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Günter-Thiele-Prize 2024: Lina Blenninger honored for excellent thesis, Caroline Siegel receives the Günter Thiele Research Fellowship 2024

The winner of the Günter-Thiele-Prize 2024 is Lina Blenninger and Caroline Siegel has been awarded the Günter Thiele Research Fellowship 2024. The award ceremony took place on April 12, 2024, as part of the "REFRESH" event organized by the Communication Management department at Leipzig University. The thesis, supervised by Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfaß and Prof. Christian P. Hoffmann from the master's degree course in Communication Management, deals with the topic of "Ethics of Public Relations in the Age of Artificial Intelligence". Caroline Siegel received a research grant for doctoral students for a scientific article on the topic of "Maturity of communication. A critical review of maturity models in strategic communication and their contribution to measurement, evaluation, and excellence".

Lina Blenninger master's thesis deals with ethical areas of conflict in stakeholder communication when using artificial intelligence. Based on a literature analysis and qualitative expert interviews with PR ethics and communication experts, she is developing a framework of ethical areas of conflict and practical solutions.

Caroline Siegel presented a full paper at the International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC) in Orlando (Florida) in March 2024, which deals with the debate on maturity and maturity models in corporate communication. The paper, co-authored with Prof. Ansgar Zerfaß (University of Leipzig), was also awarded the Koichi Yamamura Award for International Strategic Communication.

"The work of Lina Blenninger and Caroline Siegel demonstrates outstanding commitment and scientific excellence by addressing important questions of ethical dimensions in the age of artificial intelligence as well as maturity and excellence in corporate communication. Their award-winning contributions provide valuable impetus for the future of the science and practice of communication management," explains jury chairman Prof. Günter Bentele.

Mit dem nach Dr. h.c. Günter F. Thiele, dem Nestor der deutschen PR-Beratungsbranche und Ehrendoktor der Universität Leipzig benannten und mit 1.000 EUR dotierten Günter-Thiele-Preis werden jährlich die besten Masterarbeiten in den Themenbereichen Kommunikationsmanagement, Public Relations und Strategische Kommunikation an der Universität Leipzig ausgezeichnet. Der Jury gehörten in diesem Jahr Prof. Dr. Günter Bentele (Vorsitz), Prof. Dr. Werner Süß und Dr. Sandra Binder-Tietz an. Ziel des Preises ist es, einen Anreiz zu wissenschaftlich-konzeptioneller Höchstleistung sowie zu innovativer und reflektierter Auseinandersetzung mit dem Themenfeld zu schaffen.

Darüber hinaus soll mit dem 1.500 EUR dotierten Günter-Thiele-Forschungsstipendium für Promovierende die Teilnahme an wissenschaftlichen Kongressen und Konferenzen des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses im Themenbereich Kommunikationsmanagement, Public Relations und Strategische Kommunikation an der Universität Leipzig gefördert werden.

Named after Dr. h.c. Günter F. Thiele, the nestor of the German PR consulting industry and an honorary doctor of the University of Leipzig, the Günter-Thiele-Prize endowed with EUR 1,000, is awarded annually to the best master's theses in the fields of communication management, public relations, and strategic communication at the University of Leipzig. This year's jury consisted of Prof. Dr. Günter Bentele (chair), Prof. Dr. Werner Süß, and Dr. Sandra Binder-Tietz. The prize aims to create an incentive for scientific and conceptual excellence as well as for innovative and reflective engagement with the subject area.

In addition, the EUR 1,500 Günter Thiele Research Scholarship for doctoral students is intended to promote participation in scientific congresses and conferences for young academics in the field of communication management, public relations, and strategic communication at Leipzig University.

An overview of the award winners from previous years

	Award winner Master thesis	Award winner Research Scholarship	Award winner Bachelor thesis
2024	Lina Blenninger	Caroline Siegel	-
2023	Katja Fischer	Daniel Ziegele	-
2022	Julia Kloß	Jeanne Link	-
2021	Jeanne Link	-	Björn Borchardt
2020	Jan Reinholz	-	Laura Steglich
2019	Sebastian Jansen	-	Anna Pirus
2018	Karolin Köhler	-	Paulo Thelen
2017	Lena Schneider	-	Lena Lülfig
2016	Maria Borner	-	Denise Weigelt
2014	Kevin Reißig	-	Maike Lehnhoff
2013	Doreen Adolph	-	Anika Müller
2012	Miriam Droller	-	-
2011	Alexander Klepel	-	Melanie Gerasch
2010	Dr. Christine Viertmann (Wohlgemuth)		Doreen Adolph
2009	Dr. Juliane Kiesenbauer (Mühling)		Roman Rühle

2008	Annekatriin Buhl	Matthias Bartmann
2007	Dr. Birte Fähnrich	-
2005	Christian Sommer	-

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You can find more information at www.guenter-thiele-stiftung.de

Photo of the 2024 award ceremony



(from left to right): Caroline Siegel, Prof. Dr. Günter Bentele (jury chair), Lina Blenninger

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