



Applying for a faculty position at European University Viadrina: information for international applicants

1. The European University Viadrina: our vision and mission

Founded in 1991, the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) was established as a truly European university with a special mission: to promote internationality, interdisciplinarity and European integration through research and teaching. Viadrina is deeply committed to fostering cross-border cooperation and mutual understanding, particularly within the German-Polish and broader European context.

As a reform-oriented university, it integrates law, economics, and cultural studies to address social, political, and cultural transformations in Europe. Its mission is grounded in democratic values, and a commitment to diversity academic freedom, and open, critical, and responsible scholarship that addresses contemporary challenges.

Viadrina's vision is to serve as a dynamic space for scholarship and teaching, in which Europe is understood to be both interconnected and evolving – a place that cultivates multilingualism, international collaboration, and the belief that borders connect rather than divide.

Facts and Figures

The European University Viadrina was established as part of an educational reform movement with a focus on three faculties: Law, Business Administration and Economics, and Social and Cultural Sciences and one school, the European New School of Digital Studies. It currently offers 35 study programs, including 11 international double-degree options and a wide range of bachelor's, master's, and continuing education programs. Of the nearly 4,000 students enrolled at Viadrina, some 1,600 come from abroad, reflecting its strong international orientation. Research at Viadrina is dynamic, with 327 doctoral candidates, and 156 externally funded projects, included 21 supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG). The university employs over 600 staff members, including around 80 professors, and

operates with an annual budget of nearly 60 million euros, with around 9 million coming from third-party funding.



Research and Teaching

Viadrina creates knowledge through innovative research driven by a spirit of scholarly inquiry and curiosity, based on intrinsic motivation and unrestricted curiosity, as well as a sense of responsibility for shaping a better world and a peaceful and cooperative European future in a global context. The future of coexistence in Europe and the associated transformation efforts and opportunities therefore are at the centre of research conducted at Viadrina. Viadrina's identity, sense of purpose and institutional culture are grounded in a commitment to freedom of research. In this vein, scholars are invited to cross disciplinary boundaries and work in collaborative forms.

Viadrina offers a learning environment that challenges students intellectually and provides individualised support. Teaching methods and other programmes to support the learning needs of students are constantly updated and adapted to ensure that curricula and programs are proactively meeting student needs for specific future. In order to do that, Viadrina has recently created learning spaces? that enable our staff and students to teach and learn both collaboratively and individually on campus.

Recent University Achievements

In recent years, the European University Viadrina has further strengthened its international profile through new partnerships and interdisciplinary projects. The university has established innovative research initiatives such as the Center for B/Order Studies or a Competence Network for Ukrainian Studies (KIU). It continues to expand cooperation within the EU and globally, for example as a member of the European Reform University Alliance. Viadrina's growing number of English-language programs reflects its commitment to accessibility and global academic exchange. Several university members have won outstanding achievements during their time at Viadrina, such as the Leibniz Prize (Andreas Reckwitz, 2019) or the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (Karl Schlögel, 2025).

Further information: [Mission and Vision – Viadrina](#)



2. Working as a professor at Viadrina: responsibilities and benefits

Responsibilities

As a professor at a German university, you will enjoy a high degree of academic freedom in both research and teaching. Beyond the obligations of teaching programs, professors choose their topics and projects individually. Pressure by political parties is absent in the German system. Additionally, you will be supported by well-equipped facilities and qualified staff. In the German higher education system, professors occupy a distinct position: in many humanities and social science departments, they are often the only permanently employed academic staff. Each professorship is typically allocated at least one additional position that can be filled by a doctoral researcher or a postdoctoral scholar. These early-career researchers work toward their doctorate or habilitation within a fixed period, usually about six years, after which they move on to another institution. Professors are also supported by administrative assistants who help manage selected organisational tasks, allowing them to focus more fully on their academic work.

Professors are encouraged to apply for third party research funding; this funding usually leads to additional (academic and administrative) personnel and limited increase in salary, but not to a reduction of teaching obligations.

All professors at Viadrina are expected to teach and do research at the same time. This “unity of research and teaching” ensures that students at all levels are familiar with the most update knowledge in their respective fields. The teaching load amounts to four courses (eight hours) per semester; courses can be repeated from time to time.

In Germany, professors are usually civil servants and do not need to pay social insurance contributions. However, professorships can also be awarded with employee status. This means the net salary is lower than that of a professor with civil servant status. In Brandenburg, the federal state where Viadrina is located, professors are hired as employees if they are 50 years or older.

Benefits

The Viadrina is a university of manageable size. Your work as a professor will thus be shaped by personal interactions with young people from over 100 countries, short distances across the university campus, and close connections with your colleagues on both sides of the river. Viadrina is an agile organization, characterized by flexible processes, efficient administrative procedures, and user-orientated services.

Viadrina promotes gender equity, respect for diversity, and a supportive environment for families in our academic culture and respectful, flexible and attractive working conditions for our employees.

As a rule, professorships are advertised internationally and assigned to one of the three faculties at Viadrina: Law, Business Administration and Economics, and Social and Cultural Sciences. The appointment process involves several steps and can take up to one year or longer before a decision is made. A successful application process is followed by negotiations on the candidate's remuneration as well as on human resources, funding, and space.

Further information on career opportunities you will find [here](#).



3. Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences

The Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences – in German “Kulturwissenschaftliche Fakultät” – fosters an interdisciplinary and innovative academic environment that brings together scholars from cultural studies, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy

and various social sciences to address problems of late modernity in Europe and beyond. Faculty members pursue research on topics such as border studies, digital transformation, memory, migration, post-socialism or transnationalism, offering a wide range of opportunities for collaboration across disciplines.

Teaching at the faculty combines theoretical depth with practical engagement, emphasising comparative and international perspectives and encouraging students to connect academic inquiry with real-world challenges.

Professors are involved in both research and teaching, supervising national and international graduate students and leading projects that link Viadrina with academic partners across Europe and beyond. The collegial and inclusive environment enables incoming scholars to join an intellectually vibrant community where collaboration, dialogue, and innovation are central to academic life.

Further information: [Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences](#)

4. Moving to the region: Frankfurt (Oder) and the Berlin-Brandenburg area

Frankfurt (Oder) and its region

Frankfurt (Oder) offers a conducive environment for study and research. Situated directly on the German-Polish border, it is closely connected to its twin city Słubice on the other side of the Oder River. This cross-border setting gives Frankfurt (Oder) a distinctly European and international character. The two urban areas are connected by a bridge across the Oder River, creating a shared cross-border region that facilitates daily interaction and exchange. It is common for residents to live in one city and work or study in the other, moving between two national contexts as part of everyday life. This permeability fosters a very special borderland identity. Despite its modest size, Frankfurt (Oder) supports a rich cultural life. The Kleist Museum and the Kleist Forum serve as important venues for literature, theater, and public debate, while numerous student initiatives organize festivals, film screenings, and social projects that connect the university with the local community. The European University Viadrina also contributes to the city's open, intercultural atmosphere. Additionally, the many green areas within the city as well as the surrounding landscape make it easy to balance academic life with time outdoors, with forests, meadows, and lakes offering ample opportunities for hiking and cycling.

Berlin

A considerable number of academic staff at the European University Viadrina reside in Berlin and commute regularly to Frankfurt (Oder). The two cities are connected by frequent regional trains, and the journey typically takes between one hour and one and a half hours, depending on the location in Berlin. Living in Berlin offers access to a wide range of academic institutions, archives, and libraries, as well as to the many research networks and professional associations located in the capital. The city's extensive cultural infrastructure as well as its museums and theaters reflect its long-standing role as a political and intellectual center in Germany. Berlin's diverse population and its position as a European capital also foster an atmosphere of linguistic and disciplinary plurality, which many researchers find conducive to collaboration and exchange.

Moving Here

While English is widely used in academic settings, basic knowledge of German is helpful for administrative procedures and everyday communication. Viadrina offers language courses to support integration and communication. The Welcome Center of the International Office at the European University Viadrina provides guidance and assistance with all formalities, as well as with settling in and navigating everyday life in Frankfurt (Oder) and Berlin.

