

# Dr. Dinah Pfau

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Having worked as research assistant in university and museum research institutions, I draw from both worlds to specialize in the intersection of the history of science and technology. My research focuses on the transformation of scientific observation techniques, analyzing their change in response to shifting material, epistemic, and practical conditions, with a special emphasis on information infrastructures and their underlying processes. Committed to advancing the field, I actively work to ensure its long-term sustainability by fostering collaboration across diverse stakeholder groups, particularly supporting students and early-career researchers.

## ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

### **Doctorat en Histoire (History), University of Luxembourg (2021–2024)**

*Thesis:* Den Bildern auf der Spur. Epistemologische Praktiken der Bildverarbeitung und Mustererkennung in Teilchenphysik, Nachrichtentechnik und Informatik in der BRD 1950–1980. (On the trail of the image. Epistemological practices of image processing and pattern recognition in particle physics, communications engineering and computer science in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1950–1980.)

Defended December 19, 2024.

*Supervisors:* Prof. Dr. Andreas Fickers (University of Luxembourg), Prof. Dr. Valérie Schafer (University of Luxembourg), PD Dr. Rudolf Seising (German Museum Munich).

*Defense Committee:* Prof. Dr. Stefan Krebs (University of Luxembourg), Prof. Dr. Andreas Fickers (University of Luxembourg), Prof. Dr. Valérie Schafer (University of Luxembourg), Prof. Dr. Gabriele Schabacher (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz), Prof. Dr. Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (Technische Universität Berlin; Director Emeritus, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

### **MA Cultural Studies, Humboldt University of Berlin (2014–2019)**

*Thesis:* Klimarauschen. Automatisierung des Meteorologischen Bodenmessdienstes in der DDR. (Climate noise. Automation of the Meteorological Ground Measurement Service in the GDR.)

*Supervisors:* Prof. Dr. Christian Kassung (Humboldt University of Berlin), Prof. Dr. Birgit Schneider (University of Potsdam).

*Final MA Grade:* 1,1.

### **MA Cultural Studies, University of Lucerne, Switzerland (2016–2017)**

Two semesters as a SEMP scholarship holder.

### **BA Computer Science, Technische Universität Berlin (TU B) (2013–2014)**

Two semesters (no degree).

### **BA Culture and Technology, Technische Universität Berlin (TU B) (2009–2014)**

*Final BA Grade:* 1,5.

### **BA Culture and Technology, Zhe'Da University Hangzhou, China (2011)**

One semester as a DAAD scholarship holder.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute for the History of Science and Technology, Deutsches Museum Munich (Since 2024)**

DFG Research Project: “Artificial Vision at Work (ArtViWo)”, *PI*: DP Dr. Rudolf Seising (DM Munich).

DFG Priority Programme “The Digitalisation of Working Worlds. Conceptualising and Capturing a Systemic Transformation” (SPP 2267).

### **Research Assistant, Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C<sup>2</sup>DH), University of Luxembourg (2024)**

*Tasks & Activities:*

### **Research Assistant, Institute for the History of Science and Technology, Deutsches Museum Munich (2020–2023)**

BMBF Project: “IGGI – Ingenieur-Geist und Geistes-Ingenieure. Eine Geschichte der Künstlichen Intelligenz in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.“ (Engineering Mind and Mental Engineers. A History of Artificial Intelligence in the Federal Republic of Germany), *PI*: PD Dr. Rudolf Seising.

### **Student assistant at academic and non-academic employers (2013–2019):**

- EUMB Pöschk, Berlin (2014–2019)
- Cornelsen Schulbuchverlage, SCOOK (2015–2016)
- Center for Technology and Society, TU B (2013–2015)

### **Freelance activities (2013–2019):**

- Cultural Mediator, Kulturprojekte Berlin/Deutsches Technikmuseum (Cultural Projects Berlin/German Museum of Technology) (2017–2019)
- Freelance Illustrator (2013–2019)

## MEMBERSHIPS AND COMMITTEES

### **German Society for the History of Technology (gtg)**

Member, student representation on the board.

### **National Committee**

Delegate of the gtg in the National Committee of the Federal Republic of Germany for the International Union for the History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS), Division of History of Science and Technology (DHST).

### **Society for the history of Technology (SHOT)**

Member

### **German Informatics Society (GI)**

Member, Specialist Group on Informatics and Computer History

### **Academic Self-Administration, 2011–2014**

Spokesperson of the student’s initiative “KultIni” (faculty 1), member of the student’s initiative “Freitagsrunde” (faculty 4, Informatik) of the Technische Universität Berlin. Student representative in the faculty 1 council of Technische Universität Berlin, budget committee and training committee. Student representative in the steering committee for the introduction of a student life cycle management system.

**SCHOLARSHIPS,  
AWARDS &  
HONORS**

**Nominated for the Exceptional Thesis Award of the University of Luxembourg.  
(2025)**

Proposal and expert opinion submitted by Prof. Dr. Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, and Prof. Dr. Stefan Krebs (University Luxembourg).

**Publication Award, Deutsches Museum (2024)**

Awarded for the article: Pfau, Dinah. 'Mit Blick Auf KI. Von Der Teilchenphysik Zur KI, 1964–1976'. In Geschichten Der Künstlichen Intelligenz, edited by Ulf Hashagen and Rudolf Seising. Deutsches Museum Studies. München: Deutsches Museum Verlag, 2023.

**Honorable Mention, GWMT (2022)**

Honorable mention for the MA thesis "Klimarauschen. Automatisierung des Meteorologischen Bodenmessdienstes in der DDR." (Climate noise: Automation of the GDR's meteorological ground measurement network.) by the Gesellschaft für Wissenschafts-, Medizin- und Technikgeschichte, GWMT (German Society for the History of Science, Medicine and Technology).

**Fem4Scholar (2018/19)**

Ideational support, career building program for female\* scholars.

**Scholarship, Swiss European Mobility Programme (SEMP) (2016–2017)**

Financing for two semesters of study at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland.

**Scholarship, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) (2011)**

Financing for one semester of study Zhe'Da University Hangzhou, China.

**Forthcoming: Computerwelten (Computer Worlds) (2025)**

Early Career Workshop, German Museum Munich, Technical University Munich.  
21.2.2025, Munich.

**Closing Event (2023)**

Closing event of the BMBF Project IGGI – on the history of AI, German Museum Munich. 15.12.2023, Munich

**German Society for the History of Science, Medicine and Technology (GWMT),  
Annual Meeting „Mensch – Maschine – Mobilität“ (Human – Machine –  
Mobility)**

Conference, German Museum Munich, German Society for the History of Science,  
Medicine and Technology, German Medical History Museum, Ingolstadt (DMMI), 13.–  
15.9.2023, Ingolstadt.

**(Er)Zeugnisse des Digitalen im Museum. Unsichtbares sichtbar machen.  
(Products/Testimonies of the Digital in the Museum. Making the invisible visible)**

Conference, German Museum Munich, German Museum Bonn. 2.-3.5.2022, Bonn.

**Was war KI? (What was AI?)**

Conference, German Museum Munich, Specialist Group on Informatics and Computer  
History of the German Informatics Society, Institute for Music and Media Studies at  
Humboldt University of Berlin. 13.5.-15.5.2022, Berlin.

**Early Career Forum of the German Society for the History of Technology (2022–  
2025)**

- 22.5.2022, KZ–Gedenkstätte (concentration camp memorial) Mittelbau–Dora,  
Nordhausen.
- 11.5.2023, Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Science and Technology  
and Center for Urban History and Industrial Culture, Wuppertal.
- 4.5.2024, German Museum of Technology, Berlin.
- 1.-2.4.2025, Comic Artist Aike Arndt, Technische Universität Berlin, German  
Museum of Technology, Berlin.

**AI in Flux**

International conference, German Museum Munich. 29.11.-1.12.2021, Munich  
(online).

**Die frühe Geschichte der Künstlichen Intelligenz im deutschsprachigen Raum.  
Methoden und Theorien. (The Early History of Artificial Intelligence in German-  
Speaking Countries. Methods and Theories.)**

Workshop, German Museum Munich, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), 20.-  
21.5.2021, Munich.

## SELECTED TALKS

### **Digital Practices? “Scanning Girls” and the Computerization of Image Evaluation at the German Electron Synchrotron (DESY)**

Flashlab Seminar, Assia Wirth University of Vienna and the International Research Center for Cultural Studies (ifk). 29.11.2024, Vienna.

### **Auf den Mensch gekommen. Epistemologische Annäherungen an die „Lernmatrix“ von Karl Steinbuch**

DIALOGO-Vortrag der Abt. Wirkungsgeschichte der Technik und Unternehmensgeschichte, Universität Stuttgart, 12.11.2024.

### **„Studentische Perspektiven auf die *niche construction* in Wissenschafts-, Technik und Umweltgeschichte.“**

With Charlie Fischer (TU B). Workshop „NEST. Niche construction for historians of the Environment, Science and Technology“, European Society for Environmental History, Technische Universität Berlin. 6.11.2024, Berlin.

### **DESY’S Scanning Girls, 1956–1970**

“Women in the History of Quantum Physics” German Museum Munich, Technical University Munich, Humboldt University of Berlin. 19.10.2024, Munich.

### **Steinbuch’s Matrices. Epistemology of an Artificial Neural Network.**

Workshop “Why Intelligence? The political and social roots of a scientific object” University Erfurt. 23.2.2024, Erfurt.

### **Digital Practices? “Scanning Girls” and the Computerization of Image Evaluation at the German Electron Synchrotron (DESY).**

Early Career Group 2023 Workshop, Early Career Interest Group (ECIG) of the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT). 27.10.2023, Los Angeles.

### **Making of the ‘real world’.**

6th CUHKSZ (Chinese University of Hongkong, Shenzhen) History Seminars, Chinese University of Hongkong, Shenzhen. 5.5.2023, Shenzhen (online).

### **Filtering the ‚Real World‘.**

International Workshop „Automation, Control and Incompetence. Socio-Technical Ecologies of Responsible Filtering in the 20th and 21st Century“ Humboldt University of Berlin. 2.12.2022, Berlin.

### **Networks of AI. West Germany 1960-1980.**

International conference „AI in Flux – International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Cybernetics“, German Museum Munich. 01.12.2021, Munich (online).

### **Universelle Umwelten: Geschichte der Bildverarbeitung in der BRD 1970–1995 (Universal Environments: History of Image Processing in the FRG 1970–1995)**

Digital symposium “Queere KI. Zum Coming-out smarterer Maschinen.” Technical University Dresden, GenderConceptGroup. 24.–25.6.2021, Dresden (online).

### **Wie lässt sich KI-Geschichte schreiben? (How to do AI history)**

With Florian Müller, Jakob Tschandl. Early Career Workshop „Toxikalität“ (Toxicity). Driburger Kreis. 23.–24. 9.2020, online.

**Editorship**

- Pfau, Dinah (Ed.) *Künstliche Intelligenz: Perspektiven auf epistemische, praktische und historiographische Herausforderungen*. *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina NAL-historica*, Nummer 83. Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2023.

**Journal Articles**

- Pfau, Dinah, Helen Piel, Florian Müller, Jakob Tschandl and Rudolf Seising. "The "KI-Rundbrief," Its Editors, and Its Community: A Perspective on West German AI, 1975–1987". *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 45, Nr. 3 (1. Juli 2023): 48–65. <https://doi.org/10.1109/MAHC.2023.3295465>.
- Müller, Florian, Dinah Pfau, Helen Piel, Rudolf Seising, and Jakob Tschandl. „Projektvorstellung. IGGI – Ingenieur-Geist und Geistes- Ingenieure. Eine Geschichte der Künstlichen Intelligenz in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland“. *Technikgeschichte* 88, Nr. 2 (2021): 213–22. <https://doi.org/10.5771/0040-117X-2021-2-213>.

**Chapters**

- Pfau, Dinah. 'Mit Blick Auf KI. Von Der Teilchenphysik Zur KI, 1964–1976'. In *Geschichten Der Künstlichen Intelligenz*, edited by Ulf Hashagen and Rudolf Seising. *Deutsches Museum Studies*. München: Deutsches Museum Verlag, 2023.
- Pfau, Dinah, and Helen Piel. 'Vernetzte Künstliche Intelligenz: Frühe Bundesdeutsche KI- Forschung von den 1960er Bis Ende Der 1980er Jahre'. In *Künstliche Intelligenz: Epistemische, Praktische Und Historiographische Herausforderungen*, edited by Dinah Pfau. *NAL-Historica*. Halle (Saale), Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft Stuttgart, 2023. [https://doi.org/10.26164/leopoldina\\_10\\_00959](https://doi.org/10.26164/leopoldina_10_00959).

**Other**

- Müller, Florian, Dinah Pfau, Helen Piel, Rudolf Seising, and Jakob Tschandl. 'Eine Geschichte Der Künstlichen Intelligenz. IGGI – Ingenieur-Geist und Geistes-Ingenieure.', *Kultur und Technik*, 44, no. 3 (2020): 18–21, [https://www.deutsches-museum.de/assets/Verlag/Download/Kultur\\_und\\_Technik/2020/KT-3-2020Web.pdf](https://www.deutsches-museum.de/assets/Verlag/Download/Kultur_und_Technik/2020/KT-3-2020Web.pdf), 9.1.2025.
- Google Arts and Culture – "AI History: A Making-Of." Online exhibition „KI-Geschichte: Ein Making-Of. Blicke hinter die Kulissen historischer Forschung.“ by the IGGI project. *Deutsches Museum: Google Arts and Culture*, <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/ki-geschichte-ein-making-of/FQVhfetzWRnwQw>, 9.1.2025.