

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:

### **16<sup>th</sup> German-Israeli Frontiers of Humanities Symposium on *Access* 08 – 11 November 2026**

The [Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities](https://www.academy.ac.il/) invites Israeli-based early- and mid-career researchers from various research fields to apply to participate in a symposium jointly organised with the [Alexander von Humboldt Foundation \(AvH\)](https://www.avh.de/) focused on the theme of “**Access**”. Participants that are accepted will be required to attend the entire symposium and participate in the discussions. They will not be required to lecture.

The symposium will take place **from 08 November 2026 to 11 November 2026** in **Jerusalem, Israel**. The symposium aims to incentivise and establish international engagement and collaboration between researchers working in both countries in a broad range of disciplines. It is designed to encourage the exchange of ideas across both disciplinary and national boundaries by adopting a format that will allow for extensive discussion and debate, and other networking opportunities.

#### **Thematic focus**

Access is one of the most fundamental, yet unevenly distributed conditions of human life. To have or to be denied access – to food, to housing, to democratic participation, to language and mobility – shapes people’s possibilities of survival, their sense of belonging, and their capacity to flourish. It defines who is included and who is excluded, who can claim rights and resources, and who is forced to navigate precarious conditions at the margins.

In an era of intensifying global inequalities, migration, climate change, technological transformation, growing cultural and religious conflicts, and political upheaval, the question of access has become ever more urgent. Access is not only about material provision but also about recognition, dignity, and justice. It is about the infrastructures, policies, and cultural practices that enable participation in social and civic life – and about the barriers, visible or invisible, that sustain exclusion. To explore access is therefore to probe the very foundations of contemporary and past societies, and to ask how resources and rights are distributed, negotiated, and contested across different contexts. Such recognition of present-day realities also enables reflection on the past, for example, on how questions of access have been represented, debated, and reimagined in literature, art, and philosophy.

The 2026 German-Israeli Frontiers of Humanities Symposium takes this multifaceted concept as its guiding theme. Bringing together outstanding early- and mid-career scholars from Germany and Israel, it seeks to investigate how access is structured, experienced, and reimagined across four interlinked domains: Food, Housing, Democracy and Movement & Language. Each of these areas reveals a particular dimension of access, yet taken together, they illuminate broader dynamics of inequality, resilience, and transformation in our interconnected world and in the past.

The GISFOH 2026 symposium will include the following sessions:

– **Rethinking Food Poverty: Interdisciplinary perspectives, innovations, and societal impact**

The session addresses food poverty and insecurity as global phenomena that are not only historically and culturally rooted, but also deeply political. Presenters will explore how food insecurity has been conceptualized over time, from refugee camps and wartime scarcities to contemporary debates on climate change, food waste and digitalization. Special emphasis will be placed on innovative, interdisciplinary approaches that integrate multiple analytical layers. How do different societies negotiate the balance between scarcity and abundance? Which ethical frameworks shape national, municipal and individual responses to food insecurity? How have traumatic historical experiences shaped present-day approaches to food, access, and justice? And how can collaboration between scholarship, policy, and civil society generate both critical insight and practical interventions to promote food justice?

– **Housing: Making Home Under Conditions of Instability**

This session examines how individuals and communities create and sustain home when permanence is disrupted. It focuses on the intersections between material precarity, social networks, and affective attachments across diverse contexts and historical moments. Building on scholarship in urban studies, migration research, and the anthropology of displacement, the session explores how instability – whether caused by political violence, economic restructuring, or urban renewal – reshapes the meanings and practices of home. By comparing cases from different times and places, the session highlights how residents negotiate instability to forge continuity and community, how institutions shape the possibilities of dwelling, and how temporary or disrupted spaces acquire enduring social and emotional significance. Attention will also be given to the gendered and generational dimensions of homemaking.

– **Performing Democracy: Access to the public sphere**

The session examines the dynamic interplay between democracy and public space, investigating how democratic principles and the physical, social, and symbolic dimensions of shared environments mutually shape one another. Particular emphasis is placed on mechanisms of inclusion in and exclusion from these spots – especially in relation to gender, religion, and ethnicity – and their implications for civic life. How do accessibility, visibility, and contestation shape the democratic character of public space? In what ways do surveillance and securitisation transform its democratic potential? What can we learn from the long history of exclusions from public space for safeguarding its democratic openness in the future? And how might public space serve as a site of democratic experimentation and renewal?

– **Access, equity, and multilingual realities**

Languages are a fundamental condition of human life. They mediate access to education, employment, and civic participation, while anchoring identity, belonging, and intergenerational continuity. This session explores how access to multilingualism is structured, contested, and reimagined across schools, workplaces, and communities. How do educational and policy frameworks enable or constrain multilingual access? In what ways do migration and clinical (neuro)diversity enrich language maintenance? How do linguistic practices in workplaces and public spaces shape inclusion and exclusion? How have history and literature preserved, challenged, or transformed multilingual legacies, offering insights into the lived experiences of speakers across generations? And how can multilingualism be reimagined as a resource of solidarity and social justice beyond barriers?

**Follow-up programme CONNECT**

To encourage and support long-term collaboration and networking, participants may apply for the follow-up programme [CONNECT](#), offered by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. It provides grants for short working visits to Germany or Israel that can be taken up at any time after participation in the symposium.

**Eligibility requirements for researchers from Israel**

Researchers are eligible to apply provided that they work in and live in Israel and have completed a PhD within the last 15 years.

Participants are expected to attend the entire symposium. Attending the full event is mandatory to meet the requirements to apply for the Humboldt Foundation's CONNECT programme.



## Application process

In order to have your application considered, it must be submitted in English until **January 11th** to [sima@academy.ac.il](mailto:sima@academy.ac.il) and it must include:

- full name
- email address
- PhD award date
- affiliation
- research field
- commitment to participate in the entire conference, November 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>
- CV
- list of publications

Applications will be assessed according to academic excellence. Applicants will be notified of the final decision in February 2026.

## Logistics

Duration: evening of 08 November 2026 (Sunday) until early afternoon of 11 November 2026 (Wednesday)

Venue: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, Israel

Accommodation: The IASH will make hotel reservations for all participants at a nearby hotel and will cover the cost of the reservations and the meals for three nights from 08 November 2026 to 11 November 2026. Any additional costs must be paid individually.

Travel expenses: The IASH will send the information concerning covering travel expenses at a later date.

## Information

If you have any questions, please contact the manager of the Humanities Division at the IASH, Sima Daniel, [sima@academy.ac.il](mailto:sima@academy.ac.il).