



SCRIPTS Newsletter
November 2025



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Over the past years, SCRIPTS has conducted intensive research into why the liberal model of society is under pressure worldwide – and what political, social, and cultural consequences this entails. Our work has provided important impulses for both academic and public debates.

We are very pleased that this research has been recognised through the decision to extend the funding of our Cluster for another seven years. In this new funding phase, we will focus on a central question: How can democracies become more resilient in the face of crises and contestations?

This moment of transition is also an opportunity to express our gratitude – to everyone who has accompanied us on this path, supported us, collaborated with us, or shown interest in our work. The strong resonance we receive from academia, politics, civil society, and the public encourages us to continue along this path.

We are already deeply engaged in preparing for the next funding phase: new project ideas are being developed, research priorities refined, and collaborations strengthened. SCRIPTS 2.0 will begin in January 2026, and we look forward to keeping you engaged and informed as this next chapter unfolds.



Warm regards

Tanja A. Börzel

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NEWS

A New Home for SCRIPTS

Since September 1, the Berlin Graduate School for Global and Transregional Studies (BGTS) has moved into its new building at Schwendener Straße 8 — a central hub for exchange, collaboration, and graduate training within SCRIPT. By March 2026, all SCRIPTS units will have moved into their new buildings.

Recognition for SCRIPTS Researchers

Once again, this year, SCRIPTS scholars have achieved excellent results in Berlin's Top 100 Scientists 2025 ranking. Our Principal Investigators Tanja A. Börzel and Gülay Çağlar, along with alumna Martyna Linartas, were included in this year's list — adding to a growing number of SCRIPTS researchers recognized for outstanding academic achievements.

A full overview of all SCRIPTS awardees in this initiative can be found [here](#).

Further Achievements

We are pleased to share recent distinctions within the SCRIPTS community. Steffen Mau has been appointed Director at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen. In addition, Johannes Gerschewski and Tobias Rupprecht have been selected for the prestigious DFG Heisenberg Programme. Congratulations to our colleagues, whose work continues to enrich SCRIPTS' research landscape.

RESEARCH

New Research Programme

We are pleased to present our new working paper "Crisis, Regression, and Resilience of the Liberal Script. A Research Programme". The paper outlines the renewed research agenda for the next seven years, focusing on how and why the liberal script is increasingly contested — and what this means for its resilience.

Read the [full paper](#) here.

Further Publications from the Cluster

In recent months, SCRIPTS researchers have published numerous books, articles, and working papers that contribute to debates on contestations of the liberal script from different disciplinary and regional perspectives.

Explore the latest publications on our [website](#).

PALS Data Navigator

The PALS Data Navigator is online. Developed by the *Public Attitudes towards the Liberal Script (PALS)* project, this interactive tool makes data from an international survey of more than 60,000 respondents in 30 countries publicly available. Users can explore attitudes toward democracy, gender equality, market economies, and core social values. Explore the Data Navigator [here](#).

Conferences

As SCRIPTS transitions toward its second funding phase, the cluster continues to foster academic exchange. In late November, the conference “Contestations of the Liberal Script in Regional Organizations”, organized by Diana Panke, Alexander Libman, and Tanja A. Börzel, will bring together international experts to discuss how regional organizations respond to liberal contestations.

In December, a farewell conference will honor Thomas Risse and reflect on his lasting contributions to research on international cooperation and democracy.

Both events serve to consolidate insights from the first funding phase and set the stage for future research.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Berlin Science Week

01-10 NOV | Various Locations

As part of Berlin Science Week, SCRIPTS will contribute seven events, including the discussion series “Contested Freedoms” and the next edition of “Futuring the Liberal Script.”

The “Contested Freedoms”-series explores the tensions between individual and collective rights, legal protections and responsibilities — and examines what these debates mean for the resilience of democratic societies.

In “Futuring the Liberal Script”, Jessica Gienow-Hecht and filmmaker Nicola Graef discuss how the state and society are being redefined in an age of branding. Both events will be held in German.

Find our full programme at the Berlin Science Week [here](#).

More Events

Beyond Science Week, SCRIPTS will continue its “Remaking America” and “Focus USA” series in Berlin. In November, we will also be present at the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden, among others.

For more information on these and all upcoming events, please visit our [website](#).

ABOUT SCRIPTS

The Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)” is a research consortium that analyses why the liberal model of order has fallen into crisis. Interdisciplinary research teams investigate why alternative concepts of social order are on rise, how these contestations differ from earlier contestation, and what the consequences are for the global challenges of our time. In operation since 2019, SCRIPTS is hosted by the Freie Universität Berlin and unites eight major Berlin-based research institutions. The second funding period for SCRIPTS begins in January 2026.

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Thanks for reading. We welcome your feedback at public-relations@scripts-berlin.eu.

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