



Vacancy Notice

Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg (OVGU) is an internationally oriented and regionally networked university with a strong research profile.

The Faculty of Mechanical Engineering at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg (OVGU) invites applications for the position of a

Full Professorship (W3) in Cognitive Robotic Systems and Production Automation and, in Joint Appointment, Director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation IFF (m/f/d)

to begin at the earliest possible date.

The Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg is a research-oriented university with approximately 14,000 students and around 2,800 employees. It enjoys an excellent national and international reputation, particularly in the field of engineering. Teaching and research are characterized by a strong emphasis on practical relevance and interdisciplinary collaboration. The professorship is assigned to the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is Europe's leading organization for applied research. It drives innovation at the interface of science, industry, and society.

For the position of Director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation IFF, whose research focuses on robotics, automation, and cyber-physical production systems, we are seeking a strategically experienced and highly committed individual with proven expertise in organizational leadership and in shaping and implementing the production systems of the future. Fraunhofer IFF develops solutions to complex challenges in the field of Industry 4.0 across the entire life cycle of products and industrial production systems. Its core competencies include safe human-robot interaction, automated manufacturing, and the automation of production and material handling processes.

This joint appointment offers outstanding opportunities to conduct application-oriented research with a high degree of academic freedom while contributing to both the Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg and the Fraunhofer IFF.

Your Responsibilities

- Overall strategic, scientific, and financial responsibility for Fraunhofer IFF.
- Strengthening and further developing the scientific expertise at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, particularly in close cooperation with the Institute of Engineering of Products and Systems.
- Developing and implementing a forward-looking strategy for Fraunhofer IFF that is aligned with technological trends, industrial needs, and the strategic objectives of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft.
- Entrepreneurial management of Fraunhofer IFF, including responsibility for budgets, personnel, and research infrastructure, as well as controlling and ensuring the institute's long-term financial sustainability.
- Building, leading, and further developing a high-performing and reliable leadership team while fostering an innovative and collaborative organizational culture.
- Defining and prioritizing the institute's research roadmap in the fields of robotics, automation, digitalization, and artificial intelligence.
- Establishing and maintaining strong relationships with industrial partners, governmental bodies, research institutions, and funding agencies, while representing the institute nationally and internationally.
- Promoting early-career researchers and contributing to academic teaching at the university.

Your Profile

You have successfully completed a doctoral degree with distinction and have obtained a habilitation or demonstrated equivalent academic achievements qualifying you for a full professorship. Your outstanding research achievements in the field of the professorship are demonstrated through an internationally recognized publication record in peer-reviewed journals and conferences. You have extensive experience in the systematic planning, acquisition, and management of competitively funded research projects, preferably including substantial industry-funded projects. In addition, you have proven experience in the responsible leadership of large interdisciplinary research groups and possess comprehensive experience gained through employment in, or close collaboration with, industry. The appointment is subject to the requirements specified in § 35 (2) and (3) of the current Higher Education Act of the State of Saxony-Anhalt (Hochschulgesetz des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt).

Required Expertise

We are seeking an internationally recognized scientist with substantial expertise in the conception and development, or the application and implementation, of robotic and automation systems for manufacturing and production environments. The successful candidate is expected to represent and further develop two of the following research areas at an internationally leading level:

- Development of cyber-physical system models and integration of digital twins.
- Development and application of collaborative robotic systems.
- Human-machine and human-robot interaction.
- Application of machine learning and artificial intelligence methods throughout the entire life cycle of production systems.

Experience in one or more of the following areas is considered an advantage:

- Sensor data fusion.
- IT/OT security.
- Planning technologies and methodologies for the capacity-optimized and resource-efficient design and operation of automation systems.

Additional Qualifications

Applicants should also demonstrate:

- At least five years of leadership or senior management experience in research, industry, or comparable organizations.
- A strong understanding of integrative and collaborative leadership across organizational and hierarchical structures.
- Proven experience in managing large research portfolios and acquiring substantial third-party funding.
- Expertise in change management, organizational development, and the strategic management of complex organizations.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and networking skills.
- Awareness of gender equality issues and a professional approach to diversity in research and academic environments.
- An entrepreneurial mindset combined with a strong commitment to innovation.
- An established national and international network in the relevant scientific and industrial communities.
- Experience in independently teaching university courses in the fields listed above.
- Willingness to contribute to academic self-governance.
- Excellent command of English.
- Excellent command of German (minimum CEFR level C1) or, where applicable, a clear willingness to rapidly acquire the required German language proficiency.

We Offer

- An outstanding leadership position with extensive strategic and managerial responsibility, offering the opportunity to shape the long-term development of a leading research location and to successfully transfer scientific knowledge into industry and society.
- Excellent research infrastructure, highly motivated teams, and a strong network of industrial partners.

The successful candidate is expected to actively contribute to interdisciplinary research and to teach courses in the areas of robotics, automated production systems, and Industry X.0 with a teaching load of 4 contact hours per week (4 SWS).

The Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg and the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft pursue a family-friendly human resources policy and offer flexible working arrangements as well as comprehensive measures to support the reconciliation of professional and family life.

Both institutions are committed to equal opportunities for women and men. Applications from severely disabled persons and applicants with equivalent status will be given preferential consideration if they are equally qualified.

For further information regarding the position, please contact Prof. Dr.-Ing. Andre Katterfeld for Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg (fmb.dekanat@ovgu.de) or Dr. Patrick Hoyer for Fraunhofer Gesellschaft (patrick.hoyer@zv.fraunhofer.de).

Application

Qualified candidates are invited to submit their application, including the usual supporting documents (curriculum vitae, description of academic and professional career, list of publications, list of courses taught, evidence of teaching achievements, a statement outlining future research and teaching plans, and copies of relevant certificates), by **16th of October 2026** (date of receipt).

Applications must be submitted **electronically as a single PDF document** to:

Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg

Dean of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Andre Katterfeld

P.O. Box 4120

39016 Magdeburg, Germany

Email: fmb.dekan@ovgu.de

and simultaneously to

President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Hanselka

Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Headquarters

Hansastraße 27c

80686 Munich

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Email: praesident@fraunhofer.de

Please note the information for storage of personal data: https://www.uni-magdeburg.de/en/data_protection.html.