

Pressemitteilung**Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main****Volker Schmidt**

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<http://idw-online.de/de/news848428>Forschungsprojekte, Organisatorisches
Gesellschaft, Kulturwissenschaften, Pädagogik / Bildung, Psychologie
überregional**Goethe University establishes professorship for clinical psychoanalysis using endowment funds**

Goethe University Frankfurt is investing €4 million raised from several funds to set up a new professorship for clinical psychoanalysis, which is to work together closely with Frankfurt-based Sigmund Freud Institute. The required funds come from Dr. Elmar und Ellis Reiss Stiftung, Franz Adickes Stiftungsfonds, Alfons und Gertrud Kassel-Stiftung, and Dr. Rolf M. Schwiete Stiftung. In setting up this new professorship, Goethe University is building on the long-standing and traditional Frankfurt approach to psychoanalytic research. This is the fourth endowed professorship, i.e. one that is permanently financed by endowment income, to be established by Goethe University in the past three years.

Goethe University wants to further cultivate the important field of psychotherapy research and psychotherapist training into a nationally and internationally outstanding and visible profile field together with Sigmund Freud Institute. A special focus will be placed on psychoanalytical approaches. To that end, the university plans to recruit an outstanding researcher to fill the professorship at its Faculty of Psychology and Sports Sciences. The professorship will be coupled with the position of director of Sigmund Freud Institute, with the option of assuming the management of the Institute's outpatient clinic.

"We raised endowment funds to establish the professorship – meaning we are making use of the special opportunities afforded to us as a foundation university to strengthen an important research focus at the interface of the social and the natural sciences," says Goethe University President Prof. Enrico Schleiff. "In so doing, we want to further cultivate the interweaving of clinically oriented psychoanalysis, as practiced at the Faculty of Psychology, with the sociologically and social-psychological psychoanalysis conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences – an approach embodied by the Sigmund Freud Institute. This will allow us to contribute to psychoanalytically inspired social research in the Frankfurt School-based tradition of critical theory."

"We are witnessing an increase in mental illnesses, especially as a result of ongoing social crises. That is why we are very pleased to have our Institute of Psychology strengthened in this way," says Prof. Sonja Rohrmann, dean of Goethe University's Faculty of Psychology and Sports Sciences. "A wide range of different clinical approaches, methods and tools exist within psychology. Psychoanalysis is one of the oldest and most fundamental of them. The professorship for clinical psychoanalysis will enable us to explore new research fields and innovatively combine the Institute of Psychology's current expertise and orientation with Sigmund Freud Institute's expertise. I would like to thank President Schleiff for his great commitment to funding and establishing this professorship. As required by law and medical practice regulations, the new Master's degree program in Psychotherapy, offered by the Department of Psychology, teaches all of the four recognized psychotherapy methods, with Goethe University being one of only very few universities to offer a psychotherapy degree program comprising several psychotherapy methods taught at an academic level."

"In addition to fostering our strengths in psychological-psychoanalytical and psychotherapeutic research and teaching as well as clinical care, we want to deepen the cooperation between Goethe University Frankfurt and Sigmund Freud

Institute. At the same time, we are seeking to establish a highly modern focus in the field of psychoanalytically and psycho-dynamically oriented psychotherapy research rooted in the Frankfurt tradition,” adds Prof. Vera King, managing director of Sigmund Freud Institute. “This will allow us to both provide urgently needed impetus in psychotherapy research, with a particular focus on clinical psychoanalysis, and also play a leading scientific role in shaping this field from Frankfurt. We are extremely grateful to Goethe University President Schleiff for his outstanding commitment and would like to thank the foundations for their generous support.”

“As Hesse's minister of science, I am very pleased that Goethe University has succeeded in securing endowment funds for this professorship, which is also extremely important to Sigmund Freud Institute,” adds Timon Gremmels. Sigmund Freud Institute is a Frankfurt-based non-university research institution supported by the state of Hesse in accordance with Article 91b of Germany's Basic Law. “By working closely together with this professorship, Sigmund Freud Institute will not only be able to increase its scientific interaction with its neighboring university, it will also be able to connect even better with the focus on psychoanalysis, which is strongly linked to Frankfurt as a location – thereby significantly strengthening its scientific profile. I would like to congratulate the Institute on this success. I am also delighted that since the collaboration between the two institutions will become even closer, this means one of the key recommendations made by the German Council of Science and Humanities, which reviewed Sigmund Freud Institute in 2020 at my request, can now be implemented.”

The Council's work, commissioned by the Ministry, in 2020 resulted in a very positive evaluation of the work done by Sigmund Freud Institute, giving special praise to the combination of clinical psychoanalysis, social psychology and cultural studies perspectives that characterize its program. One of the Council's recommendations to strengthen the Institute from an organizational perspective was to establish an additional professorship working in close cooperation with Goethe University's Faculty of Psychology and Sports Sciences, complementing the Institute's existing cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences.

“I am very pleased that we succeeded in gaining the foundations' support,” adds President Schleiff. “I would like to thank Dr. Elmar und Ellis Reiss Stiftung, Franz Adickes Stiftungsfonds, Alfons und Gertrud Kassel-Stiftung and Dr. Rolf M. Schwiete Stiftung for supporting my cause. Thanks to their help, I am now able to keep the promise I gave the student representatives of our University Senate in 2021 to continue the professorship for psychoanalysis at Goethe University Frankfurt. The €4 million endowment made available by these foundations deliberately leave an option for further funding and we would like to invite other potential donors who feel connected to the Frankfurt tradition of psychoanalysis to offer additional support to the endowed professorship. I would also like to thank Eva Luise and Horst Köhler Foundation, which is contributing €100,000 to the professorship's endowment.”

This is Goethe University's fourth endowed professorship, i.e. one that is permanently finance from endowment income. The other three are the Lichtenberg Endowed Professorship for Molecular Systems Medicine, the Endowed Professorship for Digital Transformation and Work, and the Gisela and Wilfried Eckhardt Endowed Professorship for Experimental Physics. Over the course of the last three years, the university raised a total endowment volume of more than €22 million for these four professorships. “It is especially in times like these, when state funding for universities is sadly becoming increasingly uncertain due to budget shortfalls at federal and state levels, that we can use these funds to create our own scope for action”, says President Schleiff.

The Frankfurt tradition of psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis has a special tradition – at Goethe University, at Sigmund Freud Institute and in the city of Frankfurt. After the city's psychoanalysts had been expelled by National Socialist Germany, the Hessian state government in the 1960s re-established this school of psychotherapy, which was dominant at the time, by creating a professorship for Alexander Mitscherlich, one of its most prominent representatives, at Goethe University. Ever since, psychoanalysis in Frankfurt has always focused not just on clinical psychology, but also on socio-political perspectives. As a result of legal changes to the training of psychotherapists, the design of the course content was tied to medical practice regulations,

which in turn meant professorships were not appointed for individual psychological methods, including psychoanalysis. The only other current university professorships explicitly staffed by psychoanalysts exist at the University of Kassel (also in cooperation with Sigmund Freud Institute) and at specialized private universities.

Sigmund Freud Institute

Sigmund Freud Institute, a research institute for psychoanalysis and its applications in Frankfurt am Main, was opened in 1960. The Hessian Sigmund Freud Institute Foundation is an independent foundation under public law; it is funded by the State of Hesse. The central tasks of the Institute are research as well as the promotion of early career researchers with a view to the scientific study of psyche and society in the psycho-analytically oriented sociological-social-psychological, psychological and medical departments of the institution. Since 2016 the Institute has been under the leadership of managing director Vera Kling, as part of a cooperation professorship for sociology and psychoanalytic social psychology at Goethe University Frankfurt; director Patrick Meurs, as part of a cooperation professorship for psychoanalysis at the University of Kassel; and Heinz Weiß, former head physician at Robert Bosch Hospital Stuttgart, who heads Sigmund Freud Institute's medical focus and outpatient clinic.