

Katrin Rohrbacher

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Research Areas

Computational Literary Studies, Computational Narratology, NLP, Large Language Models, Digital Humanities Infrastructure

Research Positions

03/2025–	Postdoctoral Researcher , Text and Language Lab (Prof. Michaela Mahlberg), Department of Digital Humanities and Social Studies, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg
2021–2022	Researcher and Project Manager , PIVOT, McGill University, https://pivot.org/
11/2015– 02/2018	Student Research Assistant , Institute for Corpus Linguistics and Text Technology (ICLTT), Austrian Academy of Sciences

Education

2018–02/2025	PhD , German Studies, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, McGill University Dissertation: <i>Aspects of Space: Quantitative Approaches to Fictional Worlds</i> (Advisor: Andrew Piper).
2014–2018	MA , Department of Comparative Literature, University of Vienna
2010–2014	BA , Department of Comparative Literature, University of Vienna

Funding and Fellowships Awarded

Period	Funding	Amount
08/2026– 08/2027	FAU Emerging Talents Initiative (ETI) , “Nature in Motion: A Computational Study of Environmental Representation in Travel Writing” (applicant, awarded).	€15,000
2026	Travel Grant , Office for Gender and Diversity, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg (awarded)	€500
01/2021– 02/2022	Graduate Fellowship , Wolfe Chair for Science and Technology, McGill University	€5,100*
Total funding acquired		€20,600

* converted from CAD 7,500

Publications

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Rohrbacher, K. (2025). *Aspects of Space: Quantitative Approaches to Fictional Worlds*. Doctoral dissertation, McGill University. eScholarship@McGill.

JOURNAL ARTICLES (PEER-REVIEWED)

Rohrbacher, K. & Schrittester, D. (2026). Bridging the Gaps: Integrating Bibliographic Metadata into Wikidata for Literary Corpora. *Journal of Open Humanities Data*, 12(1), 37. <https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.483>

Rohrbacher, K. (2025). de-Corp: A Corpus of German-language Fiction and Non-Fiction (1780–1930). *Journal of Open Humanities Data*, 11(1), 51. <https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.350>

Luederitz, C., Animesh, A., **Rohrbacher, K.**, Li, T., Piper, A., Potvin, C. & Etzion, D. (2023). Non-monetary narratives motivate businesses to engage with climate change. *Sustainability Science*, 18(6), 2649–2660. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-023-01386-1>

BOOK CHAPTERS AND REFERENCE WORKS (PEER-REVIEWED)

Mahlberg, M. & **Rohrbacher, K.** (2026). Corpora in Digital Humanities and Corpus Linguistics. In H. Nesi & P. Milin (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (3rd ed., pp.~62–68). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-95504-1.01548-9>

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS (PEER-REVIEWED)

Rohrbacher, K., Nieth, B., Salin, E., Eskofier, B. & Mahlberg, M. (2026). How LLMs Build Fictional Worlds: Setting and Narrative Space in AI-Generated Creative Storytelling. *Proceedings of the 2026 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP)*. Accepted for the main conference. Preprint: <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2609.02482>

Rohrbacher, K., Wagner, A. & Mahlberg, M. (2026). “Letting the Cat out of the Bag”: Towards the Automatic Detection of Animal Metaphors in Literary Texts. *Book of Abstracts of DH2026*, ADHO Annual Conference, South Korea/hybrid, pp.~685–688. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21495909>

Rohrbacher, K. (2026). “Lived Space”: A Computational Study of Setting in Fiction. In B. Herrmann, G. Grisot & R. Aust (eds.), *Comparing Landscapes: Approaches to Space and Affect in Literary Fiction*. Bielefeld University Press. Forthcoming (accepted).

Rohrbacher, K. (2025). Opening Worlds: Narrative Beginnings and the Role of Setting. *CCLS2025 Conference Preprints*, 4(1). Peer-reviewed and accepted for the 4th Annual Conference on Computational Literary Studies, Kraków 2025. Extended version in revision for the *Journal of Computational Literary Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.26083/tuprints-00030149>

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Rohrbacher, K. Auf den Spuren des Chronotopos: Genre und räumlicher Ausdruck in Märchen-, Kriminal- und Abenteuerliteratur. Submitted to DHd 2027.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION (INVITED CONTRIBUTIONS)

Mahlberg, M. & Rohrbacher, K. (in preparation). [Title to be confirmed]. In *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Masculinities*. Invited contribution, under contract.

Research Data, Software and Resources

ongoing	Web-based open-source tool for collaborative annotation (in development)
2026	Reproducible pipeline for importing literary metadata into Wikidata (with D. Schrittester). Documented in https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.483
2026	Classifier for the automatic detection of animal metaphors (English). https://huggingface.co/katrohrb/animal-metaphor-classifier
2025–2026	Transformer classifiers for the detection of spatial and setting categories (German and English), with annotation guidelines. https://huggingface.co/katrohrb/de-setting-classifier , https://huggingface.co/katrohrb/narrative-space-classifier
2025	de-Corp , German-language literary corpus (1780–1930). https://zenodo.org/records/15714828 ; documented in https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.350

Honors and Awards

12/2021	Hans Walter Frischkopf Award for Excellence in Teaching, McGill University
01/2020	Graduate Excellence Award , McGill University
01/2019	Graduate Excellence Award , McGill University

Academic Service

since 09/2026	Representative of the mid-level academic staff (PhD students and PostDocs), Department of Digital Humanities and Social Studies, FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg
04/2025–09/2026	Deputy Representative of the mid-level academic staff, Department of Digital Humanities and Social Studies, FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg

Conference and Workshop Organization

09/2025	Co-Organizer , DHSS Summer School “Data, Gender, and Society”, FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg
01/2022	Co-Organizer , “7th Annual German Teaching Workshop”, McGill University
03/2021	Co-Organizer , Graduate Research Conference, “Environment: Last Call”, McGill University

Editorial Work, Peer Review and Memberships

2019–2025 **Managing Editor**, Journal of Cultural Analytics,
<https://culturalanalytics.org>

Peer review — DHd, Journal of Computational Literary Studies

Memberships — ADHO, COMPTExT, ACL

Teaching

Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Department of Digital Humanities and Social Studies

Summer 2026 **DH 1: Sprache und Text** (Digital Humanities 1: Language and Text).
Seminar with lab component

Summer 2026 **Critical AI**. Seminar

Winter **Computational Approaches to Storytelling**. Seminar
2025/26

McGill University, Montreal, Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Winter 2024 **Modern Short Fiction**. Seminar, taught in English

Winter 2023 **The German Novel**. Seminar, taught in English

2018–2024 **German as a Foreign Language**, beginner and intermediate level

Other Professional Experience

2017–2018 **Curatorial Assistant**, Halle für Kunst Steiermark, <https://halle-fuer-kunst.at/>

Invited Talks

01/2026 *Measuring Narrative Space: A Computational Study of German and English Prose Fiction*, University of Bielefeld, Kolloquium Literaturwissenschaften Revisited

11/2025 *Aspects of Space: Quantitative Evidence and Fictional Worlds*, University of Hamburg, DH Lecture Series

Talks and Workshops

07/2026	Talk , ADHO Annual Conference 2026, South Korea, "Towards the Automatic Detection of Animal Metaphors in Literary Texts"
04/2026	Talk , 8th annual COMPTExT conference, University of Birmingham, "Modeling Embodiment in Narratives"
09/2025	Workshop , FAU-Erlangen Nuremberg, DHSS Summer School, "Who is Doing What to Whom: Analyzing Gender Biases in Large Language Models"
07/2025	Talk , Conference of Computational Literary Studies, University of Krakow, "Opening Worlds: Narrative Beginnings and the role of Setting"
03/2024	Talk , AACL Montreal, "Questions of Authorship and Agency in the Age of Machine Learning"
10/2023	Talk , "A Computational Study of Setting in German Fiction, GSA Montreal"

Mentoring

since 08/2026	Supervision of a student research assistant in corpus construction and annotation (ETI project "Nature in Motion"), FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg
06/2025-06/2026	Co-adviser , MA-thesis, Marius Lin, "Framing of Political Discourse in Online Forums", FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg
03/2025-03/2026	Co-adviser , MA-thesis, Jan-Oliver Reincke, "Climate Change Narratives in Video Game Storytelling: A Text-Based Computational Study of Emotion", FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg

Methods and Technical Skills

NLP and machine learning — text classification, fine-tuning of transformer models, large language models, statistical modelling

Corpus and data work — text recognition of print and manuscript material, corpus construction and curation, development of annotation guidelines

Research infrastructure — Linked Open Data (Wikidata, Wikibase), reproducible pipelines, open-source tool development, editorial and technical workflows of an open-access journal

Programming — Python

Language Skills

German (native), English (fluent; doctorate and teaching in English), French (intermediate)