Earn a Doctorate in Leipzig

A Short Guide for International PhD Candidates
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WHY CHOOSE LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY FOR MY PHD?

In Leipzig you’ll find the very best environment and conditions for your PhD studies. You’ll benefit from:

- **Research-oriented, internationally recognised PhD programmes** that allow the creation of knowledge at the highest level thanks to interdisciplinary research focuses and state-of-the-art equipment.
- **A broad spectrum of research opportunities at a comprehensive university** which offers PhD programmes in every department.

- **An excellent research environment** featuring close to 20 research institutes located in Leipzig, including multiple Max Planck, Fraunhofer and Leibniz Institutes.
- **An affordable city with a lively character.** Leipzig offers a vibrant cultural scene, affordable flats and trendy neighbourhoods. And located right in the middle of the city is the new campus of Leipzig University.
APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Leipzig University offers two different ways to earn a doctorate: either individually or within a structured programme.

a) Which PhD programme is right for me?

If you’re looking for:
+ The support of multiple university professors as well as
+ Teamwork and a practical focus to your PhD studies by working and interacting with other PhD candidates and academic advisors in group research projects.

Then a structured PhD programme is the right choice for you. In a structured programme you’ll earn a doctorate working within a Graduate Centre. You’ll have a set time frame to earn your doctorate, a clearly defined curriculum and individual support from academic advisors.

If you’re looking for:
+ More freedom to structure your time while working on your dissertation,
and
+ More flexibility in altering the focus and topic of your dissertation?

Then an individual PhD programme would be the better fit for you. Here you’ll work closely together with an advising professor (often referred to as your „Doktormutter“ or „Doktorvater“ in German) to write your dissertation. You earn your PhD individually at a faculty of the university and your dissertation is usually based on your own chosen topic.

Leipzig University also offers a binational doctorate using the co-tutelle programme. For additional information about binational doctorates, please consult the following website: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/phd/binational-doctoral-degrees.html

Information regarding the application and admission process: www.uni-leipzig.de/international/phd
b) 5 steps to a PhD

Step 1: Prepare for your PhD
First, you’ll need to look at the research profile of Leipzig University (Forschungsprofil) and determine if your research topic falls under one of the research areas therein. Before applying to the university you’ll also need to decide how you want to do your PhD: Are you more interested in working within a structured PhD programme or independently on your own?

If you decide on a structured PhD programme, head over to the website of the Research Academy Leipzig to learn about the application requirements and the application process. Afterwards, move on to step 2.

If you are interested in an individual PhD programme, you’ll first need to find an advising professor who will provide you with a dissertation topic or accept your own suggested topic.

In both cases, however, you will first need a written confirmation from your future advising professor before you can apply for admission through the International Centre.

If you decide on a structured PhD programme, please also note the entrance requirements and the deadlines at the Research Academy Leipzig.

Step 2: Apply for admission at the International Centre
Your application must include a comprehensive overview of all previous education from secondary school to the highest completed level.

Please note, all school reports must be submitted as certified copies in the original language and as certified translations in German or in English. School reports in German or English do not need to be translated.

The following documents are necessary to complete the application:
- The admissions application (Antrag auf Zulassung) with an attached passport photo
- The written advisor agreement from your advising professor (Betreuererklärung).
- Your curriculum vitae
- A certified copy of your leaving certificate from secondary school
- A certified copy of the results of your university entrance exam, if applicable
- Certified copies of any previously completed university degrees, e.g. Bachelor’s / Master’s Degree, Diplom
- A certified copy of your university transcripts
- A certified copy of proof of German language ability (level of DHS-2) if your dissertation is written in German
• Proof of fluent English language ability if dissertation is written in English. This does not have to be a certified copy and can be, for example, an informal written verification from your advising professor
• Confirmation of acceptance onto the faculty’s doctoral candidate list (Doktorandenliste; may be submitted later)

Step 3: The International Centre checks your application
The International Centre will check the formal qualifications of your application, i.e. how and if your previous university degrees are recognised in Germany.
If you completely fulfil the formal requirements you’ll receive a letter of admission (Zulassungsbescheid). You will most likely need this for your visa application.
If your previous university degrees are not equivalent to the German prerequisites for study, the International Centre can provide a letter of acceptance with conditions.
The formal examination of all academic qualifications is based on the provisions of the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB). The ZAB is a part of the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. It is the central office in Germany for questions regarding the evaluation of educational qualifications earned abroad.
**Step 4: Enrol at Leipzig University**

If you’ve received your letter of admission from the International Centre, you can go to Betina Sedlaczek at any time during office hours to enrol at Leipzig University.

In order to enrol at the Leipzig University and begin registration in local government offices (e.g., town hall or aliens’ registration office) you will need to have the following items available and on hand:

- The original copy of the letter of admission to Leipzig University (Zulassungsbescheid).
- A valid passport with a valid visa for study purposes, if necessary.
- Spare, unused passport photos.
- Recent proof of a health insurance recognized in Germany (travel health insurance is not sufficient)

Additionally, you’ll need to have enough money available for important initial costs that usually require a payment, e.g. registration costs, a security deposit.

**Contact**

International Centre
Betina Sedlaczek
Goethestraße 6, 04109 Leipzig
Phone: +49 341 97 32027
Fax: +49 341 97 32049
E-mail: betina.sedlaczek@zv.uni-leipzig.de

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office hours</th>
<th>during the lecture period</th>
<th>outside of the lecture period</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1:00 - 5:00 pm</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>1:00 - 3:00 pm</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<td>9:00 am - noon</td>
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**Step 5: Register as a PhD candidate in your faculty**

Together with your advising professor you’ll need to submit an application for admission to your faculty’s doctoral candidate list (Antrag auf Aufnahme in die Doktorandenliste). The application should be submitted as soon as possible after enrolment at the University. Ideally you’ll already have written confirmation of acceptance to the doctoral candidate list when you first apply to the University or enrol.
International Doctoral Programmes
 Created in 2006, the Research Academy Leipzig bundles efforts to foster the capacity of doctoral students for cutting-edge research at the frontiers of established fields of knowledge and for interdisciplinary exchange. Indeed, the main strategic aim of the Research Academy is to recruit promising young researchers in Germany and provide them with an excellent academic environment.

The Research Academy follows two important goals: First, it aims to be a mechanism for the entire university to use towards the organisation and development of internationally-oriented, structured PhD programmes. Secondly, it seeks to break new academic ground untouched by traditional models of structured PhD programmes. The Research Academy Leipzig strives to create a forum in which internationally recognized researchers and highly qualified PhD candidates can come together and develop a long term learning community and the necessary institutional framework for its realisation. In this respect, the Research Academy Leipzig seizes upon the classic concept of an academy.

The Research Academy Leipzig is structured into three Graduate Centres. These sections currently offer 24 PhD programmes, which are organised in classes. They include, among others, international PhD programmes, the International Max Planck Research Schools and national as well as international research training groups (Graduiertenkollegs) in Germany. In addition to that, the Leibniz-Programme was implemented by the Research Academy Leipzig in October 2012 and consists of the Leibniz-Professorship and the Leibniz-Visiting Scientists Programme. It aims to create a learning community of internationally renowned senior researchers and highly motivated and qualified graduate students to increase interdisciplinary research.

PhD students from more than 60 countries bring a wealth of varied experience to the Research Academy. Between 30 and 40 per cent of all students enrolled at the Academy draw profit from a co-supervision by professors from universities abroad. Postgraduates at the Research Academy Leipzig benefit both from excellent research facilities, including rich libraries and best equipped laboratories, and from an extraordinarily diverse student population.

Website of the Research Academy Leipzig: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/ral
Graduate Centre for Mathematics/Computer Science and Natural Sciences
- Leipzig School of Natural Sciences: BuildMoNa - Building with Molecules and Nano-objects
- International Max Planck Research School: Mathematics in the Sciences
- International Research Group: Diffusion in Porous Materials
- Research Group: Analysis, Geometry and their connection to the Natural Sciences
- German-French Doctoral College: Statistical Physics of Complex Systems
- International Postgraduate Programme: Research at the Frontiers of Chemistry
- Research Training Group “Quantitative Logics and Automata”
- Leipzig Graduate School on Clouds, Aerosols and Radiation

Graduate Centre for Life Sciences
- Research Group 1097: InterNeuro - Interdisciplinary Approaches in Cellular Neuroscience
- Research Group 1182: The Function of Attention in Cognition
- International Max Planck Research School: Human Origins
- International Max Planck Research School: NeuroCom
- Leipzig University’s combined MD/PhD programme
- Integrated Research Training Group: Protein Science
- Integrated Research Training Group: Matrix Engineering
- Integrated Research Training Group: Obesity Mechanisms
- Helmholtz Research School for Ecosystem Services under Changing Land-use and Climate ESCALATE
- Young Biodiversity Research Training Group yDiv (in the course of formation)
- Integrated Research Training Group: Transnationalisation and Regionalisation from the 18th Century to the Present
- Cultural exchange: Classical studies, historical and ethnological perspectives
- International Doctorate Programme: German as a foreign language/Transcultural German Studies
- Research Group 1553: Religious Nonconformism and Cultural Dynamics
- Central-German Doctoral Program Economics
- Secularisations: Configurations and Developmental Paths
- RegAWa: Regionale Anpassung an globalen Wandel (in the course of formation)
INTERNATIONAL PHD CANDIDATE INITIATIVE

In 2005, the International PhD Candidate Initiative, or “Internationale Doktorandeninitiative” as it’s called in German, was created at Leipzig University as a way to bring together all international PhD candidates. It is a programme specially tailored to suit their needs. Its goals include promoting an exchange of experience and insight among international PhD candidates, strengthening their social support networks and supporting their academic development.

The initiative frequently organises cultural, social and academic events for international PhD candidates of Leipzig University and is a dependable source of help and advice throughout their PhD studies.

Academic and social exchanges are encouraged through:
• Open discussions unrestrained by national or academic barriers
• An emphasis on intercultural learning
• Building contact networks
• Communication
• The deconstruction of language barriers
• Individual help and support

Common activities organised by the initiative:
• Tours of Leipzig
• Excursions
• Workshops
• Evening events featuring specific cultures, bicycle tours around the city, and more.

Contact
Website: www.uni-leipzig.de/initiative/index-en.html
E-mail: dokinfo@rz.uni-leipzig.de
Office:
Internationale DOKTORANDENinitiative
Tarostraße 14, 04103 Leipzig, Germany

Office hours:
Every Thursday from 19:00 to 20:30.
The Council of PhD candidates or “PromovierendenRat” (ProRat) as it’s called in German, represents PhD students at Leipzig University and facilitates information exchanges and networking to help make a candidate’s doctoral work easier from start to finish.

**Representing Students**
In its role as an advisory committee of the University, the ProRat represents all PhD candidates and gives their needs and issues a voice.

**Networking**
The ProRat is a platform for the exchange of individual experiences and interdisciplinary knowledge. Through regularly organised meetings, PhD candidates have the chance to make new contacts with colleagues. Work groups are responsible for implementing ProRat projects, and anyone who wants to help can join.

**Opportunities for Further Education**
In addition to workshops, the ProRat also organises PhD candidate lectures based on their own on-going research. The topics are interdisciplinary in nature and are geared towards all PhD candidates at Leipzig University. Once held, lectures are then published in the scientific journal “arbeitstitel. forum für leipziger promovierende”.

**Advising Students**
The Handbook for PhD Candidates, published by the ProRat, includes important information and tips for successful doctoral studies from start to finish. You can download the handbook at the following link (in German): www.prorat.uni-leipzig.de
WEBLINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Leipzig University

General information: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/study/international-study/general-information.html

PhD Studies at Leipzig University: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/international-mobility/international-phd-candidates.html

Research Academy Leipzig - International PhD programmes: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/ral


Graduate Centre Life Sciences: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/ral/graduate-centre-life-sciences.html

Graduate Centre Social Sciences and Humanities: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/ral/graduate-centre-humanities-and-social-sciences.html

Collaborative research projects: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/collaborative-research-projects-and-centres.html

Kompetenzschule ELSYS (English: School of Expertise; a school with the goal of helping PhD candidates with career planning): www.kompetenzschule.uni-leipzig.de/?lang=en


DAAD application forms for admission: www.daad.de/deutschland/stipendium/hinweise/en/8527-application-forms-downloads/
Organisational Help

Information about visas and entry regulations: www.uni-leipzig.de/en/international/visa

Information about health insurance: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/study/international-study/general-information/preparing/health-insurance.html

Living in Leipzig: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/study/international-study/general-information/preparing/living-in-leipzig.html

Learning German in Leipzig: www.uni-leipzig.de/en/learninggerman

Website of the German Studentenwerk (organisation which assists international students): www.internationale-studierende.de/en

Financial Aid

General funding opportunities: www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/en/research/ral/information-about-research-academy-leipzig/funding-opportunities.html


Financial aid database of EURAXESS: www.euraxess.de/portal/funding_database_in.html

Scholarship database of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (in German): www.stipendienlotse.de

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Studying and doing research in Germany: www.daad.de/en

General information about doctorates in Germany: www.daad.de/deutschland/promotion/en/

Individual PhD: www.daad.de/deutschland/promotion/doktoranden/en/14754-individual-doctoral-studies/

Structured PhD: www.daad.de/deutschland/promotion/doktoranden/en/14755-structured-phd-programmes/
Further Weblinks

List of research training groups (Graduiertenkollegs) funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG): [www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/coordinated_programmes/research_training_groups/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/coordinated_programmes/research_training_groups/index.html)

List of collaborative research centres (Sonderforschungsbereiche) funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG): [www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/coordinated_programmes/collaborative_research_centres/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/coordinated_programmes/collaborative_research_centres/index.html)

The EU Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations (Kooperationsstelle EU der Wissenschaftsorganisationen) (KoWi): [www.kowi.de/en](http://www.kowi.de/en)

Network for PhD students (Doktorandenforum) – privately run, non-commercial website: [www.doktorandenforum.de/english.htm](http://www.doktorandenforum.de/english.htm)

THESIS – Interdisciplinary Network for PhD students (in German): [www.thesis.de](http://www.thesis.de)
Portal for research & teaching run by the weekly DIE ZEIT (in German): www.academics.de

Information and advice for a scientific career (run on behalf of the rector of the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH) Aachen) (in German): www.kisswin.de


Information site of the German Rectors’ Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz): www.hochschulkompass.de/en

Research Explorer of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Research Foundation (DFG): www.daad.de/research-explorer or www.research-explorer.dfg.de/research_explorer.en.html

Eurodoc – European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers: www.eurodoc.net

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