Call for Participation

Critical Mapping 2027

An interdisciplinary workshop at the intersection
of geographic and design-based research

June 20 –12, 2027 // Halle (Saale)

As powerful mediators between spaces, places, people, and things, maps and geovisualizations shape our perception of the world as much as our actions within it. Critical Mapping and critical cartography analyze and reflect on this role, examining how maps and visualizations become instruments in the construction of social realities. At the same time, alternative approaches and new forms of geographical knowledge production are emerging—collectively referred to under terms such as *counter-mapping*, *Platial GIS*, *place-based GIS*, and *spatial humanities*. This development points toward an opening up, even a democratization, of cartographic practices: today, activists, designers, journalists, and artists are creating maps and geovisualizations, experimenting with innovative practices to envision alternative visibility, alternative access points, and counter-hegemonic worldviews. Often, they subvert traditional modes of geographical knowledge production and world representation, challenging established strategies of world appropriation and developing new forms of expression. This can be understood as an effort to cultivate reflexive geographical practices—aware of the social and political situatedness of map-making and mapping itself—where participatory, narrative, and digital methods, alongside alternative modes of knowledge transmission, are explored and put into practice.

As in previous years, we aim to bring together diverse perspectives and approaches to critical mapping within the interdisciplinary workshop on Critical Mapping, bridging geographical research and design-based inquiry. Our goal is to explore practices that simultaneously challenge the power of maps and visualizations while envisioning new forms of geographical knowledge production. We welcome contributions and projects from Critical Cartography, Critical Data Studies, and design- and art-based research. By doing so, we seek to foster dialogue among approaches, methodologies, and discursive contexts that have often been treated in isolation. We therefore particularly encourage submissions—though not exclusively—from Geography, Design and Art, Cultural and Media Studies, as well as related fields.

Possible topics include:

- *Counter-Mapping* and Counter-Visualization
- Digital Forensics and *Critical Remote Sensing*
- Design and *Spatial Storytelling*
- *Qualitative GIS* and *Place-Based GIS*
- *More-than-Human Cartographies*
- Mapping as a Design Method and Creative-Artistic Research
- Geovisual Modeling from the *Spatial Humanities*
- Multimodal and Multitemporal Geomedia
- Mapping of Infrastructure and Mobility Flows

Submissions may take a more applied or an epistemologically oriented approach and/or critically engage with existing (geo)data-based visualizations. In addition to traditional paper presentations, we are particularly interested in workshop formats and hands-on contributions. Submissions are welcome in both German and English. We also encourage contributions developed within seminar papers, master's theses, or doctoral research, and aim to provide early-career researchers with a platform for interdisciplinary networking.

The workshop will take place June 10 –12, 2027, in Halle (Saale) and is jointly organized by Pablo Abend, Matthias Görlich (both from Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design), Anna Unterstab (freelance designer, Hamburg), Boris Michel (University of Halle), Nora Küttel (University of Bremen), Finn Dammann (FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg), Lea Bauer and Francis Harvey (both from IfL Leipzig). A small participation fee will be charged to cover expenses.

The event will be held at the Campus Design at Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design in Halle.

We welcome proposals (abstracts of approx. 250 words plus short biography) by December 10, 2026, at: https://indico.leibniz-ifl.de/e/critical-mapping-2027. For any questions, please contact us at kritvis@burg-halle.de. We particularly encourage submissions from researchers with experiences of marginalization.

MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT HALLE-WITTENBERG

Burg Giebichenstein Kunsthochschule Halle
University of Art and Design

FAU FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER UNIVERSITÄT ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG

Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde ifl

Universität Bremen