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**INTERNATIONAL AGYA CONFERENCE**  
**'THE PLACE OF HUMANITIES IN RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND SOCIETY: AN ARAB-GERMAN**  
**DIALOGUE'**

**8–10 NOVEMBER 2019**

VENUE: Freie Universität Berlin, Silberlaube, Hörsaal 1b, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin, Germany

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ORGANIZERS: AGYA members Dr. Jenny Oesterle (University of Heidelberg), Jun.-Prof. Dr. Barbara Winckler (University of Münster), Prof. Dr. Nuha Al-Shaar (American University of Sharjah), Dr. Beate La Sala (Freie Universität Berlin)

Digitization and artificial intelligence, globalization, agriculture and sustainable resource production in times of climate change, genome editing and high-tech medicine, are highly topical issues of STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and math). These technological and ecological transformations are increasingly shaping our everyday lives, and they determine how we will live in the future. Hence, new challenges for society arise, requiring philosophers, historians, literary scholars, and artists to provide us the essential knowledge and a variety of perspectives to reflect on social change, our ethical values, and norms: the humanities help us make meaning of the future world and define our place in it.

The international AGYA conference aims at exploring the potential and challenges of the humanities, engaging Arab and German key players in a multilateral dialogue.

In the Arab world and Germany, the humanities face common obstacles such as limited access to financial resources or their very relevance being constantly put in question. Specifically in the Arab world, the lack of prestige and status of the humanities make gifted students rather choose a career path in STEM disciplines. A restricted access to international knowledge production is also an issue in some Arab countries. In Germany, the job market for graduates of the humanities is comparatively precarious. Therefore, it is time to initiate a transregional dialogue about the role of the humanities, their standing in the academic field, and their impact on society.

What are the most challenging issues in the humanities today? How to teach humanities at universities and high schools to the next generation and what does it take to bridge the gap between sciences and humanities? What is the potential of digital humanities? The AGYA conference invites scholars of the humanities, scientists, and university officials from Arab countries and Germany to exchange ideas and share best practices, explore different strategies and benefits of Arab-German cooperation, and discuss the effects of funding policies. Last but not least, the importance and impact of humanities beyond the academic sphere will be debated together with representatives of cultural institutions, media and funding institutions, policy makers, and creative minds: How to make the knowledge and the skills associated with the humanities accessible to a broader public?

The structure of the conference will be comprised of alternating formats: keynote lectures, panel discussions and workshop sessions. Panel discussions will explore different strategies and benefits of Arab-German cooperation, the practice and allocative function of funding policies as well as opportunities and challenges in the field of digital humanities. While keynotes and panel discussions address the conference attendees and even a broader public, workshops allow for in-depth discussion of topical issues, discussing challenges and presenting examples of best practice. Among the topics addressed during the workshops are questions of, first, how to teach humanities (both at universities and in schools), second, how to 'translate' academic knowledge to a broader public, while the third workshop will be held in five parallel working groups in order to discuss in greater depth issues related to a specific discipline.

AGYA awards a prize to projects with special achievements in communicating humanities to general society. Following an international call for proposals (now closed), ten projects will be invited to take part in a poster presentation during the conference. The two best proposals/posters (one from the Arab world and one from Germany or another European country) will be honored in an award ceremony on the second day of the conference.

This is a conference of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) in cooperation with Freie Universität Berlin and Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, with the collaboration of Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg and American University of Sharjah. Sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

## **PRELIMINARY PROGRAM**

### **FRIDAY, 08 NOVEMBER 2019:**

- 18:00            OPENING: (BRIDGING BETWEEN) HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES  
19:30            DINNER RECEPTION

### **SATURDAY, 09 NOVEMBER 2019**

- 08:30-            REGISTRATION  
09:00-09:30    WELCOME ADDRESSES & INTRODUCTION  
09:30-10:15    KEYNOTE I: WHY HUMANITIES MATTER – PERSPECTIVES FROM THE ARAB WORLD  
10:15-11:00    KEYNOTE II: CHANCES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE HUMANITIES AT GERMAN UNIVERSITIES AND BEYOND  
11:00-11:30    COFFEE BREAK / POSTER SESSION  
11:30-13:30    WORKSHOP I: TEACHING HUMANITIES AT UNIVERSITIES AND (HIGH) SCHOOLS (2 PARALLEL WORKSHOPS)  
                    WORKSHOP I A: TEACHING HUMANITIES AT UNIVERSITIES  
                    WORKSHOP I B: TEACHING HUMANITIES AT (HIGH) SCHOOLS  
13:30-14:30    LUNCH  
14:30-16:00    PANEL DISCUSSION I: ARAB-GERMAN COOPERATION IN THE HUMANITIES  
16:00-16:30    COFFEE BREAK / POSTER SESSION  
16:30-18:30    WORKSHOP II: TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE TO SOCIETY (“PUBLIC HUMANITIES”)  
18:30-19:00    AWARD CEREMONY

### **SUNDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2019**

- 09:00-10:30    PANEL DISCUSSION II: FUNDING RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES  
10:30-11:00    COFFEE BREAK  
11:00-13:00    WORKSHOP III: DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES (5 PARALLEL WORKING GROUP SESSIONS)  
                    WORKSHOP III A: HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY  
                    WORKSHOP III B: LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
                    WORKSHOP III C: PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS  
                    WORKSHOP III D: LAW  
                    WORKSHOP III E: GENDER STUDIES  
13:00-14:00    LUNCH  
14:00-14:45    KEYNOTE III: DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AT RISK  
14:45-15:30    REPORT OF WORKSHOP RESULTS  
15:30-16:00    COFFEE BREAK  
16:00-17:30    PANEL DISCUSSION III: DIGITAL HUMANITIES  
17:30-18:00    CLOSING WORDS/FINAL DISCUSSION