

# Lea Gröber

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## EDUCATION

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**CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security - Saarland University** Saarbrücken, Germany  
*Dr.-Ing. Computer Science, summa cum laude* Dec 2019 – Jul 2025

- Advisor: Katharina Krombholz
- Thesis: Challenges for Individual Digital Sovereignty in the Context of Security and Privacy

**Saarland University** Saarbrücken, Germany  
*MS Computer Science, excellent* Oct 2017 – Nov 2019

- Advisor: Katharina Krombholz
- Thesis: Is There a Hacker on the Passenger Seat? Exploring User Perceptions of Risks in Modern Cars

**Saarland University** Saarbrücken, Germany  
*BS Media Informatics, good* Oct 2013 – Oct 2017

- Advisor: Sascha Fahl
- Thesis: The Agony of Choice: An Examination of Developers' Library Decision Behavior

## APPOINTMENTS

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**International Computer Science Institute (ICSI) - UC Berkeley** Oct 2025 – Present  
*Postdoctoral Fellow, supported by full DAAD postdoctoral fellowship* Berkeley, California

- Advisor: Serge Egelman
- Research topic: Human factors in privacy engineering

**Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)** Feb 2025 – Aug 2025  
*Visiting Faculty* Lahore, Pakistan

- Research topic: Accessibility of security technology for marginalized populations

**CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security - Saarland University** Dec 2019 – Mar 2025  
*Ph.D. Candidate in Computer Science* Saarbrücken, Germany

- Research area: Human factors in security and privacy

**Max Planck Institute for Informatics** Mar 2019 – Apr 2025  
*Project Manager of HORIZON 2020 EU Grant* Saarbrücken, Germany

- The project “Research Center on Interactive Media, Smart System and Emerging Technologies” was an initiative to establish a new research centre of excellence in Cyprus (CYENS). I oversaw and contributed to MPI-Inf’s work packages and later served as MPI-Inf’s representative for the project. Key contributions included designing CYENS’s quality-assurance structures and conceptualizing a joint doctoral training program between UCL, MPI-Inf, and CYENS. I reported to Kristina Scherbaum and Hans-Peter Seidel.

**CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security** Jan 2019 – Nov 2019  
*Graduate Research Assistant* Saarbrücken, Germany

- Advisor: Katharina Krombholz

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

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### LUMS Faculty Initiative Fund (FIF)

- Co-PI “Exploring Privacy Compliance Beyond Borders: Developer Challenges and Global Norms in Unregulated Contexts” (total 1.5 million PKR  $\Rightarrow$  ~5,000\$).

### DAAD IFI Postdoctoral Fellowship

- A full DAAD postdoctoral fellowship that was awarded based on my academic achievements, and the merit of my research proposal on human factors in privacy engineering (total ~95,000\$).

### ACM CHI’25 Honorable Mention Award

- Awarded to top 5% of papers.

### Busy Beaver Teaching Award - ST’23: Advanced Lecture on Usable Security and Privacy

- As a TA, I co-designed the structure and materials, organized, and operated the lecture at Saarland University with Katharina Krombholz. The computer science student council recognized the course for outstanding teaching.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (A\* VENUES)

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- S. Hashmi, S. Kashif, **L. Gröber**, and K. Krombholz, M. Javed, 2026. Mapping the Cloud: A Mixed-Methods Study of Cloud Security and Privacy Configuration Challenges. NDSS'26
- S. Hashmi, R. Sarfaraz, **L. Gröber**, M. Javed, K. Krombholz, 2025. Understanding the Security Advice Mechanisms of Low Socioeconomic Pakistanis. ACM CHI'25 - *received an honorable mention award*
- **L. Gröber**, S. Lenau, R. Weil, E. Groben, M. Schilling, K. Krombholz, 2024. Towards Privacy and Security in Private Clouds: A Representative Survey on the Prevalence of Private Hosting and Administrator Characteristics. USENIX Security'24
- **L. Gröber**, W. Arshad, Shanza, A. Goetzen, E. Redmiles, M. Mustafa, K. Krombholz, 2024. "I chose to fight, be brave, and to deal with it": Threat Experiences and Security Practices of Pakistani Content Creators. USENIX Security'24
- S. Roth, **L. Gröber**, K. Krombholz, B. Stock, 2024. Trust Me If You Can – How Usable Is Trusted Types In Practice? USENIX-Security'24
- **L. Gröber**, R. Mrowczynski, N. Vijay, D. A. Muller, A. Dabrowski, K. Krombholz, 2023. To Cloud or not to Cloud: A Qualitative Study on Self-Hosters' Motivation, Operation, and Security Mindset. USENIX Security'23
- **L. Gröber**, M. Fassl, A. Gupta, K. Krombholz, 2021. Investigating Car Drivers' Information Demand after Safety and Security Critical Incidents. ACM CHI'21
- S. Roth, **L. Gröber**, M. Backes, K. Krombholz, B. Stock, 2021. 12 Angry Developers-A Qualitative Study on Developers' Struggles with CSP. ACM CCS'21
- M. Fassl, **L. Gröber**, K. Krombholz. 2021. Exploring User-Centered Security Design for Usable Authentication Ceremonies. ACM CHI'21

## TALKS

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- Collabora Podcast. Is Self-Hosting a Terrible Idea? (to appear in January 2026)
- Nextcloud Conference 2025. Who's Behind the Server? Profiling the Self-Hosting Crowd
- DeepSec Conference 2024. Digital Sovereignty through Self-Hosting? - A Human-Centered View On Security Challenges
- The Nextcloud Podcast. Lea Gröber: Understanding self-hosting and security through Nextcloud
- Nextcloud Conference 2022. (Don't) Do It Yourself? - An Overview of Struggles and Set-Ups of Nextcloud Users
- OWASP 2021. Roadblocks for CSP and Where to Find Them. with S. Roth
- FuzzCon 2021. 12 Angry Developers - A Study on Developers' Struggles with CSP

## TEACHING

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- WT 2024 Core Lecture on Security, Teaching Assistant, Saarland University
- ST 2023 Human Factors in Cybersecurity, Teaching Assistant, LUMS, Pakistan
- ST 2023 Advanced Lecture on Usable Security and Privacy, Teaching Assistant, Saarland University
- ST 2020 Advanced Lecture on Usable Security, Teaching Assistant, Saarland University
- WT 2019 Seminar on Designing Usable Security, Teaching Assistant, Saarland University

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBER

- 2025 USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security)
- 2025 Associate Chair ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (ACM CHI)
- 2025 ACM Asia Conference on Computer and Communications Security (ACM AsiaCCS)
- 2024 International Conference on Availability, Reliability and Security, (ARES)
- 2022 Symposium on Usable Security And Privacy (USEC)
- 2021-2022 Workshop on Security, Privacy, Organizations, and Systems Engineering (SPOSE) at ESORICS

PEER-REVIEWING

- Invited CHI'22
- External Oakland'22, CHI'21, USENIX Security'21, USENIX Security'20, SOUPS'20, NDSS'23, USENIX Security'24

VOLUNTEER WORK

- 2023 Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), PC Meeting Student Helper
- 2023 Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), Mentoring Program Junior Co-Chair
- 2021 Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), Session Student Volunteer
- 2021-2022 Caritasverband für Saarbrücken und Umgebung e.V., Tutor for refugee children
- 2020-2021 CISA Helmholtz Center for Information Security, Elected Ph.D. Representative
- 2016-2017 MentoMINT Saarland University, Mentoring high school student to give her insight into science majors