

EUROPEAN-CANADIAN SPRING ACADEMY Remembering for the Future Transatlantic Perspectives and Intercultural Challenges

April 26 – May 2, 2026



How does collective memory shape who we are – and who we want to become? What role do cultural practices of remembrance play in addressing today's challenges and imagining more just and sustainable futures? These questions lie at the heart of an international seminar week at the Europäische Akademie Otzenhausen (Saarland), bringing together students from Innsbruck (Austria), Jena (Germany) and Montréal (Québec, Canada).

In an inspiring and interactive setting, participants will explore how cultural memory is created, negotiated, and transformed, and how it influences national identities, social values, and political visions. Through discussions, collaborative research workshops, and creative approaches, the seminar encourages critical reflection on dominant narratives, silenced histories, and contested memories. By engaging with these perspectives, students will gain valuable insights into how understandings of the past shape present action and future possibilities.

The program addresses key global and regional issues, including the legacy of colonialism, how Austria and Germany deal with their fascist past, the East-West history in Germany, Indigenous memory in the Canadian context, and the Québec national question in relation to anglophone Canada. These topics also highlight intercultural challenges arising from different historical experiences, value systems, and modes of remembrance. Participants will reflect on how misunderstandings, power imbalances, and cultural blind spots affect dialogue, cooperation, and social cohesion, and how intercultural competence can contribute to more inclusive and respectful forms of coexistence.

Complementing the academic program, guided excursions – including visits to Strasburg, Saarbrücken and Völklingen – offer unique opportunities to experience sites of memory firsthand and deepen reflections on how societies remember, learn, and move forward.

The Spring Academy will be complemented by a return visit of the German-Austrian group* to Montréal in late September/early October 2026. This study trip, the **EUROPEAN-CANADIAN AUTUMN ACADEMY**, offers participants unique and in-depth insights into Canadian society and culture, with a special focus on the vibrant, multicultural metropolis of Montréal. Through academic encounters, cultural experiences, guided activities, and excursions to Ottawa and Quebec City, students will gain first-hand perspectives on transatlantic relations, diversity, and contemporary social challenges.

Funding has been applied for to support all participants in the Canada excursion. Students are expected to contribute up to approximately € 800 covering flights, accommodation, the program, and half board. Further details will be provided during the summer semester.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- The European-Canadian Academy is conducted in English.
- Participation in the **European-Canadian Spring Academy** comes with a scholarship that covers the costs of accommodation, meals (full board), the program, and excursions. Travel expenses to Otzenhausen (Saarland) must be covered by the participants themselves.
- Practical questions about the trip to Otzenhausen and further details will be discussed in a preliminary (online) meeting after March 15, 2026.
- To register, please send a short **letter of motivation** including information about yourself and your studies to the following email address: doris.g.eibl@uibk.ac.at
- **Registration deadline: March 15, 2026**
- A total of six places are available for students of the University of Innsbruck. Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- For any questions about the European-Canadian Academy feel free to contact:
Dr. Doris Eibl (doris.g.eibl@uibk.ac.at)

Organizing Team

- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Christoph Vatter (Interkulturelle Wirtschaftskommunikation, Universität Jena)
- Dr. Doris Eibl (Französischsprachige Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaften, Universität Innsbruck)
- Prof. Dr. Sebastian Döderlein (École de langues, Études allemandes, UQÀM)

* Participants in the European-Canadian Spring Academy will be given priority when registering for the excursion to Montréal.