

# Material Textuality

## 2027 Annual Theme of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Scholarship Program



The Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin invites applications to its 2027 scholarship program on the theme of “Material Textuality”. Material, format, arrangement, traces of use: research into material textuality focuses on the physical form of what has been handed down and examines how texts, images and sounds are shaped by their material medium in terms of their creation, transmission and perception. It raises questions that no single discipline can answer on its own and is therefore one of the fields undergoing particularly rapid methodological development. At the same time, the concept of materiality is expanding in the digital age: digital representations, data models and algorithmic processes are not merely tools, but give rise to their own forms of materiality. These manifest themselves in data structures, metadata, interfaces and the technical infrastructures that shape transmission, access and perception.

The collections of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin offer an exceptionally broad selection of objects for research into materialities across fields and disciplines: manuscript, printed and ephemeral holdings from European, Asian and Near Eastern traditions, in formats ranging from miniature volumes to elephant folios, as well as extensive digital corpora. Researchers from all disciplines are invited to submit applications that intend to work with these collections.

As part of the scholarship program, we look forward to project proposals on topics such as fold-out picture books and volvelles, palimpsests and fragments, ex-libris and supralibros, manuscript samples and anthologies, shellac discs and glass plate negatives, as well as atlases, plaster reliefs, fabric maps, artistic and block prints, and digital objects or collections.

Materiality research unfolds its particular potential through the interplay of approaches: in the philological, codicological or detailed media-historical work on individual objects, as well as in computer-assisted methods – such as computer vision – which allow material traces to be systematically compared across large collections and placed in new contexts. In this regard, data is becoming increasingly significant both as a collection and as a research object itself: by understanding library collections not only as physical heritage but also as data to be analyzed, new opportunities arise to jointly investigate haptic materiality and digital representation. The Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin strongly supports both approaches and welcomes applications that productively combine them.

Further information on the scholarship program can be found via <https://staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/en/extras/spezielle-interessen/scholarship-program>.