

MERCI

Mekelle-Erfurt Research Cooperation Initiative

Kick-Off Week

June 1st – 4th, 2026

Meeting of the Mekelle-Erfurt Research Cooperation Initiative (MERCI), supported by
the Gerda Henkel Foundation

Venue: Centre for Transcultural Studies, Pagenhaus, Gotha

Monday, June 1st, 2026, Erfurt

2:00–3:00 pm

Meeting with Prof. Dr. Sven Jöckel, Dean of the Philosophical Faculty

3:15–4:30 pm

Introduction to the Campus in Erfurt

Coffee Break

5:30–6:00 pm

Opening of the exhibition by Zoë Opačić – Holy and Healing Waters in Erfurt and Beyond

By Sara Keller, An Event by the Closing Conference “Religion and Urbanity”

Tuesday, June 2nd, 2026, Gotha

9:00 am

Arrival

09:30–10:30 am

Greetings and Introduction to the Centre for Transcultural Studies

Prof. Dr. Iris Schröder

Coffee Break

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Mekelle University in Brief

Kiros Gebreyohannes

Academics, Research, and Community Services at Mekelle University in a Post-Conflict Situation

Dr. Mulubrhan Adane

Lunch Break

2:30–4:00 pm

Introducing MERCI

Discussion on Implementing the Teaching Collaboration as part of MERCI

Dr. Fesseha Berhe Gebregergis

Coffee Break

4:30–5:30 pm

Discussion on Implementing the Research Collaboration as part of MERCI

PD Dr. Felix Schürmann

Dinner

Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026, Gotha & Erfurt

9:30 –11:00 am

Discussion and Planning the Visit to Ethiopia in October 2026

Coffee Break

11:30 am–12:00 pm

Wrap-Up: Next Steps and Future Actions

Lunch Break and Travel to Erfurt

2:30–5:30 pm

Visit to the Erfurt Campus: Discussions with the International Office and Professors from Other Faculties

Prof. Dr. Thomas Heller, Religious Education (14:30 pm), Dr. Antje Dallmann, International Office (15:30 pm), Prof. Dr. Thorsten Thiel, Democracy and Digital Policy (16:30 pm)

Coffee Break

6:00 pm onwards

Roundtable-Discussion: “Is Migration Ever Voluntary? Migration Between Agency, Coercion, and Power”

Pierre Jérôme Monforte (Barcelona), Tahire Erman (Ankara), Florian Wagner (Erfurt), Part of the lecture series organized by the Research Unit “Voluntariness” and the Department of History

Thursday, June 4th, 2026

10:30am–12:00 pm

Guided Tour of the Perthes Collection (Gotha Research Library)

Lunch Break

1:30–3:30 pm

Roundtable-Discussion: Doing a PhD in History at the University of Erfurt

Prof. Dr. Sabine Schmolinsky & Florian Balbiani

Wrap-Up