

## Call for Proposals: Financial Support for Graduate Symposia 2026 funded by the German Cognitive Science Society

The German Cognitive Science Society invites proposals for financial support for graduate symposia in cognitive science. The aim is to foster exchange and networking among doctoral researchers and early-career scholars, including PhD students and, where appropriate, early postdocs.

We particularly welcome proposals addressing the following topics, although proposals on any topic relevant to cognitive science will be considered:

- Facing **societal challenges** and fostering **resilience**, including aging societies, the future of care, climate change, and opinion manipulation.
- What can cognitive science offer to artificial intelligence and machine learning? How cognitive are large language models in contrast with cognitive models?
- Which effects have social media, large language models, and related technologies on human cognition, shared and individual beliefs, belief bubbles, and education? How can they be steered in a positive direction?
- How do and which interindividual differences shape beliefs and cognition?

Our societies, social networks, politics, technologies, opinions, and beliefs are developing at an unprecedented pace. One goal of the German Cognitive Science Society is to investigate these developments at the cognitive level and to support **positive societal change**. Active exchange across disciplinary boundaries and methodological approaches can strengthen interdisciplinary research in cognitive science, stimulate collaborations between different institutions in German-speaking countries, and contribute to societal development through **cognitive-scientific insights**.

To support this exchange, the German Cognitive Science Society is offering funding for graduate symposia that promote networking among graduate students in cognitive science. Applicant teams are free to define their own thematic focus.

### Format and Scope

Time period: The symposium should take place late 2026 or early 2027.

Duration: At least two full days, ideally two and a half days.

Language: English.

Target size: Approximately 40–50 participants, including at least around 20 participants from institutions other than the host university.

### Financial Support

The German Cognitive Science Society will provide financial support of up to €5,000 for the best proposal. It is expected that a local contribution will also be provided and that participation fees will be kept as low as possible, for example below €30 per participant. Funding will be transferred on the basis of documented expenses.

## **Application**

Applications may be submitted in either German or English and should include the following:

- Conceptual outline of the symposium, including its thematic focus and scientific objectives, with a maximum length of two pages. Ideally, the proposal should involve several disciplines within cognitive science.
- Structural design of the symposium with regard to the support and networking of doctoral researchers in cognitive science, with a maximum length of two pages. Where appropriate, the proposal should describe opportunities for participants to contribute through talks, posters, discussion sessions, or other interactive formats.
- Financial plan, including expected participation fees and local contributions where applicable, with a maximum length of one page.

Statement by a professor confirming that they will assume overall financial responsibility for the implementation of the symposium.

## **Applicant Team**

The application must be submitted by a team of at least three doctoral researchers or young postdocs from at least two institutes that differ in disciplinary and/or methodological orientation. The applicant team should consist of no more than five people.

## **Submission Deadline**

Applications should be submitted by 31 July 2026 to:

vorstand@gk-ev.de

## **Decision**

The Executive Board of the German Cognitive Science Society will decide on the applications by the 15<sup>th</sup> of September.

**Executive Board: Prof. Dr. Martin Butz, Prof. Dr. Nele Rußwinkel**  
**20 May 2026**