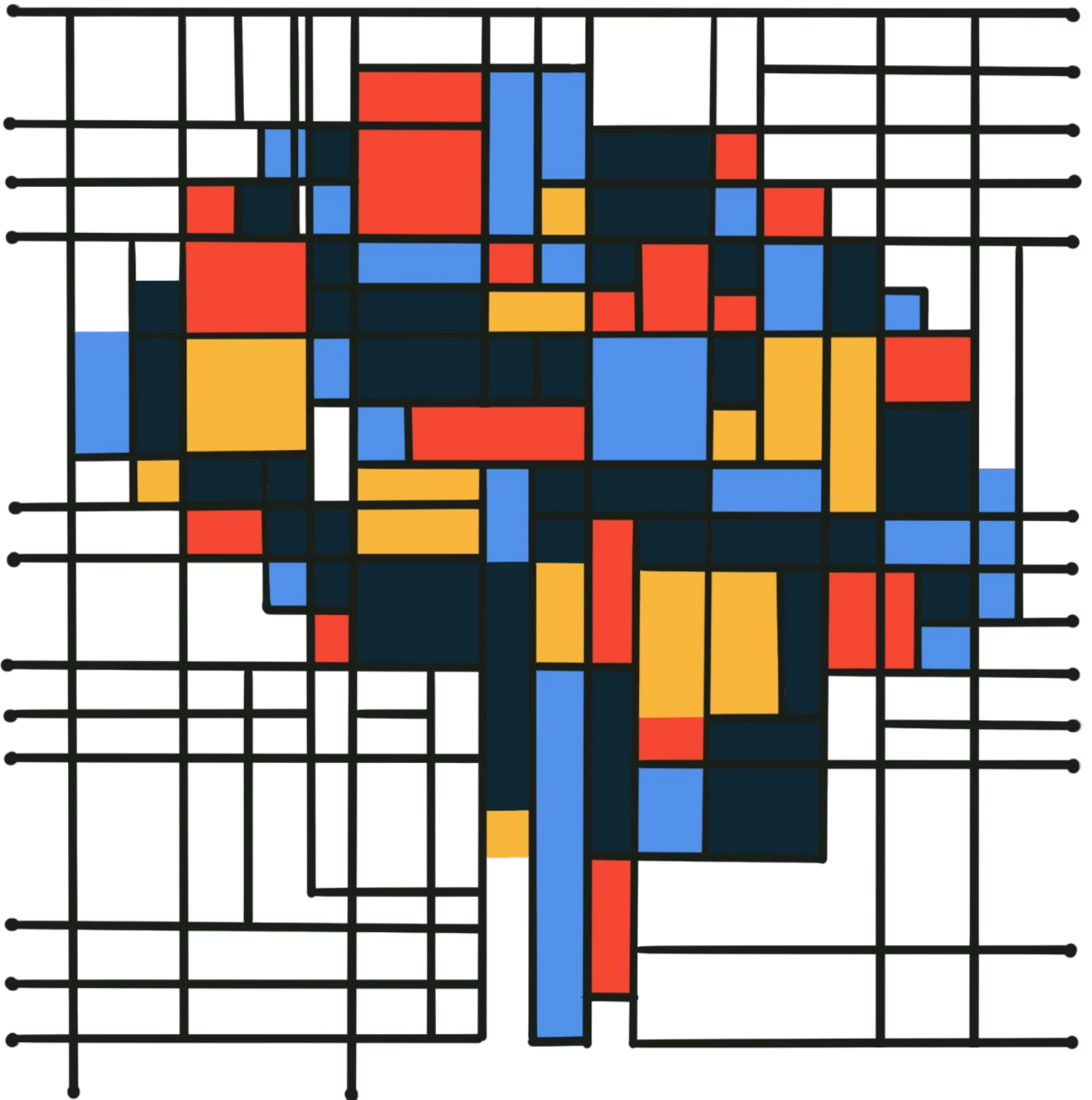# UNDERSTANDING INTELLIGENCE

Helmholtz Institute for Human-Centered AI

**Open PhD positions in Munich
Apply by May 16th**

About the positions

Join us to work on cutting-edge research at the intersection of machine learning, cognitive science, and computational psychiatry. The Institute for Human-Centered AI at the Helmholtz Center Munich is looking to hire two outstanding PhD researchers for open-topic positions, each funded for at least three years. The start date is flexible and can be anytime in 2025.

We welcome candidates with interests in the following areas:

- **Machine Learning:** Research on large language models, foundation models, and deep learning.

- **Cognitive Science:** Large-scale modeling of human cognition and behavior.

- **Computational Psychiatry:** Using machine learning–especially LLMs–to better understand and support mental health.

We encourage applications from individuals with strong analytical skills who are excited to push the boundaries of AI-driven modeling of cognition and behavior.

We are looking for two motivated PhD researchers who are passionate about research and ready to make meaningful contributions. Here's what we're looking for:

- **Academic Background:** You hold a Master's degree in Machine Learning, Cognitive Science, Computer Science, Neuroscience, or a related computational field.

- **Technical Skills:** You have solid programming experience and a strong mathematical foundation. You are comfortable with (or willing to learn) tools such as PyTorch, TensorFlow, R, or JavaScript.

- **Research Experience:** You have been involved in empirical research and can demonstrate your ability to carry out complex projects. This doesn't have to mean publications: we value substance over formal output.

- **Independence and Curiosity:** You take initiative, enjoy asking bold questions, and approach research with both diligence and creativity.

- **Commitment to Diversity:** We believe that innovation is driven by diverse perspectives. We strongly encourage applications from individuals from groups historically underrepresented in science and technology.

If you're excited to work at the intersection of machine learning, cognitive science, and psychiatry and want to contribute to meaningful, interdisciplinary research, then we'd love to hear from you.

Why join us?

Joining our lab means becoming part of a collaborative and supportive team that values both scientific excellence and a positive work culture. We care deeply about the quality of our research, and equally about how we treat each other. We aim to foster an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are welcomed and where your contributions truly matter. We work hard, we help each other grow, and we enjoy what we do. Here's what makes this opportunity stand out:

- **Personalized Mentorship:** You'll receive regular one-on-one meetings with your supervisor to help your project stay on track and grow in the right direction. You'll also collaborate closely with other PhD students and postdocs in our larger research group.

- **Global Collaboration:** You'll work alongside a dedicated postdoc in the lab and benefit from co-supervision by researchers from leading institutions such as Harvard, MIT, UCL, or DeepMind.

- **Fair Compensation:** Good research needs fair conditions. This position is paid according to E13 (80%), which is competitive, especially in an international context.

- **International Environment:** Our team brings together researchers from around the world, based in Munich, an international, diverse, and vibrant city. You don't need to speak German to live and work here.

- **Inclusive Lab Culture:** We aim to create a collaborative, respectful, and open environment. Lab decisions are made together, and we value diverse perspectives as a key part of our success.

- **Beyond the Lab:** You'll have the chance to attend summer schools, visit other labs, and get experience supervising students to broaden your skills and network.

- **Enjoying the Journey:** We take our science seriously, but we also know how to have fun. Whether it's playing table football, hiking during lab retreats, or celebrating milestones with cake, we enjoy spending time together.

- **Strong Track Record:** Our alumni have gone on to postdoc positions at places like Oxford, Harvard, Princeton, and the Allen Institute.

If you would like to join us, then please email a cover letter, CV, unofficial transcripts, a short description of your research interests, and the contact details of 2 referees to **eric.schulz@helmholtz-munich.de by May 16th, 2025**. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.