UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

PROFESSOR DR. ANSGAR ZERFASS NOVEMBER 2026

Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfass
Professor and Chair of Strategic Communication
Institute of Communication and Media Studies
Leipzig University, Germany

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SHORT CV

Ansgar Zerfass is Professor and Chair of Strategic Communication at the Institute for Communication and Media Studies at Leipzig University, Germany. He is also a Visiting Research Fellow at BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, and teaches executive courses at RSM Rotterdam School of Management.

He holds a doctorate in business administration and a habilitation in communication science and has worked for ten years in management positions in the corporate world. He serves as Consulting Editor of the "International Journal of Strategic Communication", USA; on the Editorial Board of "Corporate Communication Review", a global magazine bridging theory and practice; as lead researcher of the European Communication Monitor; and as Chairman of the Executive Board of the Academic Society for Management & Communication, the leading European think-tank in the field supported by research universities and chief communication officers of more than 50 global companies.

According to Google Scholar, Ansgar Zerfass is the world's most cited researcher for the topics Corporate Communication, Communication Management, Strategic Communication, and #2 in Public Relations (h-index). He has received more than 30 awards for conference contributions (best papers), books, campaigns, and personal achievements, including the renowned Pathfinder Award from the Institute for Public Relations in New York. To date, he has published 44 books and more than 450 articles and study reports in several languages in his research areas of corporate communications, communication management and value creation, digital communication, and international communication. More information and a complete list of publications are available at www.zerfass.de

CURRICULUM VITAE

Professor Dr. Ansgar Zerfass holds the Chair of Strategic Communication at the Institute for Communication and Media Studies at Leipzig University, Germany. Founded in 1916, the institute is the oldest institute in the field in Germany. He also teaches executive courses at RSM Rotterdam School of Management and BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo. From 2013 to 2025, he was simultaneously Professor of Communication and Leadership at BI. He served also as visiting professor at Bournemouth University, WU Vienna University of Business and Economics, Université Bordeaux Montaigne and Hong Kong Baptist University.

Dr. Zerfass studied business administration, communication science, and information systems at FAU University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Bavaria. He graduated in management (Dipl.-Kfm.) with an acclaimed thesis on business ethics and started his academic career as a research associate with Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. mult. Horst Steinmann at the Chair of Strategic Management in Nuremberg. He gained a doctorate in business administration (Dr. rer. pol.) summa cum laude. Afterwards, he worked in the practice for 10 years in the fields of corporate communications and political consulting. He held an executive management position at MFG Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart, the federal state's center of excellence for information technology and media. At the same time, he achieved a Habilitation (second doctorate / postdoctoral qualification) in communication science at FAU University Erlangen-Nuremberg under the mentorship of Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Winfried Schulz. He works at Leipzig University since 2006, initially as a Full Professor of Communication Management and since 2014 as Chair Professor of Strategic Communication. Various offers by other renowned universities, including an Endowed Chair at the USC Annenberg School of Communication, Los Angeles, were turned down. In Leipzig, he directs the Master Communication Management program, which, according to various rankings, is continuously ranked number one among all graduate programs in the field in the German-speaking countries since 2007.

His research topics include strategic communication, corporate communications, communication management and value creation, digital communication, and international communication. Current projects include the analysis and optimization of business models for communication departments, a theoretical modeling of the digital infrastructure for corporate communications, and the interdisciplinary analysis of trends and innovations for communication management. In addition, the codification of international knowledge and management tools for corporate communications is driven supported through several handbook projects in German, English and Chinese. With the European Communication Monitor and its spin-off, the Global Communication Monitor across 80 countries, he has been leading the world's largest empirical study series on communication management since 2007.

Dr. Zerfass is Chairman of the Executive Board at the Academic Society for Management & Communication, a non-profit think tank that combines the commitment of more than 50 international companies and several research universities to promote cutting-edge research and knowledge transfer in the field of corporate communications.

Current board, advisory board and editorial activities of Dr. Zerfass include roles as Founder and Editorial Board Member of Corporate Communication Review; Consulting Editor and long-time Editor of the International Journal of Strategic Communication (Routledge/Taylor & Francis, USA); Member of the board and founder of the Günter Thiele Foundation for Communication & Management; Academic Adviser of the Austrian Society for Communication and Reputation (KomRep), Vienna, Austria; Co-Founder and Academic Partner of the Nordic Alliance for Communication & Management (#NORA), Oslo, Norway; Member of the Academic Committee of the International Corporate Communication Hub, Milan, Italy; Executive Lecturer at the RSM Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands; Member of the Academic Advisory Group of the Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC), London, UK; Chairman of the Jury of the Integrated Communication Award at F.A.Z.-Institute, a subsidiary of the leading German national newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt am Main; Member of the Board at CSBT Center for Sports Business Tegernsee; Editor of the bestseller "Handbuch Unternehmenskommunikation" (Handbook of Corporate Communications) published by Springer with a circulation of more than 52,000 books and eBooks of the latest edition to date. He served for many years as Member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Public Relations Division of the International Communication Association (ICA), Washington, D.C.; President and Board Member of the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA), Brussels, Belgium, and as Chairman of the Jury of the International German PR Award organized by the German Public Relations Association (DPRG). He is a member of the Academy of Management, ICA, ECREA, EUPRERA, DGPuK, DPRG, and DNWE.

More information and complete list of publications: www.zerfass.de

RESEARCH IMPACT

h-index	(number of publications that have been cited at least h times)	74
i10-index	(number of publications that have been cited by at least 10 other publications)	237
Citations	(number of references in other sources to any publication of the author)	19,862

Source: Google Scholar, November 2026

PERSONAL AWARDS

2018: Distinguished Scholar in Public Relations (Lifetime Award),
European Public Relations Education and Research Association, Brussels
2015: Jackson Jackson & Wagner Behavioral Science Award, Public Relations Society of America, Atlanta
2014: Pathfinder Award, Institute for Public Relations, New York
2010: Most Innovative PR Researcher in Germany, Newsaktuell/dpa
2005: PR Head of the Year, German Public Relations Association (DPRG)

AWARDS FOR SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

2024: Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, USA
2023: Best Paper Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Prague
2023: Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, USA
2020: Best Paper Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Brussels
2019: Institute of Public Relations W. Ward White Award for Top Paper of Professional Significance,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, USA
2018: Emerald Professional Impact Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Aarhus
2018: Emerald Literari Award for Excellence, Best Article in Journal of Communication Management 2017
2018: Brigham Young University Top Ethics Paper Award,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, USA
2016: Best Paper Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Groningen/Amsterdam
2016: JCOM/CCCI Impact Award, Corporate Communications International Conference, New York
2016: IPR Top Paper Award, International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2016: Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2014: Best Paper Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Brussels
2014: Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award,
International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2013: IPR Top Paper Award, International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2013: Jackson Sharpe Award, International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2012: Best Paper Award, EUPRERA Annual Conference, Istanbul
2012: IPR Top Paper Award, International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
2011: Jackson Sharpe Award, International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, USA
1997: Ludwig-Schunk-Preis für Economic Science, University of Gießen
1995: Albert Oeckl Award, German Public Relations Association (DPRG), Bonn
1995: Doctoral Dissertation Award, FAU University Erlangen-Nuremberg
1989: Award of the Hermann Weiler Foundation, Nuremberg

AWARDS FOR COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

2010: PR Report Award „Innovative PR Strategy“
2009: Federal Award for University Communication, BMBF/HINB
2005: German Multimedia Award
2000: German Public Relations Award (Deutscher PR-Preis)

AWARDS FOR SUPERVISED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Doctoral and master students supervised by Professor Zerfass have already been honored 26 times as authors of the best theses in the field of communication management/PR nationally, in Europe or globally, and have received numerous awards at the university level (Günter Thiele Prize, Günter Thiele Research Scholarship) not listed here.

2026: DPRG Science Award, German Public Relations Association (Most innovative doctoral dissertation in Germany)
2025: EUPRERA PhD Award (Best doctoral dissertation in Europe)
2025: BdKOM Talent Award, Federal Association of Communicators (Best master thesis in Germany)
2024: BdKOM Talent Award, Federal Association of Communicators (Best master thesis in Germany)
2024: James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Thesis Award 2024,
International Communication Association (ICA), USA (Best master thesis globally)
2024: DPRG Science Award, German Public Relations Association (Most innovative doctoral dissertation in Germany)
2023: BdKOM Talent Award, Federal Association of Communicators (Best master thesis in Germany)
2022: DGPuK Dissertation Award International and Intercultural Communication,
German Communication Association and Ludwig Delp Foundation (Best doctoral dissertation in Germany)
2022: James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Thesis Award 2020/21,
International Communication Association (ICA), USA (Best master thesis globally)
2022: DPRG Science Award, German Public Relations Association (Most innovative master thesis in Germany)
2020: Master Thesis Award, EUPRERA (Best master thesis in Europe)
2020: DGPuK Dissertation Award PR/Organizational Communication, German Communication Association
(Best doctoral dissertation in Germany)
2019: EUPRERA PhD Award (Best doctoral dissertation in Europe)
2018: EUPRERA Master Thesis Award (Best master thesis in Europe)
2017: BdP Young Talent Award, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons
2017: DPRG Science Award, German Public Relations Association (Most innovative master thesis in Germany)
2016: EUPRERA Master Thesis Award (Best master thesis in Europe)
2015: EUPRERA Master Thesis Award (Best master thesis in Europe)
2012: Albert Oeckl Science Award, German Public Relations Association (Most innovative master's thesis in Germany)
2012: BdP Young Talent Award, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons
2011: Digital Communication Award (Best master thesis on online PR in Europe)
2010: BdP Young Talent Award, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons
2010: PR Report Gold Award “Student of the Year”
2009: BdP Young Talent Award, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons
2007: BdP Young Talent Award, Federal Association of German Press Spokespersons

MORE INFORMATION

Personal profile with list of publications	www.zerfass.de
Website of the Chair (DE/EN)	https://tinyurl.com/IFKMWStratKomm
Research project database of the Chair	https://fob.uni-leipzig.de/public/ou/309/forschungsprojekt?lang=en
Publication database of the Chair	https://fob.uni-leipzig.de/public/ou/309/publikation?lang=en
Website of the communication management division at Leipzig University (DE/EN)	www.communicationmanagement.de