

The **CORE COGNITION** lab, led by Marcel Binz, is recruiting fully funded **PhD students** (E13, 75%). The expected start date is October 1st, 2026, but later starting dates are possible by agreement. Funding is secured for at least four years.

About the group

We work towards a **unified theory of human cognition**, taking the form of **computational models** that can simulate, predict, and explain human behavior across a wide range of situations. The group is part of the [Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics](#) in Tübingen, a vibrant student town at the foot of the Swabian alps and one of Europe's leading hubs for cognitive science and machine learning research. More information on our [lab webpage](#).

About the position

You will work on one of the lab's research directions:

- Foundation models of human cognition
- Modeling human behavior in naturalistic environments (e.g. conversations, games, coding)
- Automated scientific discovery for the cognitive sciences
- AI alignment

What we are looking for

- Master's degree (or equivalent) in cognitive science, computer science, machine learning, or a related field.
- Intellectual curiosity, initiative, and the ability to communicate clearly.
- Strong programming skills (Python, PyTorch, Claude Code, or similar tools).
- Prior research experience in machine learning, cognitive science, or a related area.
- Familiarity with large language models or modern deep learning workflows is a plus.
- Willingness to work on-site in Tübingen.

What we offer

- The opportunity to work on frontier research at the intersection of machine learning and cognitive science.
- An international research environment with collaborators at DeepMind, Princeton, Harvard, and beyond.
- Proven track record of high-impact publications in venues such as Nature, PNAS, NeurIPS, ICLR, and ICML.
- Large-scale compute through the Max Planck ecosystem.
- Participation in the [IMPRS-IS](#) graduate school.
- Room to shape a young, ambitious, and growing research group.

How to apply

Please email the following as a single PDF to marcelbinz1@gmail.com, with "**PhD-CORE-2026**" in the subject line:

- Cover letter describing your previous achievements and research interests (one page)
- Curriculum vitae
- Academic transcripts and certificates

Applications will be considered until **July 10th, 2026**, or until the positions are filled. The Max Planck Society is committed to employing diverse individuals and strives for gender equity and diversity. We welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds and explicitly encourage members of under-represented groups to apply.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to marcelbinz1@gmail.com.