

TRANSATLANTIC RUHR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

July 24 - September 20, 2026



<https://pivaboy.com/photos/vessel-hive-hudson-yards-460725/>

Dear Fellows, Friends, and Partners,

It is my great pleasure to introduce the 2026 cohort of the Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship Program and to highlight the remarkable range of internships and professional experiences that await them this summer.

Representing all three universities of the University Alliance Ruhr, Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen, this year's fellows bring together diverse academic interests and interdisciplinary perspectives spanning psychology, sustainability, communication, education, economics, political science, entrepreneurship, and international relations. Over the course of the program, they will contribute their skills and experiences to institutions across New York

and Pennsylvania while further developing their professional, intercultural, and transatlantic competencies.

The 2026 fellows will intern with a distinguished group of partner institutions, including Adelphi University, Lafayette College, Lehigh University, the German Academic International Network (GAIN), the German American Chamber of Commerce, the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Goethe-Institut, the New York City Civic Engagement Commission, and the Society of Illustrators.

Through these placements, fellows will engage directly with fields including higher education, sustainability, public engagement, international communication, arts and culture, research management, and transatlantic collaboration. What makes the Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship Program particularly meaningful is its emphasis on professional growth within an international and intercultural context. Fellows not only gain practical experience through their internships, but also build networks, strengthen leadership and communication skills, and contribute to long-term exchange between Germany and the United States.

An important component of the fellowship is the leadership program hosted in cooperation with Lehigh University's Lee Iacocca Institute for Global Leadership, where fellows participate in workshops and discussions designed to further develop their entrepreneurial mindset, intercultural awareness, and collaborative skills.

The Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship Program reflects the University Alliance Ruhr's broader commitment to internationalization, academic exchange, and fostering the next generation of globally engaged professionals and leaders. We are immensely proud of this year's cohort and look forward to seeing the intellectual, professional, and personal connections that emerge from their experiences

in the United States.

#TRF2026 is made possible through the close cooperation of the UA Ruhr North America office, the German American Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh University's Iacocca Institute, and our valued host institutions. We are also sincerely grateful to the DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service – for its continued support of the fellowship through the PROMOS scholarship program.

We invite you to follow the journeys of the 2026 fellows and learn more about their internships and experiences in the pages that follow.

With best wishes,


Priya S. Nayar



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



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 of Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and University of Duisburg-Essen, three leading universities located in Germany's dynamic Ruhr region. Each institution has a strong tradition of interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. United by a shared commitment to advancing research and teaching across disciplines, the universities came together to form one of Germany's most distinctive strategic university alliances.

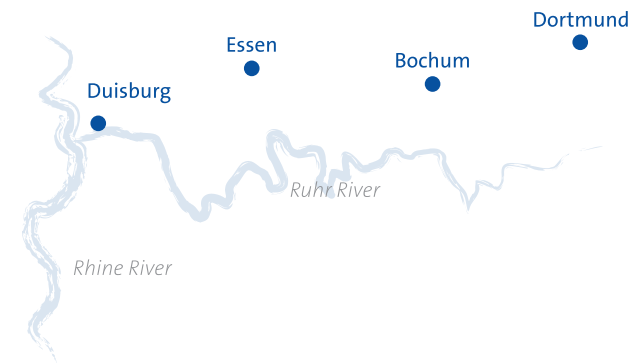
More than 120,000 students, including approximately 19,000 international students, and over 14,000 researchers study and work across the UA Ruhr universities. Together, the three universities maintain more than 850 partnerships with institutions in over 130 countries, creating extensive opportunities for international exchange, research collaboration, and academic development.

To further strengthen its global engagement, UA Ruhr has established international liaison offices in North America, South America, and Eastern Europe/ Central Asia.

The Ruhr region is not only one of Europe's largest academic hubs, but also a center of innovation where universities, research institutes, industry, and cultural institutions work in close collaboration. Through this network, UA Ruhr offers students and researchers from around the world an open

gateway to one of Germany's most internationally connected research and innovation ecosystems.

We invite you to learn more about UA Ruhr and its universities, and we look forward to welcoming you to the Ruhr region!



Who's Who



Stacy Burger
Lehigh University



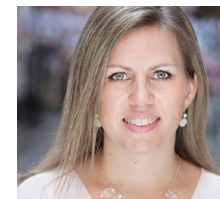
Samantha Comas
Lafayette College



Lindsay Compton
Society of Illustrators



Steve Compton
Society of Illustrators



Susanne Johnson
GACC NY



Sandy Jones
GACC NY



Sophia Kranemann
University Alliance Ruhr
North America



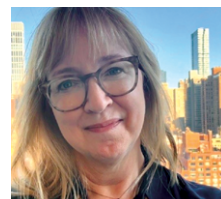
**Margarete
Lamb-Faffelberger**
Lafayette College



Arabelle Liepold
Society of Illustrators



Leah Mason
Lehigh University



Dana Cowlshaw
DFG New York



Susan Dinan
Adelphi University



Conner Elliott-Knaggs
Lafayette College



Jana Groh
GAIN



Cheryl Matherly
Lehigh University



Delicia Nahman
Lafayette College



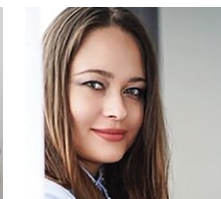
Priya S. Nayar
University Alliance Ruhr
North America



Anna Oberle-Brill
GAIN



Lucy Patterson
Goethe-Institut NY



Anastassiya Perevezentseva
Lehigh University



Ajkuna Hoppe
GAPP / Goethe-Institut NY



MaryAnne Hyland
Adelphi University



Stephan Isernhagen
DFG North America



Denis Johannßen
Lafayette College



Sonia Putzel
NYC CEC



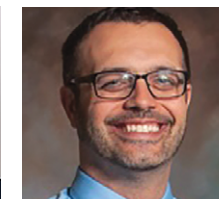
Eduardo Rodriguez
Lehigh University



Oscar Romero
NYC Civic Engagement
Commission



Jörg Schumacher
Goethe-Institut NY



Michael Senra
Lafayette College



Benjamin Solotaire
NYC Civic Engagement
Commission

Fellows (in alphabetical order)

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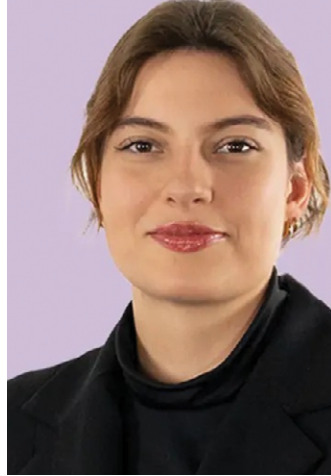
Jasmin Ahmeti



Leidy Palomino Ayvar



Jule Marie Bündgen



Lucia Marie Johanneves

Jasmin Ahmeti *CEC NYC*

Jasmin Ahmeti has gained professional experience through internships at Deloitte Germany, where she developed an interest in project management and organizational processes. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, she will be interning at the Civic Engagement Commission in New York City, where she will support project coordination and initiatives that promote civic engagement and community involvement. She is particularly interested in understanding how such initiatives are structured in an international context and looks forward to further developing her communication and intercultural skills.

Leidy Palomino Ayvar *Lafayette College*

Leidy Sulla Palomino Ayvar is in her second semester of the Master's program in Globalization, Transnationalization and Governance at Ruhr University Bochum. She has gained experience working at the university's International Office, supporting international students, and is currently involved in development cooperation through the Import Promotion Desk, a project funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Leidy will be interning at Lafayette College in the area of sustainability. She looks forward to strengthening her communication skills, gaining insight into sustainability practices in the United States, and working in an international team.

Jule Marie Bündgen *GACC NYC*

Jule Marie Bündgen is currently completing her Master's degree in Business and Economics at TU Dortmund University, after earning her Bachelor of Science in the same field. During her studies, she gained international experience through a semester abroad at Karlstad University and a year abroad at Georgia Southern University in the United States. Alongside her studies, she worked in public health administration during the COVID-19 pandemic and gained experience in Human Resource Management at Materna. At university, Jule is actively involved in supporting first year students and participating in the DLab program, which focuses on entrepreneurship, innovation, and international collaboration. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, she will be interning at the German American Chamber of Commerce in New York, where she is excited to gain insight into transatlantic business and innovation.

Lucia Marie Johanneves *GAIN*

Lucia Marie Johanneves is pursuing a Master's degree in Work Organization and Industrial/Organizational Psychology, following a Bachelor's degree in General Psychology, at Ruhr University Bochum. Alongside her studies, she serves as a board member of the student consultancy Campus for Company and is actively involved in university governance through the student council. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Lucia will be interning with the German Academic International Network, where she will contribute to corporate communications and the organization of a conference for researchers and academics in San Francisco. She looks forward to gaining experience in international communication as well as project and event management.

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Isabel Lenz



Kathrin Morochnyk



Nikolas Hendrik Neuhöfer

Isabel Lenz

Adelphi University

Isabel Lenz is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Psychology at Ruhr University Bochum. Alongside her studies, she has gained experience in personnel consulting and student consulting, and serves as chairwoman of the student consultancy Campus for Company. She has also completed a semester abroad at La Sapienza University in Rome, strengthening her intercultural communication skills.

As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Isabel will be interning at Adelphi University, supporting the Offices of International Studies, University Communications, and the Provost and focusing her work on student programming. She looks forward to gaining insight into U.S. higher education while further developing her skills in international communication and organizational work.

Kathrin Morochnyk

Lafayette College

Kathrin Morochnyk is pursuing a dual Master's degree in Communication Science and Anglophone Popular Culture at University of Duisburg-Essen, with a focus on digital marketing, public relations, and international communication. She has gained experience through roles in public relations at the university, an internship at D.SPORTS Düsseldorf, and international study experience in the UK.

As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Kathrin will be interning at Lafayette College, supporting the Sustainability team. She looks forward to contributing to sustainability initiatives while further developing her international communication skills.

Nikolas Hendrik Neuhöfer

Lehigh University

Nikolas Hendrik Neuhöfer is a fourth semester student of political science at University of Duisburg-Essen. Alongside his studies, he works as a parliamentary assistant to a State Senator in North Rhine-Westphalia and previously participated in the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange Program.

As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, he will be at Lehigh University, where he looks forward to gaining insight into the American university system, strengthening his professional English skills, and contributing to transatlantic dialogue.



Elif Özgöz



Natalie Schmidt



Tom Wecke

Elif Özgöz

Goethe-Institut NY

Elif Özgöz is a pre service teacher studying German and Social Sciences with a focus on German as a Foreign Language. She has teaching experience with international students across different proficiency levels and has conducted research on language learning. In addition, she organizes projects for international students and is involved in a socio political book club, where she contributes to discussions and moderation. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Elif aims to intern at the Goethe-Institut, where she is interested in supporting educational and cultural programs. She looks forward to gaining insight into the international implementation of language education and further developing her skills in intercultural communication and project coordination.

Natalie Schmidt

DFG NY

Natalie Schmidt is pursuing a Master of Science in Sustainable Innopreneurship at University of Duisburg-Essen. She is actively involved in entrepreneurship-related events and volunteers as a Campus Scout, supporting prospective students. She is currently spending a semester abroad in Poland. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Natalie will be interning at the German Research Foundation (DFG NY) in New York, where she looks forward to gaining experience in marketing within a research environment and further developing her skills in innovation and international collaboration.

Tom Wecke

Society of Illustrators

Tom Wecke is currently pursuing a Master's degree in European Culture and Economy at Ruhr University Bochum. Alongside his studies, he has gained experience in media, publishing, and consulting institutions in Germany and Belgium, with a focus on the internationalization of media and digital industries. As a Transatlantic Ruhr Fellow, Tom will be interning at the Society of Illustrators in New York, where he will support media coverage through social media content, photography, and video production. He looks forward to further developing his communication skills, experiencing New York's art scene, and connecting with artists and creatives in an international environment.

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 Lee Iacocca Institute for Global Leadership cultivates global leadership proficiencies of current and emerging leaders at Lehigh University and beyond through experiential learning programs, education and consulting, and applied scholarship.

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 supporting work to learn experiences, 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)



Adelphi University

Founded in 1896, *Adelphi University* is a private university located in Garden City, New York, recognized for its strong commitment to academic excellence, diversity, and student-centered learning. Adelphi offers undergraduate and graduate programs across a wide range of disciplines, combining rigorous academics with hands-on experience and community engagement. With close proximity to New York City, the university fosters global perspectives, innovation, and interdisciplinary collaboration in an inclusive and supportive campus environment.

adelphi.edu



DFG Office North America

(New York, Washington DC, and San Francisco)

The *DFG*, headquartered in Bonn, currently funds about 32,000 research projects in all fields of science and the humanities with a budget of €3.9bn a year. One of the DFG's principle goals is to foster the internationalization of German research. The DFG Office North America facilitates transatlantic research projects, works closely with US and Canadian funding organizations, and monitors science policy. It supports early-career researchers here on a DFG fellowship with networking events like GAIN, and organizes outreach activities to showcase German research regionally.

dfg.de



GACC NY

The *German American Chamber of Commerce, Inc.* (GACC NY) was established in 1947. Together with its chapters in Boston, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, GACC NY has been promoting economic relations between Germany and the United States for almost 80 years. The organization has distinguished itself as an innovative and relevant service provider as well as a reliable partner in German-American business inquiries. GACC NY supports companies by facilitating the following: market entry & business development, legal services, intern visas, recruitment and startup guidance.

gaccny.com



GAIN

GAIN (German Academic International Network) is the largest network of researchers and scientists from Germany working abroad, dedicated to fostering international academic exchange and career development. Founded through a joint initiative of the German research and funding organizations DAAD, DFG, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, GAIN connects German scholars in North America with opportunities in Germany and beyond. Through networking events, career workshops, and its annual GAIN conference, the organization supports transatlantic collaboration and promotes Germany as a leading destination for research and innovation.

gain-network.org/en/



Goethe-Institut / GAPP

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.

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.



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.



NYC CEC

The NYC Civic Engagement Commission (CEC) was established by the voters of New York City as part of an amendment to the City Charter in 2018. The CEC's mission is to enhance civic participation, promote civic trust, and strengthen democracy in NYC. The CEC works to accomplish this mission through its programming, including: "The People's Money" – NYC's first-ever citywide participatory budgeting process; "Poll Site Access" – a voter engagement initiative that provides interpreters at election

poll sites; supporting Community Boards by providing trainings and resources to board members; programming and partnerships with other City agencies to increase awareness and access to city services; "The People's Bus" – a retired Corrections vehicle transformed into mobile community center.



Society of Illustrators

The *Society of Illustrators*, founded in 1901, is America's oldest nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the art of illustration. Its mission is to celebrate illustration's history and evolving nature through exhibitions, lectures, and education, while also serving the community. The Society's Museum of Illustration, established in 1981, offers year-round themed exhibits, art education programs, and annual juried competitions. Its Permanent Collection, featuring 2,500 cataloged pieces, is available for scholarly use and periodic display.



Our Alumni

2017

Igor **Bergen** — TU Dortmund University
Frederike **Forsting** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Kevin **Klein** — Ruhr University Bochum
Sebahat **Kurnaz** — Ruhr University Bochum
Tim **Lermen** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Clara **Luft** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Laura **Montag** — Ruhr University Bochum
Sarah **Schneider** — Ruhr University Bochum
Lisa **Schröder** — TU Dortmund University
Cem **Yagli** — TU Dortmund University

2018

Katrin **Bauer** — TU Dortmund University
Daniel **Beck** — TU Dortmund University
Maximilian **Engel** — TU Dortmund University
Konstantin **Ewert** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Rabea **Friedrich** — Ruhr University Bochum
Anabell **Mensing** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Laura **Niggemann** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Bastian **Oldach** — TU Dortmund University
Lisa **Rombach** — TU Dortmund University
Fabian **Rosenfeld** — University of Duisburg-Essen

2019

Jannik **Blecher** — TU Dortmund University
Annette **Britner** — TU Dortmund University
Susanne **Fronia** — TU Dortmund University
Katharina **Helmchen** — Ruhr University Bochum
Timo **Henning** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Jan **Leukefeld** — Ruhr University Bochum
Aileen **Ludwig** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Judith **Stämmler** — Ruhr University Bochum
Vera **Tessarolo** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Roderich **Wallrath** — TU Dortmund University

2020

Jannik **Bonakdar** — TU Dortmund University
Moritz **Brinkforth** — Ruhr University Bochum
Nathan **Ewers** — Ruhr University Bochum
Valerie **Heuchert** — Ruhr University Bochum
Angelina **Kuschel** — Ruhr University Bochum
Laura **Peters** — TU Dortmund University
Tobias **Pyka** — TU Dortmund University
Daniel **Schierok** — Ruhr University Bochum
Marvin **Siegmann** — Ruhr University Bochum
Maleen **Stachon** — TU Dortmund University
Lisa **Zahar** — University of Duisburg-Essen

2021

Tinatin **Davitashvili** — Ruhr University Bochum
Caroline **Hoyer** — TU Dortmund University
Dalida **Licina** — TU Dortmund University
Andreas **Palik** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Linda **Pannhausen** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Milad **Parhamfar** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Abdur **Rehman** — TU Dortmund University
Philipp **Schulz** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Tobias **Wirtz** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Merle Marie **Wittig** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Alina **Wolski** — Ruhr University Bochum
Wei Fang **Wu** — Ruhr University Bochum

2022

Mariana **Bittermann** — TU Dortmund University
Sven **Borgschulze** — TU Dortmund University
Silas **Fischer** — TU Dortmund University
Leonie **Gimbel** — TU Dortmund University
Eugen **Mangazeev** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Niklas **Mergner** — TU Dortmund University

2022

Khanh Viet **Nguyen** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Mona **Rosenberg** — Ruhr University Bochum
Michelle **Roskoch** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Patrick **Ruhland** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Maximilian **Schmidt** — Ruhr University Bochum
Till Maximilian **Schmitz** — TU Dortmund University
Frederik **Schreiber** — Ruhr University Bochum
Franziska **Wyschka** — TU Dortmund University

2023

Annika **Beckmann** — Ruhr University Bochum
Carlotta **Behle** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Edda **Brenscheidt** — Ruhr University Bochum
Sonja **Frerich** — Ruhr University Bochum
Annika **Hesse** — TU Dortmund University
Julian **Marx** — TU Dortmund University
Kai **Mohr** — Ruhr University Bochum
Cedrik **Pelka** — TU Dortmund University
Charlotte **Rabsch** — TU Dortmund University

2024

Elif **Bayat** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Hannah M. **Boeckmann** — Ruhr University Bochum
Richard **Brandt** — TU Dortmund University
Lea M. Rebecca **Hördemann** — Ruhr University Bochum
Karina **Kaidarova** — Ruhr University Bochum
Karoline **Kaimer** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Fabian **Klaps** — TU Dortmund University
Johanna **Lehnert** — University of Duisburg-Essen
David **Schupp** — Ruhr University Bochum
Patrick **Sobbe** — TU Dortmund University
Alisea Joline **Wigger** — University of Duisburg-Essen

2025

Samet **Besyaparak** — Ruhr University Bochum
Moritz **Brinkforth** — Ruhr University Bochum
Chander **Lal** — Ruhr University Bochum
Ria Arakkel **Marokky** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Carolin **Neuroth** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Karolina **Odorska** — TU Dortmund University
Nasir **Stelderman** — University of Duisburg-Essen
Hanna **Würker** — TU Dortmund University

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Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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BOCHUM

RUB

tu technische universität
dortmund

UNIVERSITÄT
**DUISBURG
ESSEN**

Open-Minded



UA RUHR