

Editorial

Dear Readers,

Are you “lazy”? This is the term scientists use to describe people who move their heads very little during conversation. Naturally it is not meant judgementally, but merely denotes scientific interest – at least from the point of view of the researchers in the Cluster of Excellence Hearing4all. They are working, among other things, on the question of how the space-aware, intelligent hearing device of the future can adjust to the wearer’s behaviour. And different behaviours during conversation – whether this involves head nodding or not – play a key role here.

In our Focus article on the Cluster of Excellence we report on the challenges that the researchers in Volker Hohmann’s team face on the path to developing a dynamic hearing aid. In our interview with Christiane Thiel and Birger Kollmeier you can find out how much progress has been made three years after the Cluster of Excellence began its work and what its further goals are. And in the accompanying photo series we show how Oldenburg researchers in Stefan Debener’s team are miniaturising EEG technology and making it mobile.

Hearing also features, albeit indirectly, in the “Research Update” section. Musicologist Melanie Unselde talks about the legacy of singer and drawer Celeste Coltellini, for whom Mozart also composed a number of arias. Her legacy provides a new, “non-Mozart-centred” perspective on the music culture around 1800. In another article in the “Research Update” section sociologist Thomas Alkemeyer and sport scientist Mirko Brandes examine the phenomenon of self-tracking, looking at the benefits and risks of people obsessively collecting data about themselves and their bodies.

In our portrait of psychologist Ute Koglin you will also meet her closest co-workers, Ferdi, Finn and Lobo – three hand puppets that Koglin takes into kindergartens to research social-emotional skills in children. We also portray musicologist Gunter Kreutz who, together with the Pius-Hospital Oldenburg, has set up a choir for people suffering from chronic lung diseases. In this article you can find out more about what motivates the musicologist.

In a guest contribution historian Malte Thießén outlines the history of vaccination and “immunity” as emblematic of the contradictory modern era. What fears and hopes fuelled vaccinations, he asks. And how have they changed perceptions of risk and safety?

Legal theorist Volker Boehme-Neßler, on the other hand, is interested in why the legal world hardly ever uses images; why, in fact, it seems to actively dislike images. And yet the increasing power of images is undoubtedly having an impact on legal thought. Does this mean that the law and society are drifting too far apart?

And as if that wasn’t enough variety, a number of scientists from our University tell us about their various missions abroad, each in their very own style.

We wish you a most pleasurable read!

Yours,
the EINBLICKE editors.

