My career path to the Leibniz Association

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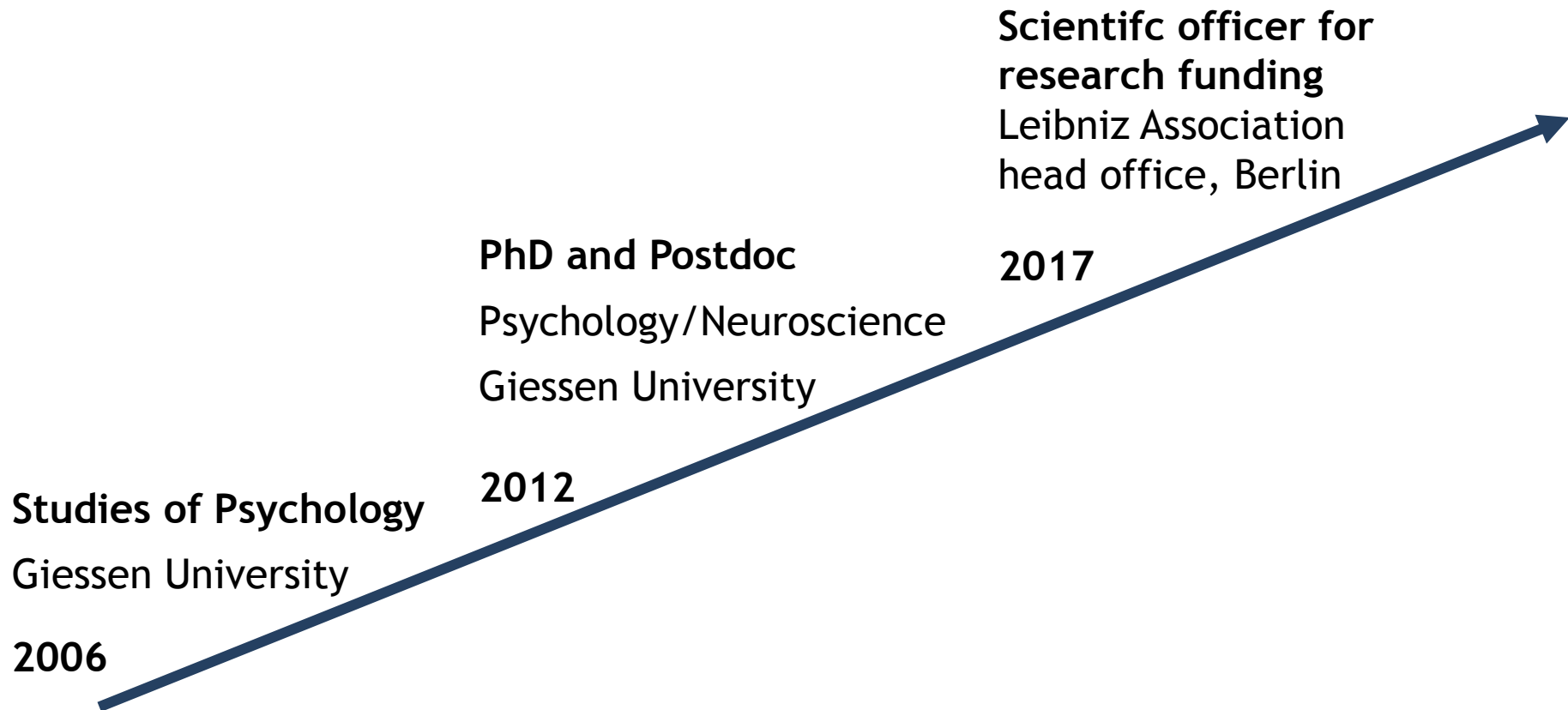
IRTG colloquium

July 3 2018

My career path

Scientifc officer for research funding
Leibniz Association head office, Berlin

2017

PhD and Postdoc

Psychology/Neuroscience

Giessen University

2012

Studies of Psychology

Giessen University

2006

Leibniz
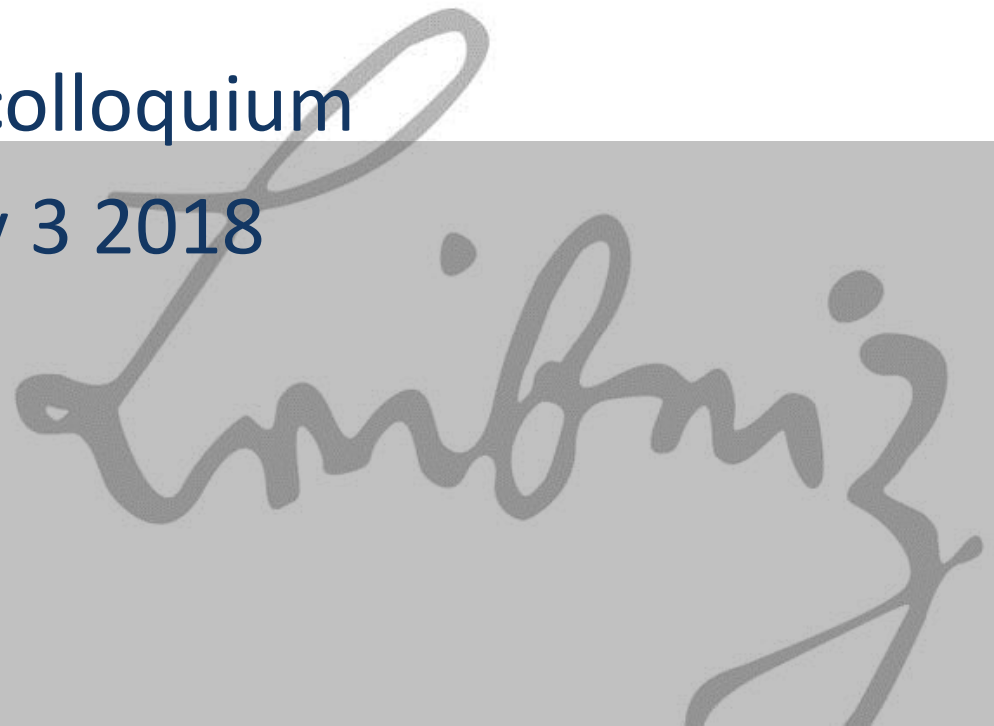
Why did I quit (active) research?

- Change in tasks
- More variety in tasks
- More teamwork, less competition
- Less „visibility"

Why did I choose science management?

- Still quite close to science

- More service-oriented job

- Stronger focus on organizational tasks

- Close to politics

How did I get the position?

- 4 applications: research funding, human resources development
- Job posting for 1-year parental leave replacement (now on a permanent position)
- First job interview at Leibniz: why science management?

What is Leibniz?

1.

* 1891

2.

* 1646

3.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716)

- Polymath: law, mathematics, philosophy, theology, history, linguistics, natural sciences, engineering

- Librarian, political advisor, diplomat and font of ideas: e.g. Berlin Academy of Sciences

- "Theoria cum praxi": theoretical concepts must contain perspectives for application

Research in Germany

120
Universities

220 Universities of
applied sciences

Basic
research

Applied
research

An overview of the Leibniz Association

Research mode: academic excellence and social relevance

- Excellent problem-oriented and application-oriented basic research which is of social, economic and ecological relevance

- Interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research within and beyond the institutes

- Close collaborations with universities

Research organisation

- Financial and legal independence of the institutes

- Joint funding at national and state level (generally 50:50)

An overview of the Leibniz Association

- Founded in 1995
- Association of 93 independent institutes, including 18 infrastructural institutes and 8 research museums
- Total budget of 1.9 billion €/year
- Around 19,100 employees, including 9,900 academics

Sections of the Leibniz Association

Section A

Humanities and Educational Research
(22 *institutes*)

Section B

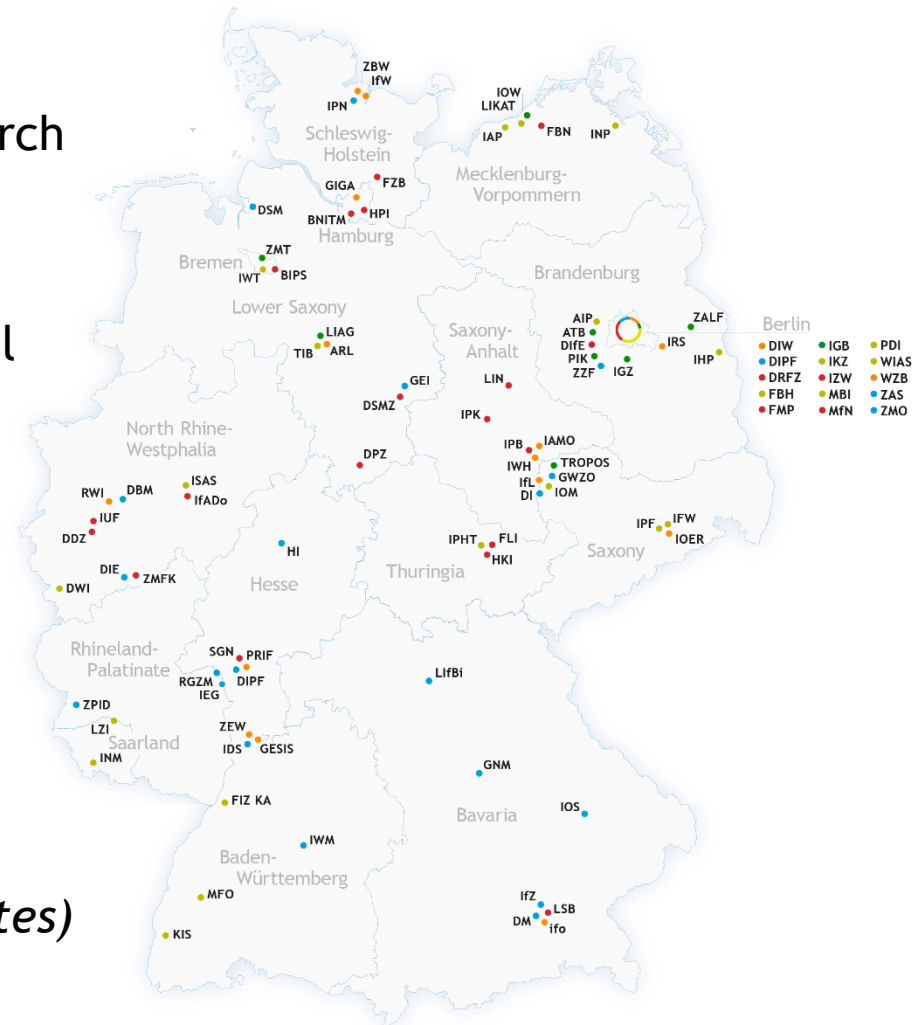Economics, Social Sciences, Spatial
Research *(16 institutes)*

Section C

Life Sciences *(23 institutes)*

Section D

Mathematics, Natural Sciences,
Engineering *(23 institutes)*

Section E

Environmental Research *(9 institutes)*

An overview of the Leibniz Association

Head office: Central interface between institutes, politics, and public

~70 employees

Evaluation of institutions

Communication with ministries/funders: "lobby work"

Public relations: communicating science to the public

Advise researchers: funding, founding of new companies, patents

Coordinate institutions, also for overlapping topics

What I am doing: Leibniz Competition

- Internal competition tool: Leibniz Institutes compete for funding
- 25 mio. € per year
- Every Leibniz Institute has a right to apply for max. 1 mio. €
- ~110 applications
- Two-stage review process: external reviews, internal panel

Funding programmes
- Leibniz Junior Research Groups
- Leibniz Programme for Women Professors
- Leibniz Collaborative Excellence
- Leibniz Transfer

What I am doing: Leibniz Competition

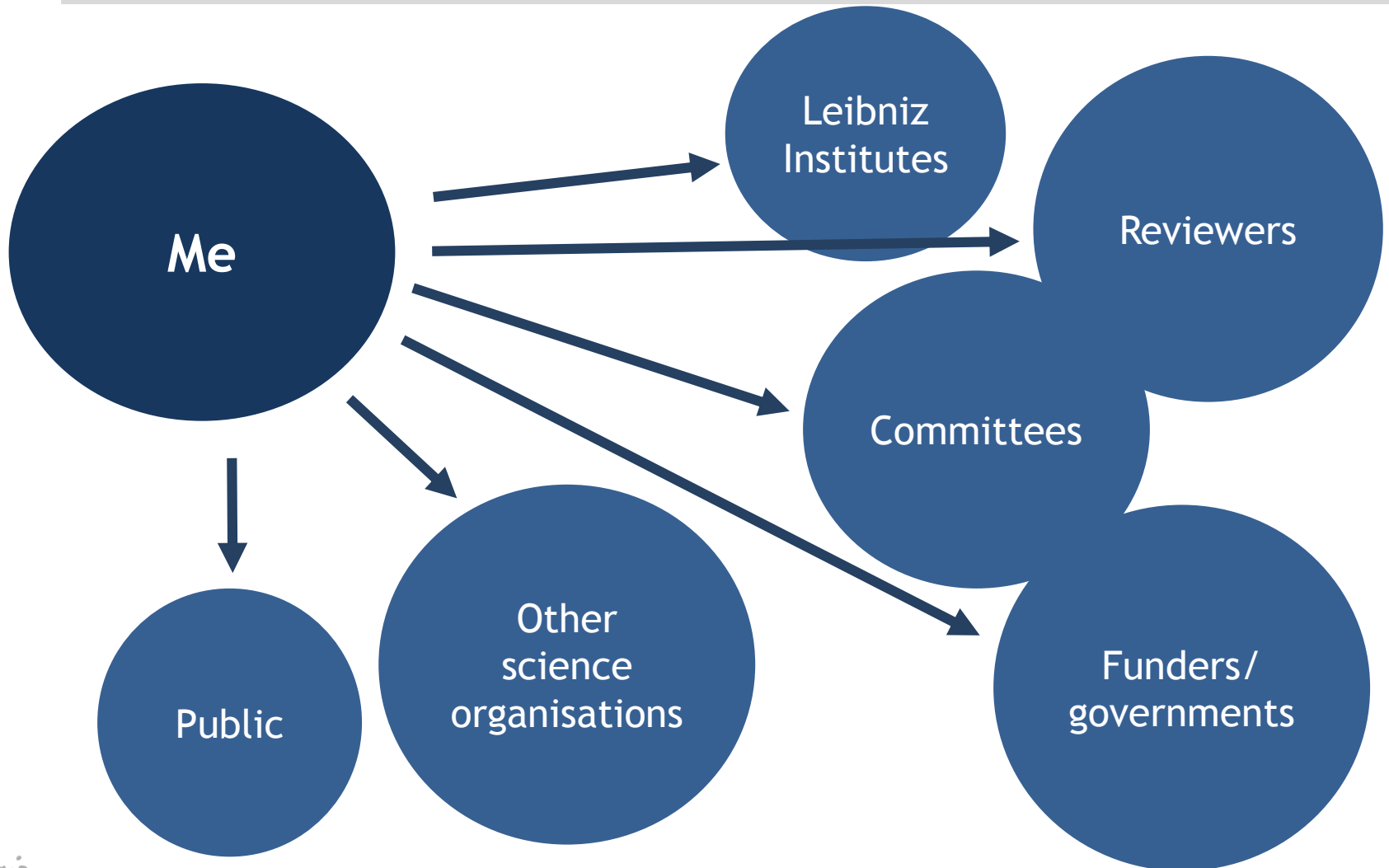| Advising applicants	→	Finding reviewers	→	Prepare selection panel	→	Feedback for applicants
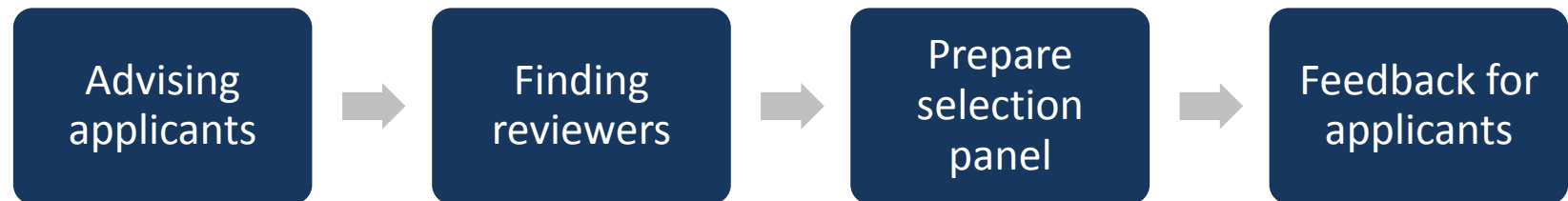
- Improvement of procedure
- Other panel meetings
- Reports to funders/ ministries
- Public relations: press releases, campaign, events
- Network of grantees

Who I interact with

What I like

- Applicants and grantees benefit from my work
- Insights into current research of all disciplines
- Work on „hot topics" in scientific policy: equal opportunities, transfer from science to public, carreer prospects of young researchers,...
- Variety in tasks
- Variety in future carreer perspectives (HR, PR, research coordination, ...) at different institutions (universities, funding agencies, ministries, EU, consulting agencies, media,....)
- Interaction with many different people and target groups: different ways of communication
- Opportunities to introduce my ideas
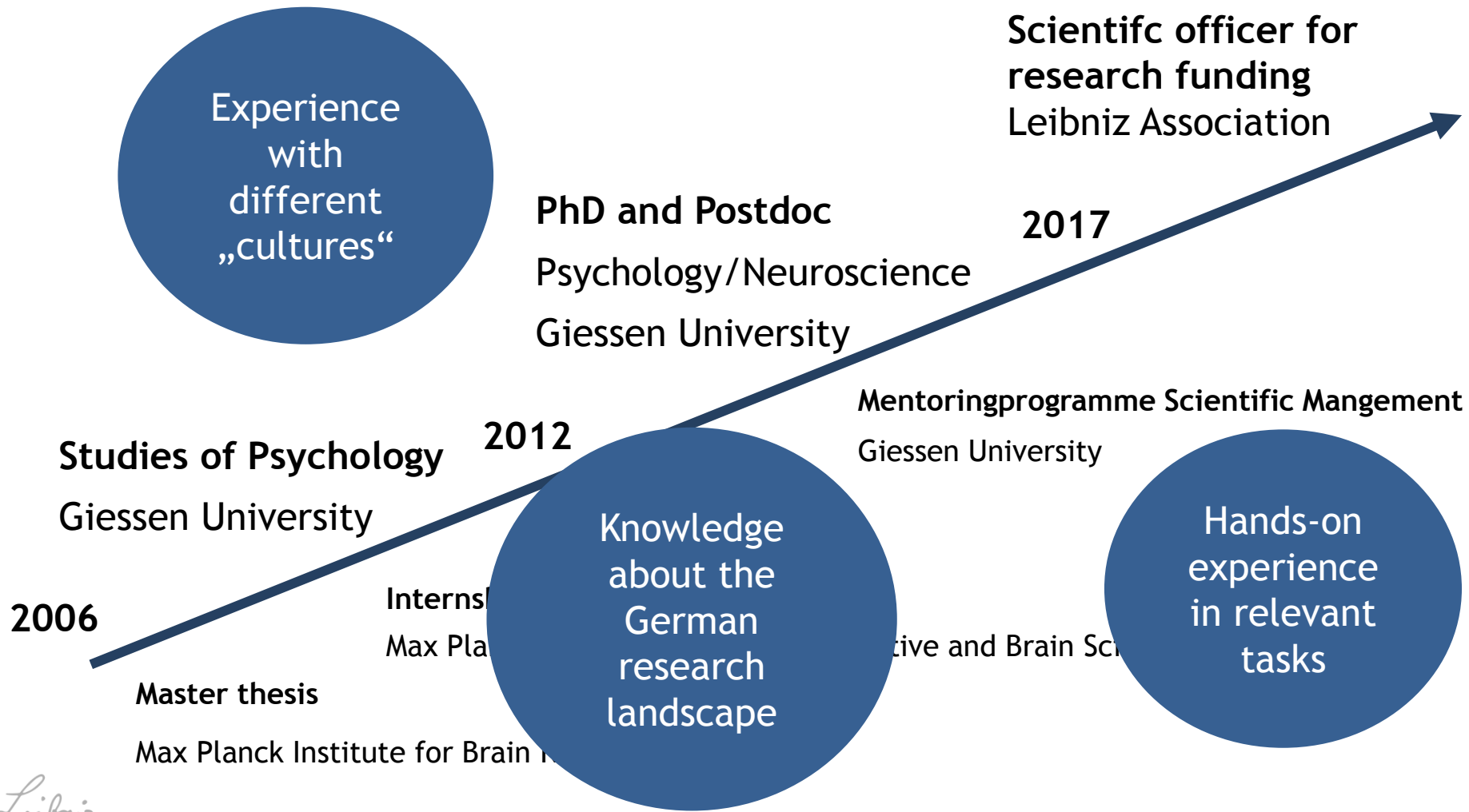- Teamwork
- Working hours

What could be better...

- Travelling is missing
- More hierarchical and more formal communication
- Interaction can also mean dependency
- Very German

My career path

Scientifc officer for research funding
Leibniz Association

Experience with different „cultures"

PhD and Postdoc
Psychology/Neuroscience
Giessen University

2017

Mentoringprogramme Scientific Mangement
Giessen University

Studies of Psychology
Giessen University

2012

Knowledge about the German research landscape

Hands-on experience in relevant tasks

2006

Internsl...
Max Pla...

...ive and Brain Sci...

Master thesis
Max Planck Institute for Brain r...

Leibniz

How to get there

- Mentoring programmes (for Giessen and Marburg: MEWISMA)
- Visits/internships in relevant organizations
- Workshops (e.g.: https://www.zwm-speyer.de/, costs may be covered by DFG!)
- Take over administrative tasks in your institution
- Networks:

https://www.wissenschaftsmanagement-online.de/

https://www.netzwerk-wissenschaftsmanagement.de/

https://www.forschungsreferenten.de/startseite/

Thank you!

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