



Doctoral Scholarship in accordance with the Berlin State Act to Support Early Career Researchers and Artists (Nachwuchsförderungsgesetz, NaFöG)

## INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

### Freie Universität Berlin

Dahlem Research School (DRS-NaFöG)

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### Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

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### Technische Universität Berlin\*

Center for Junior Scholars (CJS)

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\* The office at TU Berlin only offers advice on the application process. The applications and scholarships of TU applicants and scholars are administered by the office at Freie Universität Berlin (see above).

**Please note that if a scholarship application has been rejected, you can reapply a second time. However, you may only re-submit your application once.**

## A. Scholarship options according to NaFöG

### **Full-time scholarship (funding period up to 3 years)**

In accordance with Berlin State Act to Support Early-Career Researchers and Artists (Nachwuchsförderungsgesetz, NaFöG), doctoral candidates preparing for a doctorate at one of Berlin's universities can receive a doctoral scholarship.

### **Scholarship for the completion of a doctorate (funding period up to 1 year)**

According to Section 2.2 NaFöG, doctoral candidates may receive a scholarship for the completion of a doctorate that is already at an advanced stage. We cannot award a completion scholarship if your doctorate has already been financed by public funds or by a private institution that is fully or mostly maintained by public funds.

### **Part-time scholarship**

According to Section 6.2 NaFöG, doctoral candidates who are pregnant or take care of children under the age of 7 may apply for a part-time scholarship. In this case, we can extend funding for your doctoral project for up to twice the duration of a full-time scholarship as the monthly amount of funding is proportionally reduced.

## B. Requirements

Applicants must provide evidence of academic performance well above average (as per Section 2.1 NaFöG) in their master's degree certificate (or equivalent). We expect your doctoral project to make an important contribution to your academic field. We can only award scholarships to doctoral candidates who are based at one of Berlin's universities and who are working with an academic supervisor there.

The applicant's citizenship is irrelevant to the application process. In the case of an international university degree, you need to provide proof of its recognition as a qualification to pursue a doctorate in Berlin. This can be documented by, for example, an equivalence test or a letter of admission to a doctorate by the doctoral office of your department.

For applicants from academic subjects with state examinations requirements (teacher training / education and law for example), the first state examination serves as a university degree. In the subject of human medicine, a university degree is only awarded after passing the second medical examination (after the practical year) or respectively, after the third medical examination (after the practical year), in accordance with the old medical licensing regulations (Approbationsordnung).

We cannot grant an Elsa-Neumann-Scholarship if you have already received funding for your doctoral project from public funds or from publicly funded private institutions. This includes any funding of the doctoral project through employment, e.g., part-time employment as a research assistant. We also consider part-time employment as a research assistant in the context of third-party funded projects as pre-funding if your task was in the field of the doctoral project and was suitable for funding your doctorate.

## C. Application

Please submit your application for a doctoral scholarship on the digital application platform <https://www.drs.fu-berlin.de> by the deadlines set by the Awards Committee (in spring and autumn of each year).

Please note that the digital scholarship application is definitively submitted once you use the "submit" function, after that you can no longer make changes or additions to your application. After successfully submitting the application, you will receive a confirmation email via the application portal.

Applications are evaluated by the Awards Committee, which is composed of university professors from Freie Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Universität der Künste Berlin.

### Required data and documents for the digital scholarship application

1. Please fill out the digital Elsa-Neumann application form at <https://nafoeg.ecampus.fu-berlin.de>. Enter your own details and those of your primary supervisor. Then you will need to print and sign the application, before you finally scan and save it in PDF format.
2. Please upload the following documents in PDF format to the digital application platform in the designated sections:
  - 2.1. Completed and signed application form
  - 2.2. Curriculum vitae, including information on when you started work on your doctorate and, if applicable, a list of your academic publications
  - 2.3. Certificates (including interim certificates or mid-term grade reports, university degree certificates with your overall grade point average for the degree program and individual grades / transcript of records)
  - 2.4. Proof of above average performance in your master's degree or equivalent  
In order to demonstrate your above average academic performance (in accordance with Section 2.1 NaFöG) as a master's degree student, you should provide statistics on the average academic performance of the entire cohort in your subject at your institution. If the average grade is not noted on the diploma, you should request it from the appropriate office at the degree-granting university. Your final grade point average for your university degree must be clearly above the average of your cohort. If the degree-granting university cannot provide these statistics, you should provide documentation of your correspondence with the relevant office at your university, in which the university states that they cannot procure the required information. For degrees awarded by a Berlin university, data on average grades for all subjects is already available to the NaFöG office.
  - 2.5. Official admission to a doctorate at a Berlin university (letter from the relevant department / dean's office / faculty)  
At the time of your application, you should at least have applied for admission. Please upload the admission or official proof of the submitted application to the application portal. We need you to provide the final confirmation of admission before the start of the scholarship.  
In the case of a conditional doctoral admission pending certain criteria: Please send us a

statement from your supervisor that details your plan to fulfill the conditions and integrate the tasks into your work and time schedule.

*A confirmation of supervision by your academic supervisor or an admission into a structured doctoral program is not sufficient, we need you to provide the official admission letter to a doctorate, issued by the examination office of your department / faculty.*

2.6. Certificates and expert reports on previous qualifications / training / degrees, if relevant

2.7. Information / documentation / explanation on language skills / required knowledge, if relevant

2.8. Ethics Committee Decisions or Governmental Approval, if relevant

If you plan to conduct experiments on humans or human material, you have to enclose an official statement from the relevant ethics committee. In the case of animal experiments, you have to comply with the regulations of the German Animal Welfare Act. In the case of animal experiments requiring approval, you need to submit the approval of the relevant government authority. In the case of studies at schools and / or with school children, you must obtain the approval of the relevant government authority and enclose it with the grant application.

If you require the approvals in the first year of your potential funding, they must be part of your application, or you must at least provide proof that you have applied for them. You can then submit the official approval before the end of the applicable selection period. If approvals will not be necessary until the second or third year of funding, you can submit them later in the first year. In this case, they must be part of your proposed work and time schedule and your supervisor should refer to them in their reference letter.

2.9. Research proposal (“Exposé”) for your doctoral project with a detailed work and time schedule  
You must prepare and formulate your research proposal yourself. It should not exceed 12 pages (font size: at least Arial 10 or Times 11) and should begin with a table of contents and follow this structure:

- A project summary written for a general audience that includes a brief depiction of the objectives and research methods (15 lines or fewer)
- Description of the research topic and any preliminary work you have done: Please describe the research problem concisely and focus on its main characteristics, methods, and objectives, as well as your reasons for choosing the research question. This section should include information on the current state of research and an overview of relevant literature and sources. It should be clear that you developed the central questions and objectives of your project with attention to the current state of research. Please comment on any preliminary work you have completed.
- Work and time schedule: You can apply for a full-time scholarship for a period of up to three years. In view of this time frame, we ask you to present your planned work steps in as much detail as possible. The time schedule (starting from the beginning of funding) should be summarized in a table and broken down by months. You can receive the scholarship for a maximum of three years. After the first and second years, you will need to submit progress reports in order to receive the funds for the following year. If applicable, information on the integration of the project into the research program of an institute / department and / or on cooperation with other researchers or institutions, as well as any information on your planned participation in a structured doctoral program.

- If applicable, information on the integration of the project into the research program of an institute / department and / or on cooperation with other researchers or institutions, as well as any information on your planned participation in a structured doctoral program.
- If applicable, travel funds: A brief presentation of any required travel funds. A travel allowance is only possible if approved by the Awards Committee. Travel funds are only distributed as reimbursements (after the trip has been conducted). Approval is also subject to the availability of funds. Please refer to the DAAD top-up scholarships for longer stays abroad (see below for detailed information).
- Bibliography
- A signed declaration stating that you have prepared the research proposal independently, in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice, and that you have cited all the sources used.

### **Supervisor's Statement**

The confidential statement has to be uploaded by your supervisor themselves within two weeks after the application deadline after receiving a link via e-mail. The statement should address the legal requirements for the awarding of a scholarship as well as the quality of the proposed research project:

- Exceptionally high academic performance of the applicant (the grade of the university degree must be well above the average of other students from the same examination period / cohort)
- Importance of the contribution of the doctoral project to the respective academic field and its innovative quality
- Assessment of the applicant's professional qualification and the feasibility of the project according to the work schedule, as well as an assessment of the research problem, the hypothesis, and the proposed methods.
- In the case of a conditional admissions pending certain criteria, missing ethics statements or animal experiment approvals for the second or third year of funding, your supervisor should comment on the projected fulfillment of these conditions in their statement.

*Please note that we will reject applications for formal reasons if the above-mentioned documents are not submitted in full to the application platform by the deadline (digital submission on <https://www.drs.fu-berlin.de/> through the "submit" function). The only exception pertains to the confidential statement, uploaded to the application platform by your supervisor, which may be submitted up to two weeks after the deadline. **If your scholarship application is rejected, you can apply a second time. However, you may only re-submit your application once.***

### **Specific Requirements for Completion Scholarship Applicants**

All required information and documents are the same as for full-time scholarship applications with the exception of the scope of the research proposal ("Exposé"), which should not exceed 25 pages.

You need to elaborate on the current state of your doctoral project, e.g., by providing information on the chapters of the thesis that have already been written. Please attach the completed sections of the dissertation to the application.

The scholarship is granted for a period of up to 1 year. No extensions can be granted. The work and time schedule should indicate that the dissertation will be completed within one year. Please present the

planned work steps in as much detail as possible. The time schedule should be summarized in a table, broken down by months.

## D. Scholarship Amount

The scholarship amounts to 1,350 euros per month plus a lump sum for material costs of 100 euros per month. A family allowance of 102.26 euros per month is added if the scholarship holder has a child to support. For each additional child, the scholarship amount increases by a further 51.13 euros.

The scholarship holders may only pursue additional employment if this does not prevent them from devoting their full attention to the doctorate. In the case of teaching activities, a maximum of 4 hours per week is compatible with the purpose of the scholarship. Other employment responsibilities may take up a maximum of 10 hours per week.

The scholarship holders' income from other sources will be credited against the scholarship if the income, after the deduction of income tax, exceeds an amount of 12,271.01 euros per year. For each child, this amount increases by 1,022.58 euros.

### Travel Funds

We can grant special allowances for trips required for the doctoral project. For travel abroad, the allowance will only be granted for a duration of up to a total of 30 days. Scholarship holders are not categorically entitled to special allowances. Due to the limitation of funds, we cannot guarantee reimbursement for every request; in some cases, only partial reimbursements may also be distributed.

For trips abroad lasting more than 30 days, Elsa Neumann scholars can apply for a top-up grant from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). This top-up grant is dependent upon the approval and duration of the NaFöG scholarship. Further information can be found in the DAAD guidelines printed on the following pages or on the respective DAAD website ("GRAFÖG - Aufstockung auf die Landesgraduiertenförderung"): <https://www2.daad.de/ausland/studieren/stipendium/de/70-stipendien-finden-und-bewerben/?detail=50015185>

*For environmental reasons, priority should be given to rail and bus connections. Travel expenses for air travel can only be granted if there are no reasonable alternatives.*

## E. Increase to the Federal State Graduate Funding: GRAFÖG



### Program objective

Most federal states in Germany have adopted regulations to promote young researchers and artists. They include provisions that support the preparation of doctoral studies abroad. Within this framework, the DAAD can contribute to funding with a top-up scholarship.

### Who can apply?

You can apply for a top-up scholarship if you have completed a degree or program in an academic or artistic field and are receiving a scholarship provided through state-level legislation aimed at promoting early-career researchers and doctoral projects. You must also demonstrate that a stay abroad is necessary in order to carry out your doctoral project. Doctoral candidates with supervisors in two different countries can also apply within this framework.

## What is the funding for?

This DAAD funding is intended for longer stays abroad conducted by scholarship holders under the German federal states' legislation to promote early-career researchers and doctoral projects (Graduierten-, Promotions- und Nachwuchsförderungsgesetze der Länder). The DAAD can award a top-up scholarship for a period of no less than 30 days.

## Duration of support

At least 30 days, up to 12 months. The funding can also be used for several shorter stays in up to three consecutive years, provided that scholarship holder does not spend more than 12 months abroad in total (the maximum scholarship period). After submitting your application, it is possible to apply for additional months of funding up to a maximum of 12 months (in the event that these did not form part of the time plan submitted with the original application). Applications for additional months of funding must be submitted during the scholarship period.

## Scholarship benefits

- Supplement to living costs abroad, i.e., doctoral researchers receive an amount equal to the difference between the standard DAAD doctoral scholarship rate for the country in question and the standard scholarship rate under the German federal states' legislation to promote early-career researchers and doctoral projects.

*Example calculation:*

1,775 euros DAAD doctoral scholarship rate for USA  
- 1,300 euros standard scholarship rate  
= 475 euros monthly rate for DAAD top-up scholarship

- Travel allowance depending on host country (a one-time payment per stay abroad)
- A monthly lump sum of 102 euros for research and conference costs
- Health, accident and personal liability insurance benefits

In addition, further benefits may be granted upon application under certain conditions:

- Subsidy for tuition fees, if applicable, up to a maximum limit: <https://www.daad.de/de/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/stipendien-finanzierung/wichtige-hinweise-zu-daad-stipendien/>, Section D.4.
- Grant for a language course (national language or language of instruction/ working language): [https://static.daad.de/media/daad\\_de/pdfs\\_nicht\\_barrierefrei/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/merkblatt\\_sprachkursangebot.pdf](https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/merkblatt_sprachkursangebot.pdf)
- Family benefits for accompanying spouses or life partners and / or children: <https://www.daad.de/de/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/stipendien-finanzierung/wichtige-hinweise-zu-daad-stipendien/>, Section D.7.
- Grant for travel in the host country that is directly related to the project (please submit a cost estimate with confirmation from the supervising university teacher with the application). Costs for accommodation cannot be reimbursed.
- If you have special needs or a chronic disease, you can receive a subsidy for additional costs you may incur abroad that are not covered by third parties: <https://www.daad.de/en/the-daad/mobility-with-a-disability/>

## Application requirements

The award of this DAAD scholarship depends on the applicant receiving a state scholarship and the duration of that scholarship. Both financial support and the timing of the DAAD scholarship are contingent upon these factors.

## **Application deadline**

Applications can be submitted to the DAAD via the online portal at any time; however, you should allow for a processing period of eight weeks.

## **Application documents**

Please upload the following as individual documents in the DAAD Portal:

- Online application form
- Confirmation from your home university: [https://static.daad.de/media/daad\\_de/pdfs\\_nicht\\_barrierefrei/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/grafoeg\\_bestatigung\\_hochschule.pdf](https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/grafoeg_bestatigung_hochschule.pdf)
- Copy of the complete application for a state scholarship originally submitted to the Awards Committee (including reports, copies of certificates and grades, and curriculum vitae)
- Copy of the valid confirmation of scholarship award from the Elsa Neumann Scholarship Office
- Work and time schedule for the stay abroad
- Confirmation from the host institution stating that you will receive a place to work and supervision / advising; research permit stating whether tuition fees will be charged; and, in the case of research stays involving archives, a confirmation of permission to use the facility is required
- Letter / statement from your supervisor in Germany stating their position on your plans to travel abroad and their assessment of your language skills (if required). There is no special form of format for this letter / statement.

The following documents must be submitted via the portal when applying for an extension:

- Progress report on the funding period to date
- Confirmation from the host university / institute for the extension period
- If applicable, a copy of the notice of extension from the Elsa Neumann Scholarship Office
- If applicable, request to extend scholarship
- Statement from your supervisor about the need to extend your stay abroad
- Updated time and work schedule

## **Data Protection**

Application materials submitted to the DAAD become its property. The DAAD will store scholarship holders' data in accordance with the German Federal Data Protection Act and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to the extent that it is required to process the application or the scholarship. The documents of unsuccessful applicants will be deleted after a reasonable period.

## **Contact and further information**

Contact person at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Sandra Kuhn

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