancing cross-cultural understanding.

We are incredibly proud of our 2025 fellows and confident that their time in the United States will be both formative and transformative. This year, fellows will intern at: *DFG German Research Foundation* (New York and Washington, DC), *GAIN German Academic International Network*, *GACC German American Chamber of Commerce*, *Goethe-Institut* and *GAPP German American Partnership Program*, *Lafayette College's Office of Sustainability*,

NYC Civic Engagement Commission, and the *Society of Illustrators* at the Museum of Illustration.

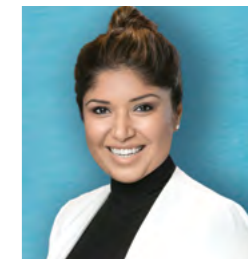
#TRF2025 is hosted in close cooperation between the UA Ruhr North America office, the German American Chamber of Commerce, and Lehigh University's Iacocca Institute, where fellows will spend one week developing and sharpening their entrepreneurial mindset. We are sincerely grateful to the DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service – for its ongoing support of the fellowship through the PROMOS scholarship.



We invite you to follow our fellows' journeys and learn more about their internships in the following pages. For further information, please visit our website and social media platforms.

With best wishes,


Priya S. Nayar



Priya S. Nayar
Executive Director
UA Ruhr North America, New York



Ruhr
UNIVERSITÄT
BOCHUM **RUB**

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tu technische universität
dortmund

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UNIVERSITÄT
DUISBURG
ESSEN

Open-Minded

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University Alliance Ruhr

The academic hub for research, teaching, studying, and networking in Germany's vibrant Ruhr area

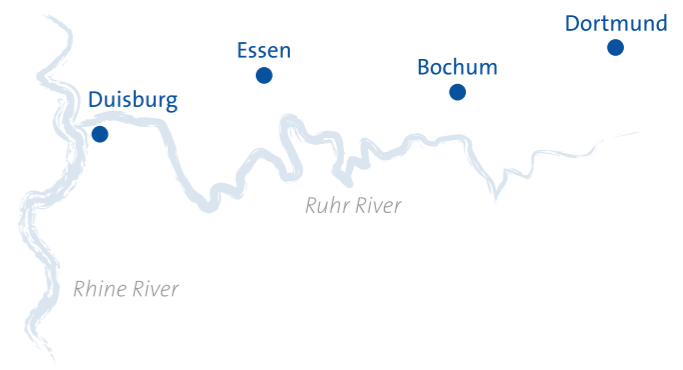
The University Alliance Ruhr is an alliance between Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen, the three largest universities in Germany's thriving Ruhr area. Each of our institutions has a strong tradition of breaking down walls between disciplines. We believe in the benefits of collaboration on all levels of scholarship and research, which is one of the reasons we came together in this unique university alliance.

More than 120,000 students, of which 19,000 are international, as well as over 14,000 researchers study and work within the UA Ruhr universities.

Together, the three universities have 850 partnerships with universities in over 130 countries, which provides our students and researchers with virtually unlimited possibilities for exchange and resources for development. To support our already strong global network of international exchange and collaboration, UA Ruhr has also created academic liaison offices for North America and Eastern Europe/Central Asia.

The Ruhr area is not only Germany's largest academic hub, but also an epicenter of innovation that fosters close interaction between academia and the private sector – and our alliance provides students and researchers from around the world with an open gateway to our region.

We invite you to learn more about the UA Ruhr alliance and our universities, and we look forward to welcoming you in the Ruhr area soon!



Who's Who

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Georg Bechtold
DFG



Stacy Burger
Lehigh University



Steve Compton
Society of Illustrators



Scott Koerwer
Lehigh University



Margarete Lamb-Faffelberger
Lafayette College



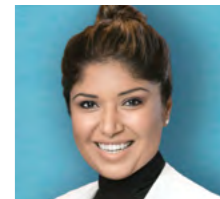
Arabelle Liepold
Society of Illustrators



Cheryl Matherly
Lehigh University



Delicia Nahman
Lafayette College



Priya S. Nayar
UA Ruhr



Dana Cowlshaw
DFG NY



Lisa Getzler
Lehigh University



Ajkuna Hoppe
GAPP



Anna Oberle-Brill
GAIN



Anastasiya Perevezentseva
Lehigh University



Tim Pfoehler
UA Ruhr



Eduardo Rodriguez
Lehigh University



Oscar Romero
NYC Civic Engagement Commission



Betzy Sandoval
Lehigh University



Susanne Johnson
GACC NY



Denis Johannßen
Lafayette College



Sandy Jones
GACC NY



Bettina Schuffert
DFG DC



Jörg Schumacher
Goethe-Institut NY



Michael Senra
Lafayette College



Larry Starr
Lehigh University

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Fellows

(in alphabetical order)

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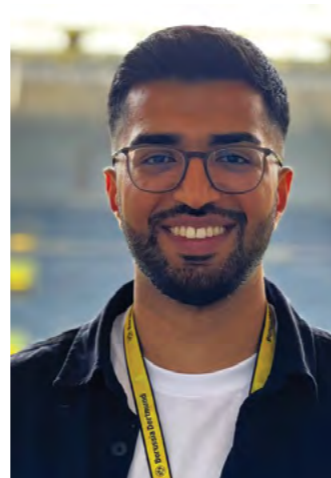
Samet Besyaprak



Moritz Brinkforth



Hadis Förster



Chander Lal

Samet Besyaprak *Goethe Institut/GAPP*

Samet is currently pursuing a degree in Educational Science at the University of Duisburg-Essen, specializing in the Sociology of Education. As part of his academic journey, he spent time in San Antonio, Texas as a Fulbright Scholar. Alongside his studies, he works as a student assistant in the university's Working Group on Childhood Research. Beyond academia, Samet is an educational activist, moderator and anti-discrimination trainer. His dedication to educational equity was recognized by the Allianz Foundation, which honored him with the "Movers of Tomorrow" award in the People category, celebrating his impactful work. During his time as a TRF Fellow, he will be interning at the Goethe-Institut/GAPP.

Moritz Brinkforth *GAIN*

Moritz is in the final semester of his Master's program in Psychology, specializing in Work, Organizational, and Business Psychology at Ruhr University Bochum. He also holds a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering. By combining both disciplines, he aims to help shape tomorrow's workplaces. In an interconnected world, he believes it is essential to address challenges from multiple perspectives. Driven by this goal, connecting researchers and practitioners across disciplinary boundaries is a key motivation in his career. Moritz is active in the student council for psychology and co-organized a major academic conference for students. During his time as a TRF Fellow, he will be interning at GAIN.

Hadis Förster *Society of Illustrators*

Hadis is a communications professional with experience in journalism, corporate communications, and storytelling. At Siemens Digital Industries Software, she shaped leadership communications across social media. She holds a degree in German and English Studies from Ruhr University Bochum and has led editorial work in Dublin and Cologne. Her work focuses on accessible content, change communication, and the role of narratives in digital transformation. Hadis is committed to expanding her multicultural expertise and gaining insights into international leadership within the cultural, public, and corporate sectors. As a TRF Fellow, she will be interning at the Society of Illustrators.

Chander Lal *GACC NY*

Chander is currently in the final year of his Master's degree in Sales Management at Ruhr University Bochum. Alongside his studies, he works in the Business Development department at Borussia Dortmund, one of Germany's leading soccer clubs. Through his academic training and role as a working student, he has gained hands-on experience in business strategy, sales excellence, and business development. He loves to travel and values cultural exchange as a source of personal growth and inspiration. After graduation, he aims to pursue a career in strategic consulting or business development. As a Fellow, he will be interning at GACC NY.

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Fellows

(continued)

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Ria Arakkel Marokky



Carolin Neuroth



Karolina Ordorska

Ria Arakkel Marokky

NYC CEC

Ria is in the final stages of her Master's in Business Administration at the University of Duisburg-Essen. During a semester abroad in South Korea, she gained international experience and developed a strong appreciation for diverse perspectives. She believes that diversity drives innovation and long-term success. Ria is looking forward to gaining practical experience through an internship at NYC CEC in New York City, where she values the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally. In her free time, she enjoys swimming and playing badminton. Her goal is to pursue a marketing career that blends creativity with strategic thinking.

Carolin Neuroth

DFG DC

Carolin is in the final year of her Bachelor's degree in Economics at the University of Duisburg-Essen. She has a strong interest in economic research and is currently working as a student assistant at the Chair of Econometrics at her university. Previously, she worked as a student assistant at the Research Data Center Ruhr at the RWI—Leibniz Institute for Economic Research, where she gained her first insights and practical experience in the field. During an exchange semester at NHH Bergen in Norway, she acquired valuable international experience. This summer, Carolin is looking forward to an internship at the DFG in Washington, DC.

Karolina Ordorska

NYC CEC

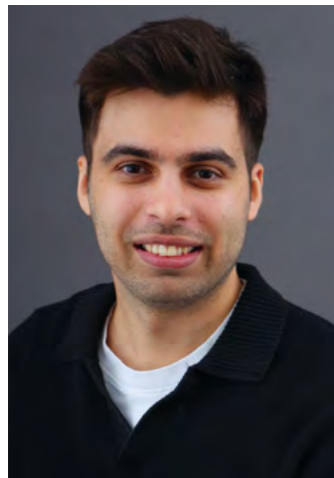
Karolina is a Master's student in Industrial Engineering as well as Business Administration and Economics at TU Dortmund University. She has gained international academic experience studying in Italy and Australia and has previously completed short-term internships in France and Italy. Professionally, she has worked in product management in the automotive industry and currently supports research and teaching as a research assistant in organizational development and change management. With an interdisciplinary background and a strong interest in meaningful public sector work, she looks forward to gaining practical insights into civic engagement and participatory governance at NYC CEC.

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Fellows

(continued)

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Mohammad Nasir Steldermann



Maria Vogt



Hanna Würker



Mohammad Nasir Steldermann
Lafayette College

Nasir is pursuing a Master of Education at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Before that, he gained professional experience in public healthcare and federal law enforcement. In addition to his studies, he works as a research assistant in the Department of North American Studies and engages in extracurricular activities such as intercultural dialogue, transatlantic studies, and sustainability education. He gained international experience as an intern at a boarding school in Singapore and through interdisciplinary academic collaborations across Europe. This summer, he will be interning at Lafayette College.

Maria Vogt
DFG NY

Maria is pursuing a Master's degree in Work, Organizational, and Business Psychology at Ruhr University Bochum. Alongside her studies, she has gained diverse professional experience, ranging from academic research to training and development, as well as consulting. Most recently, she has contributed to projects in change management at Deloitte and aptitude diagnostics at Kienbaum. Additionally, she supports startups as a student consultant. In her free time, Maria enjoys traveling and singing classical music. This summer, she will be interning at DFG in New York.

Hanna Würker
Lafayette College

Hanna is currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Economics at the Technical University of Dortmund. She has gained international experience through a high school exchange in Canada, and her academic interests lie in strategic management and innovation, complemented by practical experience from internships and volunteer work. Passionate about intercultural collaboration, she enjoys working in diverse teams and developing new ideas across disciplines. In her free time, she enjoys sailing, exploring new places and engaging in community activities. This summer, she will be interning at Lafayette College.

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Partner



Lehigh University

Lehigh University, established in 1865 in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is a prestigious private research university recognized for its academic programs and research initiatives. With a strong commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship, Lehigh provides a dynamic environment for students and faculty.

Founded in 1988, the Iacocca Institute at Lehigh University is at the forefront of fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. For the past 25 years, the institute has enjoyed a dynamic partnership with the University Alliance Ruhr in Germany, leveraging collaborative efforts to enhance entrepreneurial ecosystems.

By sharing best practices, promoting student exchanges, and creating joint experimental labs, the Iacocca Institute drives regional economic growth and prepares students to tackle global challenges. This collaboration aligns with Lehigh's strategic plan, "Inspiring the Future Makers," underscoring the university's commitment to impactful, global entrepreneurial education.

lehigh.edu



Lehigh University

Host Organizations

(in alphabetical order)



DFG New York, DFG Washington, DC

The German Research Foundation (DFG), headquartered in Bonn, currently funds about 32,000 research projects across disciplines with a budget of €3.9bn a year.

One of the DFG's principal goals is fostering the internationalization of German research. The DFG Office North America facilitates transatlantic research projects, works closely with U.S. and Canadian funding organizations, and monitors science policy. It supports early-career researchers here on a DFG fellowship with networking events and organizes outreach activities regionally to showcase German research.

dfg.de



GACC NY

The German American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (GACC NY), situated in the bustling heart of the Financial District, has been a cornerstone of networking and growth opportunities since 1947. With a vibrant community of over 850 member companies and entrepreneurs spanning diverse industries, we foster transatlantic trade, facilitating direct connections between German and U.S. businesses.

gaccny.com



GAIN

The German Academic International Network (GAIN) is a global community of postdoctoral German researchers, with a strong focus on the U.S. and Canada. GAIN promotes transatlantic mobility and collaboration by connecting researchers with career opportunities, funding programs, and professional networks in academia and industry. It supports members in leveraging international experience to advance careers in Germany and offers resources, mentorship, and peer insights to help shape successful research and innovation paths.

gain-network.org/en/



GAPP

Established in 1972, the German American Partnership Program (GAPP) is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization that facilitates bilateral transatlantic exchanges between schools in the U.S. and Germany. With 750+ U.S. schools and 400,000+ alumnae/alumni, GAPP is the largest bilateral exchange program between the U.S. and another country.

goethe.de/gapp

Host Organizations

(continued)



Goethe-Institut

The *Goethe-Institut* is the globally active cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany. Since 1969 it promotes the study of the German language and culture in New York and encourages artistic and cultural exchange between Germany and the United States.

goethe.de



Lafayette College

Lafayette College is an independent, academically competitive, and diverse in culture and perspective institution founded in March 1826. It offers undergraduate programs on a coeducational, residential campus rich in history and beauty. In an environment that fosters the free exchange of ideas, Lafayette College seeks to nurture the inquiring mind and to integrate intellectual, social, and personal growth.

lafayette.edu



NYC CEC

The *NYC Civic Engagement Commission (CEC)* was established by the city's voters as part of an amendment to the City Charter in 2018. The CEC's mission is to enhance civic participation, and promote civic trust through its programming, including: "The People's Money" – NYC's first participatory budgeting process; "Poll Site Access" – a voter engagement through interpreters at poll sites; partnerships with other NYC agencies to increase awareness and access services; "The People's Bus" – a retired corrections vehicle transformed into mobile community center.

nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/index.page



Society of Illustrators

The *Society of Illustrators*, founded in 1901, is the oldest nonprofit organization in the United States dedicated to the art of illustration. Located on New York's Upper East Side, the Society invites visitors to explore its historic Museum of Illustration, which features rotating exhibitions, a permanent collection of over 3,500 cataloged pieces, and engaging events throughout the year.

societyillustrators.org

New York City — The Vessel at Hudson Yards



<https://pixabay.com/photos/new-york-city-the-vessel-hudson-yard-4125987/>

Our Alumni

2017

Igor **Bergen**
Frederike **Forsting**
Kevin **Klein**
Sebahat **Kumaz**
Tim **Lermen**
Clara **Luft**
Laura **Montag**
Sarah **Schneider**
Lisa **Schröder**
Cem **Yagli**

2018

Katrin **Bauer**
Daniel **Beck**
Maximilian **Engel**
Konstantin **Ewert**
Rabea **Friedrich**
Anabell **Mensing**
Laura **Niggemann**
Bastian **Oldach**
Lisa **Rombach**
Fabian **Rosenfeld**

2019

Jannik **Blecher**
Annette **Britner**
Susanne **Fronia**
Katharina **Helmchen**
Timo **Henning**
Jan **Leukefeld**
Aileen **Ludwig**
Judith **Stämmeler**
Vera **Tessarolo**
Roderich **Wallrath**

2020

Jannik **Bonakdar**
Moritz **Brinkforth**
Nathan **Ewers**
Valerie **Heuchert**
Angelina **Kuschel**
Laura **Peters**
Tobias **Pyka**
Daniel **Schierok**
Marvin **Siegmann**
Maleen **Stachon**
Lisa **Zahar**

2021

Tinatin **Davitashvili**
Caroline **Hoyer**
Dalida **Licina**
Andreas **Palik**
Linda **Pannhausen**
Milad **Parhamfar**
Abdur **Rehman**
Philipp **Schulz**
Tobias **Wirtz**
Merle Marie **Wittig**
Alina **Wolski**
Wei Fang **Wu**

2022

Mariana **Bittermann**
Sven **Borgschulze**
Silas **Fischer**
Leonie **Gimbel**
Eugen **Mangazeev**
Niklas **Mergner**

2022

Khanh Viet **Nguyen**
Mona **Rosenberg**
Michelle **Roskoch**
Patrick **Ruhland**
Maximilian **Schmidt**
Till Maximilian **Schmitz**
Frederik **Schreiber**
Franziska **Wyschka**

2023

Annika **Beckmann**
Carlotta **Behle**
Edda **Brenscheidt**
Sonja **Frerich**
Annika **Hesse**
Julian **Marx**
Kai **Mohr**
Cedrik **Pelka**
Charlotte **Rabsch**

2024

Elif **Bayat**
Hannah M. **Boeckmann**
Richard **Brandt**
Lea M. Rebecca **Hördemann**
Karina **Kaidarova**
Karoline **Kaimer**
Fabian **Klaps**
Johanna **Lehnert**
David **Schupp**
Patrick **Sobbe**
Alisea Joline **Wigger**

New York City — Manhattan
6th Avenue at 59th Street Central Park South



<https://pexels.com/photos/manhattan-new-york-usa-america-3425664/>

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Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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BOCHUM

RUB

tu technische universität
dortmund

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Open-Minded



UA RUHR