

Protocol of the Leibniz PhD Network's General Assembly 2023



Date: 20.10.2023

Location: Centre for Structural Systems Biology, Notkestraße 85, 22607 Hamburg

KOMs: Franziska Krause & Robin Biermann

Participants: 20 online at 11:50; 39 in person

Steering Committee 2022/2023

- Saida Diaz (Spokesperson)
- Eframir Franco (Spokesperson)
- Dominik Lonken (Treasurer)
- Mitja Musberg (Section A Spokesperson)
- Subhashree Nath (Section B Spokesperson)
- Franziska Krause (Section C Spokesperson)
- Eleni Sachs (Section D Spokesperson)
- Robin Biermann (Section E Spokesperson)

AGENDA

 The Leibniz PhD Network GA 20 23 Centre for Structural Systems Biology CSSB, Notkestraße 85, 22607 Hamburg, Germany		Agenda 20th October '23	
08:30 – 09:00	On-site arrival at CSSB		
09:00 – 09:10	Welcome note		
09:10 – 09:40	Introduction to the Leibniz PhD Network Report on the activities of the network in the term 2022/23		
09:40 – 10:00	Message from Dr. Heinz, Senior research manager at Leibniz Association, contact person for Section C scientific affairs and former spokesperson of the Leibniz PostDoc Network		
10:00 – 10:20	Coffee/ Tea break		
10:20 – 12:15	Activity report of the Working Groups :: WG Communication :: WG Survey :: WG Prevention of Power Abuse & Contract Situation :: WG Diversity :: WG Mental Health		
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch break		
13:15 – 13:35	Finance report 2022/23		
13:35 – 13:45	Introduction to the voting procedure		
13:45 – 14:15	General discussion and input session		
14:15 – 15:15	Election of Spokespersons, Treasurer and Section Spokespersons		
15:15 – 15:30	Group photo		
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee/ Tea Break		
16:00 – 17:00	Working Group Meetings		
17:00 – 17:45	WG wrap up & presentation of WG Results		
17:45 – 18:00	Closing Words		
18:00 – 18:30	Post-Session with new Steering Committee (Optional)		
19:30 – Open end	Self-pay dinner Restaurants will be announced during the GA		

Protocol

9:15: Eleni started to introduce the agenda printed above and briefly explained the contents

9:16 Eframir started the **welcoming note (See presentation)**

- explained the scope of the current SC
- All sections are represented in person
- Structure of the steering committee is explained
- Milestones of the Leibniz PhD Network since 2016 are shown and the activities of the last year explained

9:30 Saida started to introduce the N2 Network

- Explained the aims of N2 and what the most important key facts are they stand for
- Mentioned the political impact of the N2 Network
- Mentioned the N2 impact in the 2022/23 term (WissZeitVG, political statements and the approval of the N2 concept event).

9:35 Dr. Gitta Heinz (Scientific Manager at Leibniz for Section C), replacing Dr. Marvin Bähr

- Introduction to the history of the Leibniz Association
 - Leibniz main mission “Scientific excellence and social relevance”, credo “Theoria cum praxi”
 - presents financial funding of the Leibniz Association and gives information on budgeting
 - Research Infrastructures within the Leibniz Association are named and their relevance explained
 - Explains the meaning of strategic networking for the association
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- Leibniz Competition funding scheme is explained (target audience: junior researchers, female professors and 2 other)
 - Strategic networks established via science campi.
 - Highlights the international ties of Leibniz
 - Equal opportunities are mentioned (“Leibniz Equal Standards”, “Leibniz Mentoring program”, “Networking”)
 - Reminder to read the Leibniz Guidelines on Career Development and Career Support
 - Lists social outreach strategy from Leibniz
 - Questions:
 - Leibniz Leadership Academy, how can PhDs suggest superiors to attend the Leadership Academy?
 - New Directors are personally contacted by Leibniz. But cannot be forced
 - From Eleni: SC had also contact to the Leadership Academy.
 - From Eframir: It is intended to involve PostDocs and PhDs at a later stage
 - What political position can a PhD Representative take in the institute
 - Institutes are independent
 - Eleni: The Workers council can be involved as they have a fixed political power
 - Robin: best way is to start the communication and talk to all PhDs and the head of the Institutes
 - Eframir: Communication path goes both ways, take every step before escalating further
 - Why is there no representation within the Leibniz Association decision making structure yet?
 - Eframir: So far, the topic has been addressed. Further work is needed. But it needs time and legal framework
 - Seconed by Dr Heinz: that time is needed for those processes
 - Eframir: we need additionally manpower, Eleni is elaborating

COFFEE BREAK!

Start of the reports of from the WGs

No one raised their hand that photos should not be taken. But in case, they can mention it on the attendance sheet.

Dr. Heinz gave some insights into the Leibniz PostDoc network

10:34 Working Group Diversity by Saida:

- Introduction to the WG.
- **Work did in 2022/2023:**
 - Support of women in science
 - Scope: Equity and inclusion
 - Big event in 2024 organized with N2, two days, with 100 participants incl. Politicians
 - Institutional strategies are implemented in (some) German institutions
 - Saida is addressing the points of emphasis of the N2 Event and becoming very passionate about the topic 😊
 - Imposter syndrome is explained and often observed in underrepresented groups
 - Invitation to join the WG and the organization team

10:46 Working Group Sustainability by Kristine Oevel:

- WG is coming to an end
- Explanation of the field of interest for Sustainability.
 - Research is amongst the less sustainable fields. (Measured by CO2)
 - CO2 Footprint is scattered differently into consumables, travels, commuting or energy, depending on the type of institute.
 - History of the WG. Founded in 2020. 2021 Panel Discussion. Aim: Writing a position paper that was published in March 2023 on Zenodo (DOI [10.5281/zenodo.7714679](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7714679))
 - The paper has a section on goals and demands that specifically addresses the Leibniz Institutes and possible tasks to contribute to reducing their carbon footprint
 - Listing potential Measures explained in the chapters of the position paper
 - The Leibniz Association founded a Sustainability management team in 2020 to exchange ideas and the Steering Group Sustainability in 2022
 - As a result of the working group sustainability and their published paper, 10 pilot projects will be funded to develop climate neutral research infrastructures and a position of the Leibniz Association
 - Invitation for impulse talks at institutes and joining the Leibniz PhD Network

11:02 Working Group Communication by Aleksandra Atanasova and Subhashree:

- Subhashree is shortly presenting what WG Communication is doing, including the Social media campaigns but also in communicating the work of a PhD to the society.
- “Life of a PhD” is introduced. Request for voluntary stories and joining the working group

11:06 Working Group Contract Situation and Prevention of Power abuse by Eleni and Mitja:

- Advertisement of the working group power abuse
- Issues have spiked during the COVID Period
- Two Focus projects have been spiked in Mainz during the Future Workshop
 - Dedicated Survey on Power Abuse
 - Workshop on prevention on Power Abuse and current challenges in academia

- More info on the survey:
 - Anonymously collection of data and stories
 - Data security issues are finally being fixed and are taken very seriously
 - Storage of data is currently discussed to be stored at GESIS
 - No stories will be published. The Mechanisms are of interest are hoped to be explored by this survey
- More info on the workshop:
 - Deals with topics such as the WissZeitVG or Stipend issues.
 - Goal: Draft a position paper
 - Highlights the possibilities of collaboration between different Leibniz Institutes

11:17 Working Group Survey by Marco and Emilio:

- Goal: inform decision making structures
- Info: Report is submitted since this week
- Products of the WG:
 - Harmonized Survey
 - General Report (Leibniz)
 - Institute Specific reports (Leibniz)
 - Issue Report (Leibniz)
 - Issue Report N2
 - Action reports (N2)
- Overview of the workflow:
 - Can be checked in the PPP slides
- General overview of the 2021 Survey data with the original presentation shown at the Leibniz Head Quarters
- Some overall improvements were observed related to salary bracket
- Concerning the topic “closing the gap”, it was reported, that the formal reality doesn’t match the documented reality of the survey
- If gaps are not closed, it might lead to thoughts of quitting the PhD
 - Reasons high workload
 - Poor working conditions
 - And a third one
- Topics that were addressed are: quitting the PhD and reasons, contracts and estimated PhD duration, mental health, working hours in contrast to hours stated in the contract, supervision satisfaction, supervision, power abuse as bullying
- Ways of closing the gaps were presented
- **Specific results can be read in the report**
- **The group urges for new members to join as it is one of the most important working groups**
 - Pointed out that now a new cycle starts which is perfect for people to get involved
 - A handbook on “how to” is currently written
 - There should be a coding bootcamp and data transformation at GESIS

Question round for the WGs:

- Q: Time consumption?
 - A: Its voluntary, only as much as you want
- Q: What's the process to join:
 - A: Sent an email to the coordinators or the SC and just attend the meeting
- Q: How to get the institute specific survey data?
 - A: Currently not enough workforce for institute specific data.
 - Q: Can the data be shared with the institute?
 - A: No, not now, as the data is not anonymized. And a certain number of Participants is needed

- Q: What are we missing to get PhDs on board on the PhD Network?
 - A: People might be scared to join others they don't know. A Stammtisch might be good to lower the burden.
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- Pankhuri:
 - Emphasize to look at the things that are dealt with right.
- Q: How about introducing a Stammtisch in Berlin? Was this done before? Because you like to participate more when you know the people.
- Eframir, Eleni and Dominik: Is already running in Hamburg, for sure can be started in Berlin
- Q: How to speak up without being discriminated for being "the negative person" bringing up the "negative vibe"?
 - A: speak up in the role as representative, creating a common round, form a group, make a small anonymous survey
- Q: How to get Funding for events? Do more than one institute need to be included?
 - A: Funding for activities within the Network
- 1st Suggestions: mid yearly meeting to start the engagement and advertise
- 2nd Suggestion: Starter Package for the PhD Reps that are newly elected
- Both suggestions answered: Mid yearly meeting is the future workshop and section specific zoom meetings
- Problem stated: institute specific survey showed problems that were presented to the head of the institutes. The head of institutes said that they would need the names before they can act.
- Answer: Contact the power abuse group for help.
- Q: what to do if the works council is not working together with the PhDs to solve Problems? No Scientific staff and no PhDs in the working council.
- Answer: Inform about "firing" the working council and contact the power abuse working group.

13:23: Financial Report by Dominik

- Fiscal Year of the Leibniz PhD Net is explained: overlap between two years.
- What goes into the budget and what is spent? (Numbers can be taken from the presentation)
 - GA
 - N2 Events
 - Future Workshop
 - Small Event Funds
 - WG/SC funding for travel costs and accommodation
 - On- and off-boarding weekend
- Detailed description on what was spent in 2022 and 2023.
 - 12,870€ spent in 2022
 - 17,422€ spent in 2023 so far
- Call for ideas on how to spend the money in a useful way on seminars and workshops to let go a part of the budget back to the headquarter
- Q: what are we spending the money on in terms of the small event fund?
 - A: 1 Meeting in Kühlungsborn for a Science Slam
 - A: 2 Meeting in the field of economy in Cologne and Berlin. Which impacts did the COVID Pandemic have on Germany
 - Under Review: German Language Interaction hosted in Berlin
 - Under Review: Data Security Workshop from GESIS and Coding Bootcamp
 - Granted: Prevention of Power Abuse in Bochum
- Q: How is money given to projects?
 - A: Guidelines for the formal framework exist "Guidelines for small event funds": There is a form that covers the main aspects: Open to everyone? Budget? Idea?
 - Form should be sent around to all PhD Reps

13:45 Introduction to the voting procedure by Dominik

- One PhD Rep per Institute is able to vote the Spokesperson (1 Vote, the two people with the most votes will be the new spokespersons), the Treasurer (1 Vote) and the Section spokesperson of the Section that your institute belongs to (1 Vote)

13:48 Vote on Project Groups and renaming of Contract Situation and Prevention of Power Abuse introduced.

- Any obligations from the audience?
- Q: Why is Sustainability Group retiring
 - A: From Kristine Oevel: Environmental part is already covered, and participants are leaving Leibniz. Still, there is more room for further topics.
- Emilio: About the coordination of a WG: It's about balance between distributing tasks according to the strengths and weaknesses.
- WG Survey prepares a manual for the WG Coordination to help new members to get orientation
- Eframir praises the work in the SC and explains how the dynamics work
 - Second by Saida. Addition: Learning and practicing soft skills
- Comment: Closing WGs might be needed to archive the mission of the PhD Network
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Hand raise majority vote on introducing project groups – **Majority present and online seconds the proposal**

Hand raise majority vote on renaming the Prevention of Power Abuse WG into “Prevention of Power abuse and contract situation” – **Majority present and online seconds the proposal**

Questions from the audience to the SC:

- Q: How many meetings do you have?
 - A: Time, date and frequency up to the SC
- Q: How often do you have meetings with the Section?
 - A: As often as you want. It depends on the pressing topics.

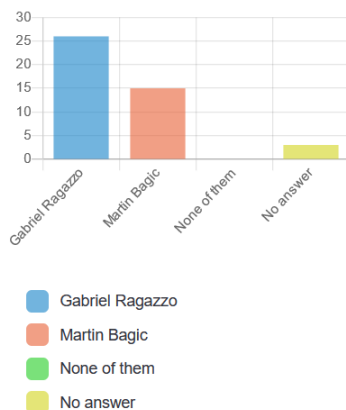
Empowering Call of the SC to find new people volunteering for the SC.

14:12 Introduction of the SC voting (24 People online) during a coffee break:

Spokesperson:

- **Final Vote: Gabriel Ragazzo, Martin Bagic (26 and 15 Votes)**

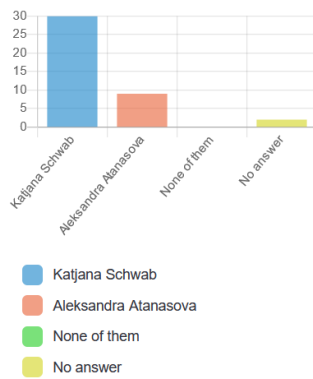
Who should be the new Spokespersons of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?



Treasurer:

- **Final Vote: Katjana Schwab (30 Votes)**

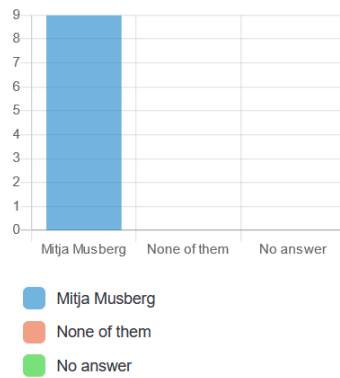
Who should be the new Treasurer of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?



Section A candidates:

- **Final Vote: Mitja Musberg (9 Votes)**

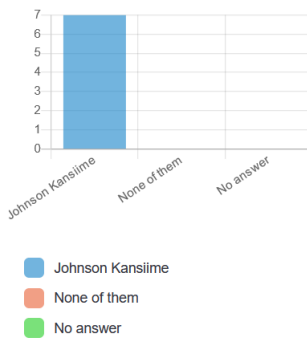
Who should be the new Section A Speaker of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?



Section B candidates:

- **Final Vote: Johnson Kansime (7 Votes)**

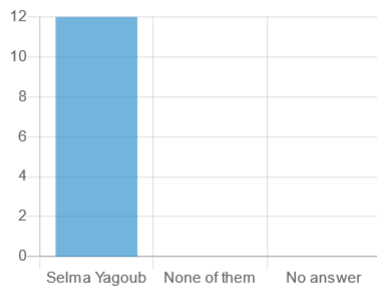
Who should be the new Section B Speaker of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?



Section C candidates:

- **Final Vote: Selma Yagoub (12 Votes)**

Who should be the new Section C Speaker of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?

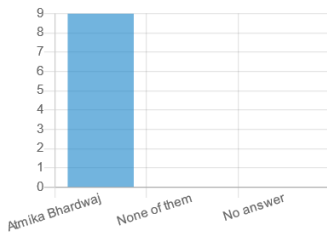


- Selma Yagoub
- None of them
- No answer

Section D candidates:

- **Final Vote: Atmika Bhardwaj (9 Votes)**

Who should be the new Section D Speaker of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?

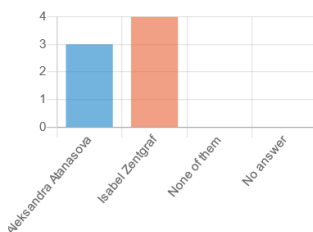


- Atmika Bhardwaj
- None of them
- No answer

Section E candidates: Alexandra

- **Final Vote: Isabel Zentgraf (4 Votes)**

Who should be the new Section E Speaker of the Leibniz PhD Network for 2023/24?



- Aleksandra Atanasova
- Isabel Zentgraf
- None of them
- No answer

Finally, pictures of the audience were taken.

During the closing remarks the success of the event was highlighted and the Working Group session was opened.



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Seal of the Leibniz PhD Network Steering Committee, Date, Place