

Hier
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Zukunft!



Saarland University is a campus university with an international reputation for research excellence, particularly in computer science and in the life sciences and nanosciences. The university is also distinguished by its close ties to France and its strong European focus. Around 17,000 students, studying over one hundred different academic disciplines, are currently enrolled at Saarland University. Saarland University is officially recognized as one of Germany's family-friendly higher-education institutions and with a combined workforce of more than 4000 it is one of the largest employers in the region.

The Department of Language Science and Technology at Saarland University invites applications for the following position commencing **01 April 2025**

Academic research assistant (m/f/x)

Reference number W2561, salary in accordance with the German TV-L salary scale¹, pay grade: E-13 (see also <https://oeffentlicher-dienst.info/c/t/rechner/tv-l/allg?id=tv-l-2024&matrix=1>); for 3 years, employment: 75 % of standard working time.

Workplace/Department:

The Language Science and Technology Department at Saarland University invites excellent students holding a master's degree to pursue a PhD (3 years) in the field of Psycholinguistics. You will join [Vera Demberg's lab](#), which covers the highly interdisciplinary and fast-paced fields of psycholinguistics and computational linguistics.

The focus of the project:

When humans read and listen to language, they construct rich mental representations of the presented information. A crucial element of these representations is the construction of discourse relations: semantic-pragmatic links such as cause-consequence and contrast. Comprehenders can make use of many different types of information to construct discourse relations, such as connectives (e.g., because, but), or even visual information such as gesture (e.g., two hands on opposing side of the body to signal on the one hand / on the other hand). However, we know little about what other cues signal discourse relations, and whether languages differ in the type of cues they contain and the effects of these cues.

The position will be funded as part of the Collaborative Research Centre 1102, project B2 "Cognitive Modelling of Information Density for Discourse Relations". The goal of the project is to develop models that explain how readers and listeners can effectively make sense of discourse during online and offline processing. This is done by

¹ TV-L = collective agreement on remuneration of public sector employees in the German *Länder*

examining how discourse signals influence discourse processing and comprehension, at the level of linguistic cues, speech cues and gestural cues. The project adopts a multi-method approach, combining methods such as reading time studies, comprehension studies and acceptability studies.

Job requirements and responsibilities:

- The position is intended to begin in April 2025 (start-date is negotiable in both directions, i.e., earlier start as soon as January 2025 or a later start are possible).
- Prior experience of research activities in experimental linguistics, including experimental design and data analysis.
- Excellent spoken and written proficiency in English.
- Willingness to learn new experimental methods through guidance from colleagues and training courses.
- Interest in bridging scientific fields, specifically cognitive and computational linguistics.
- Proficiency in programming languages such as R or Python.

Your academic qualifications:

Completed university studies in : A Master's degree in a relevant field, such as linguistics, psycholinguistics, experimental psychology, cognitive science, data science, or a related discipline.

What we can offer you:

- Access to state-of-the art research and training facilities and a generous conference and travel budget
- Immersion in an interdisciplinary community made up of cognitive and computational researchers.
- A flexible work schedule allowing you to balance work and family
- A broad range of further education and professional development programs
- An occupational health management model with numerous attractive options, such as our university sports program
- 30 vacation days per year; in addition, we honor the German public holidays
- Enrollment in a personal pension scheme to which both employer and employee pay a monthly contribution
- Supplementary pension scheme (RZVK)
- Discounted tickets on local public transport services ('Jobticket')

Applicants are requested to submit their application, including a cover letter that specifies why you would like to work on this topic and what qualifies you for it, an academic CV, a list of academic publications, your BSc/ MSc thesis (or a current draft), copies of academic degree certificates and names of two potential references.

We look forward to receiving your meaningful application. Please quote **reference number W2561** when applying. The application deadline is **December 15th, 2024** / OR Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

The **applications** should be sent via email directly to Prof. Vera Demberg to **[applications-vd\(at\)lst.uni-saarland.de](mailto:applications-vd(at)lst.uni-saarland.de)**

If you have any **questions**, please contact us for assistance. Your contact: Prof. Vera Demberg ([vera\(at\)coli.uni-saarland.de](mailto:vera(at)coli.uni-saarland.de))

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[Saarland University](#) is one of the leading centres for computer science and computational linguistics in Europe, and offers a dynamic and stimulating research environment. Prof. Vera Demberg's group is affiliated with both the [Department of Computer Science](#) and with the [Department of Language Science and Technology](#). The student will become part of the collaborative research center SFB 1102 "[Information Density and Linguistic Encoding](#)", which offers a rich and vibrant environment of students working

on related questions. On site, there is also the new research training group on [Neuroexplicit Models of Language, Vision and Action](#).

Our researchers and students come from all over the world, and our primary working language is English.

The Saarland University is an equal opportunities employer. In accordance with its policy of increasing the proportion of women in this type of employment, the University actively encourages applications from women. Women are given preference in cases of equal suitability, ability and professional performance.

Applications from severely disabled persons will be given preferential consideration in the event of equal suitability. Part-time employment is generally possible.

We welcome applications regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic and social origin, religion/belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation and identity.

Pay grade classification is based on the particular details of the position held and the extent to which the applicant meets the requirements of the pay grade within the [TV-L salary scale](#).

When you submit a job application to Saarland University you will be transmitting personal data. Please refer to our privacy notice for information on how we collect and process personal data in accordance with Art. 13 of the Datenschutz-Grundverordnung. By submitting your application you confirm that you have taken note of the information in the Saarland University privacy notice.