HOCHSCHULE MITTWEIDA
University of Applied Sciences

NextGen

Prospects for Young Academic Talent

nextgen.hs-mittweida.de

Development of a University Personnel Recruitment and Junior Staff Development System

NextGen is the qualification program at Mittweida University that supports scientists on their academic career path toward a professorship at a university of applied sciences (UoAS).

As part of the FH-Personal program by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), which promotes the recruitment and development of professorial staff at universities of applied sciences, Mittweida University developed and implemented this concept.

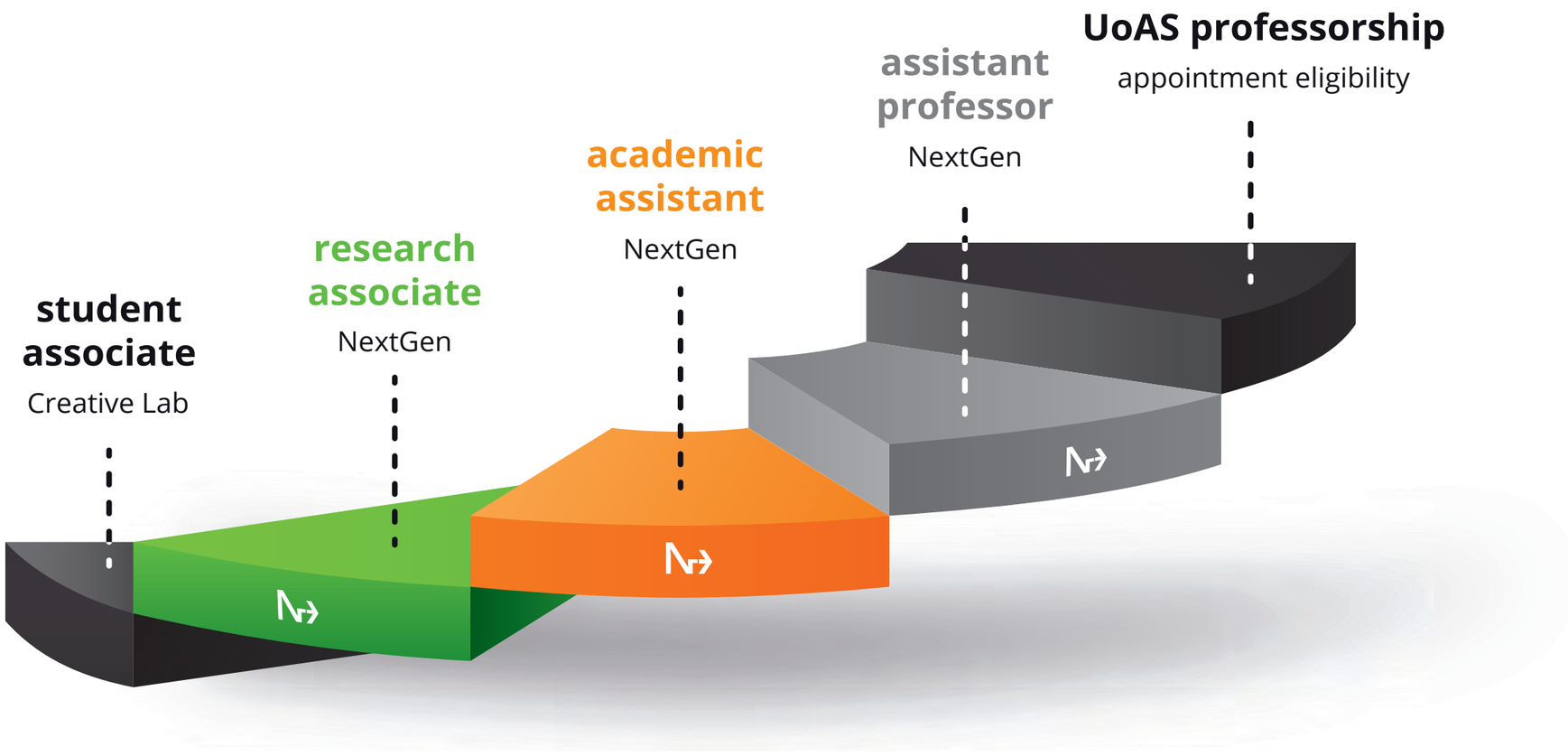
According to the BMBF, a continuation of the program is not planned. This would represent a significant setback for Mittweida University in recruiting professorial talent, maintaining our innovative capacity, and attracting skilled professionals, putting us at a considerable competitive disadvantage. Additionally, this program has enabled exceptionally successful personnel development, fostered highly positive experiences with interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthened identification, motivation, and team building. As a result, we make a substantial contribution to recruiting skilled professionals in the Free State of Saxony.

Mittweida University is applying for the continuation of this recruitment and talent development system under the Future Contract. We see enormous potential in this initiative for the recruitment and development of qualified academic staff across Saxon universities. We also propose to further develop this concept as a pilot program for all Saxon universities of applied sciences and, if necessary, extend it to other universities in the Free State.

Career Path Model

Future professors at universities of applied sciences must meet dual requirements: scientific qualification through a PhD and several years of professional experience outside the academic sector. Additionally, university teaching skills expand the list of qualifications. Of course, the next generation of professors must not only be specialists in their own discipline but also be able to think beyond their respective fields.

The team members are distributed across the faculties and institutes of Mittweida University and come from interdisciplinary research areas such as Digital Forensics, Social Robotics, Climate Change, Corporate Social Responsibility, Experimental Mechanics, Digital Competencies, Responsible Consumption and Production, and Economic and Communication Psychology. What all team members have in common is that they represent innovative profiles that do not yet exist as professorships at Mittweida University. Often, these profiles are so forward-looking that no candidates in the industry or job market fully meet the appointment criteria for a university of applied sciences professorship.



Testimonials from NextGen Participants

Prof. Dr. Michael Spranger

Professorship in Forensic Text Mining and Computational Linguistics

During my two years in NextGen, I was able to broaden my skill set, develop innovative teaching concepts, and publish scientific work. These experiences were invaluable for my *successful appointment.*

Dr. Mandy Lange-Geisler

Methods of Machine Learning and Computational Intelligence

NextGen provides me with the opportunity to gain relevant *industry experience* alongside my university work, which is essential for an appointment at a UoAS.

Bilyal Khassenov

Digital Skills

NextGen connects me with researchers from other disciplines. Through our collaborative exchanges, I have developed ideas that I have already implemented in *innovative interdisciplinary projects*, such as a privacy-compliant transcription tool and an online survey tool.

Dr. Inga-Maria Eichentopf

Sustainable Transformation in the Face of Climate Change

I hold a PhD in Physics and I am actively engaged in contemporary science communication. I am proud that NextGen has given me the opportunity to establish an area of appointment and further *develop the university's international network.*

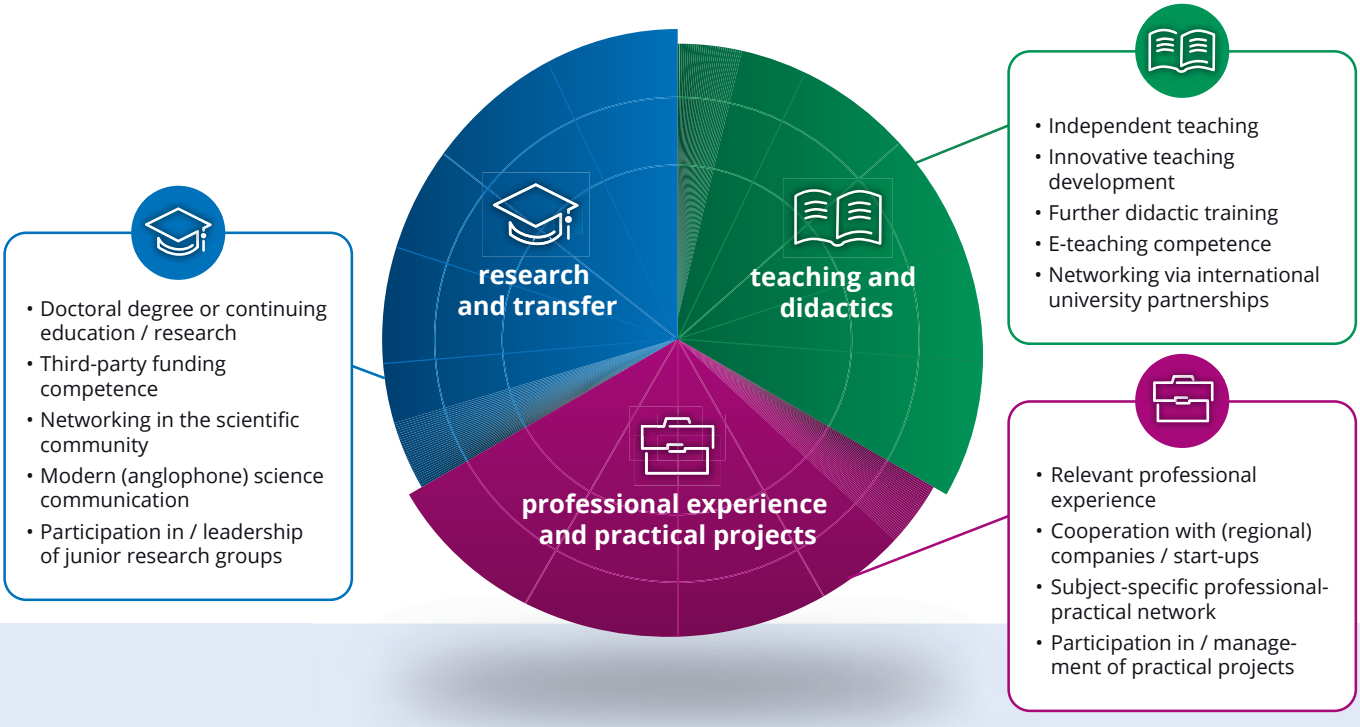
Jill Deschner-Warner

Corporate Social Responsibility

I have extensive practical knowledge and teaching experience. At NextGen, I have the opportunity *to further my scientific qualifications*, and I am currently working on my PhD.

Qualification Areas

The team composition is highly diverse. What all members share is their engagement in innovative, cross-disciplinary teaching and research areas at Mittweida University. The qualification program focuses on three key areas that lead to appointment eligibility: Research and Transfer, Teaching and Didactics, and Professional Experience and Practical Projects.



Advantages and Positive Outcomes of the Program at Mittweida University

- Recruitment of highly motivated **young scientists** who might not have pursued an academic career or would have done so later.
- Establishment of new **industry partnerships** through targeted personnel deployment in joint profile fields and potential job-sharing models.
- **Active personnel development** in emerging disciplines that are still underrepresented in the job market.
- Creation of career **development opportunities** for young talent and strategic profile-building for the university.
- Enhanced **competitiveness** in attracting top academic talent to Mittweida University and Saxony.
- Early **networking** among scientists from different disciplines.
- Increased research **quality** and publication output through collaborative and interdisciplinary projects.
- Stronger **motivation and identification** with the university, interdisciplinary topics („hyphenated topics“), and professorial responsibilities.
- Development of innovative, interdisciplinary **teaching concepts**.
- Targeted personnel development to support highly **qualified scientists** (postdocs/experienced professionals from the industry) in meeting appointment requirements and counteracting the „leaky pipeline“ effect.

Interdisciplinary Projects

The goal of NextGen is to foster interdisciplinary project ideas, such as The Crimecave, developed by NextGen team members Marie Luise Heuschkel and Dr. Hagen Bankwitz. This project combines forensics and 3D printing to create a modular and mobile photogrammetry system that enables forensic imaging and the generation of 3D models of persons and objects with greater precision, speed, and no motion artifacts. This innovation will enhance the quality and efficiency of suspect identification and the creation of court-admissible reports while optimizing resource usage. The project proposal was submitted under the EFRE Validation Funding 2021–2027 directive.

Scientific Anthology

Since 2022, the annual collected volume NextGen Scientific Review has published current findings from the NextGen team in the areas of research and development, teaching, transfer, and management. It particularly highlights emerging academic and research fields at Mittweida University. This publication aims to provide a regular overview of the scientific activities of NextGen members.

Contact us

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