



Sustainable development—economic, social, and ecological—is the greatest challenge and an opportunity at the same time, which humanity faces. Scientist and politician Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer (1938–2024) was committed to this idea throughout his entire career. Klaus Töpfer understood the complex interrelationships between the preservation of natural resources, social and economic justice, and free societies. To this day, his publications, speeches, and actions continue to shape the discourse on sustainable development.

The universities affiliated within the University Alliance Ruhr, Ruhr University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen, have set themselves the goal of continuing Klaus Töpfer’s work in the scientific field. Therefore, TU Dortmund University offers the following position (starting at the earliest possible date):

„Klaus Töpfer Professorship for Sustainable Development“ as W3-Professorship

Stiftung Mercator plans to provide substantial support for the professorship due to its outstanding importance for research into sustainable development.

The interdisciplinary professorship established at TU Dortmund University can be organizationally integrated into a department of TU Dortmund University in consultation with the future holder of the position and depending on their scientific focus. Beyond this, co-optations to other departments of TU Dortmund University and to departments of the UA Ruhr partner universities are possible.

Profile of the professorship

The offered position is aimed at scientists who are conducting research at an outstanding international level and with an interdisciplinary perspective on sustainable development and the associated transformations in a social, humanities, cultural, or economic discipline represented at TU Dortmund University and have experience with the transfer of scientific knowledge to society. Applicants develop their research area in an internationally visible way. They achieve this by establishing research networks and/or research collaborations, particularly with partners in the UA Ruhr, by actively promoting early career researchers, and by successfully establishing research-based teaching.

Your qualifications

You have obtained a doctorate with above-average success and have acquired a post-doctoral lecture qualification (Habilitation) or an equivalent qualification. You demonstrate your research excellence in the field of the professorship through continuous international publications in recognized, peer-reviewed venues especially in recent years, and have been successful in obtaining competitively awarded third-party funding. Furthermore, participation in international research networks is expected. You also display the potential for teaching excellence. Social and leadership skills and the willingness to participate in academic self-administration complete your profile. Moreover, the recruitment requirements in Sections 36 and 37 of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act (Gesetz über die Hochschulen des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, HG NRW) apply.

Attractive environment

We offer an excellent academic environment and attractive cooperation opportunities with renowned international, national, and regional partners. The metropolitan Ruhr Area with the University Alliance Ruhr (UA Ruhr) guarantees short distances to a diversity of partners from science and industry.

With our Dual Career Service, we support your partner in finding professional opportunities in the region, if desired. We are happy to provide information about housing and living in Dortmund and help you find childcare options. If you are coming to us from abroad, our Welcome Service will support you upon your arrival in Germany.

Diversity welcome

A central goal of TU Dortmund University is to promote diversity and equal opportunities. We have set the strategic aim to significantly increase the percentage of women in research and teaching and therefore welcome applications from female scientists. We give preference to severely disabled applicants if their qualifications meet the requirements. We support the compatibility of family and career and promote gender equality in academia and research.

Your application

If you are interested in the position, please submit your application by 10.07.2025 via our application portal. Please submit a research concept (maximum two pages) together with your application. In these concept, please describe in detail how you plan to develop your scientific work with an international perspective in collaboration with partners from TU Dortmund University, the UA Ruhr, and national and international scientific institutions. Please also enclose a teaching concept (maximum two pages).

Details on the application process and the preparation of application documents can be found here: berufung.tu-dortmund.de/en/application

Questions will be answered by Professor Dr. Manfred Bayer at +49231/755-7550 or rektor@tu-dortmund.de.

Further information about TU Dortmund University can be found at www.tu-dortmund.de/en.

[apply here](#)