

RESPONSIBILITY IN INTERCULTURAL WORK:

Cases, Narratives, and
Practices for the Future

October 22 online |

Academic Insights
Interdisciplinary Dialogue & Networking

October 24-25 in Jena |

Transfer to Practice & Networking

As part of the Intercultural Summer Academy (ISA), researchers, practitioners, and students come together annually to discuss current perspectives on interculturality, learn from one another, and jointly develop new impulses for research and practice.

Organisation

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Call for Contributions

Conference date: **October 22, 2026** (online via Zoom)

With the Department of Intercultural Business Communication at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena and the association [interculture.de](https://www.interculture.de) e. V., Jena has been an integral part of intercultural discourse and practice for more than three decades and is part of a broader academic, educational, and societal movement:

Interculturality is today firmly embedded in academic programs, research projects, professional development, counseling practice, cultural work, and institutional strategies.

Nevertheless, it is evident that society's ability to deal with diversity, power dynamics, multilingualism, and plural identities in a reflective and sustainable manner does not automatically grow alongside this institutionalization. Public debates, conflicts in educational institutions, media portrayals, and political polarization make it clear that intercultural competence must be continually reflected upon and exercised responsibly in specific contexts.

The online conference held as part of this year's ISA takes this tension as a constructive starting point. It explores the question of responsibility: What insights have emerged from three decades of intercultural work? Which models, concepts, and methods have proven effective? Where do limitations, blind spots, or unintended reproductions of systems of difference become apparent? And what forward-looking paths are opening up for academia, schools, cultural work, institutions, and civil society?

Submission deadline for abstracts (max. 250 words incl. preferred format, language and duration): **July 20, 2026**

E-mail: isa@interculture.de

Notification of acceptance by **August 3, 2026**

We invite submissions that present both **critically reflected experiences and forward-looking approaches**. We welcome **analyses of problematic routines or theoretical constructs**, as well as **examples of successful practices and scholarly approaches**. Submissions may, amongst other things, address the following questions:

- What kind of intercultural work leads to what—for example, toward reflexivity, democratic judgment, institutional change, or relationships based on solidarity?
- Which educational, communication, research, or practical formats have proven effective, and where do their limitations lie?
- Which concepts, images, narratives, and models reinforce notions of “us” and “them”—even when the opposite is actually intended?
- How can migration, multilingualism, and plurality be framed and addressed not only as challenges but also as resources for democratic societies?
- How can intercultural work help us productively address the question of why racism and discrimination are a problem for everyone—including those who do not see themselves as directly affected?
- What responsibility do experts in intercultural studies bear when issues such as migration, equality, multilingualism, or belonging are politically charged?
- How can civil society, businesses, educational institutions, and other social actors remain capable of taking action when scientific findings and fundamental democratic principles come into conflict with political decisions or public interpretations?
- What artistic, multilingual, dialogic, or experimental formats open up new approaches to responsibility in intercultural work?

Contributions may draw on research, educational practice, cultural work, consultancy, civil society or artistic contexts. We welcome theoretical, empirical, practice-oriented and experimental approaches, as well as contributions that highlight open questions, working processes or ongoing explorations.

As we wish to ensure the programme to be **didactically varied and bilingual** (German/English), we ask that, when submitting your proposal, you include not only an abstract outlining the content but also details of the planned format (e.g. interactive workshop, keynote talk with discussion, experiment, etc.) duration and the language of the presentation. It is essential that the format can be delivered online and contributes to a dialogue-based reflection on responsibility in intercultural work.