BIGSSS-departs PhD Program – Application Materials

General Information on Application - Please read carefully

Please submit your application for a BIGSSS-departs Fellowship electronically via our online admissions system. For information concerning the deadline please take a look at our admissions page.

Please note that the program commences on September 1, 2017. The application deadline for the BIGSSS-departs PhD Program is January 31, 2017 in order to be considered for the program starting in September 2017. All deadlines refer to the date of receipt of the application, not the mailing date.

You will find a list of what your application should include below.

Our online admissions system will only accept documents in pdf-format. You can download a free version of PDFCreator.

If you have any questions regarding the admissions process, please consult our Frequently Asked Questions Section below after carefully reading the website or contact our Admissions Officer at admissions-officer@bigsss-bremen.de.

Application Materials for BIGSSS-departs PhD Fellowships

Candidates are asked to submit the following application materials to the Admissions Officer:

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM

- Please note that there is no official "application form". Instead, applicants are requested to submit the documents described below and provide us with personal information, contact data and information on their professional background via our online admissions system.

2. CURRICULUM VITAE

- Your CV should include information on your educational and work history, publications, language abilities and extracurricular interests (max. 2 double-spaced pages, incl. a statement on transferable skills).

3. PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

- We do not expect you to have an ultimate version of your research proposal upon application. Nonetheless, we ask for a well-developed version of your preliminary dissertation proposal. It should be written in English, encompass between 5 and 10 double-spaced pages and include the following elements:

(1) Summary

(2) State of research (highlighting theoretical and empirical debates on your topic and deficits in the literature that your project would address)

(3) Your research experience/competence in the field

(4) Objectives, methods and work plan (be very specific about the methods used and the stages of the work plan)

(5) Bibliography

- Please note: By submitting your application, you consent to have your dissertation proposal checked for plagiarism.

4. ONE-PAGE PROPOSAL ABSTRACT

- Please provide a one-page (double-spaced) abstract of your dissertation proposal.

5. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- Your statement of purpose (max. 2 double-spaced pages) should provide a clear picture of your academic and professional interests, background, and career plans. It should also describe how your interests fit in with the BIGSSS-departs PhD Program.

- You must indicate one or two potential supervisors for your proposal. If you do not name one or two potential supervisors, your application will not be considered. Please be sure to check the BIGSSS homepage and those of our faculty for their research interests. By having a close fit to the research interests of BIGSSS faculty, we can assure the best possible supervision. Please note that you should not contact the potential supervisors directly. Instead, it is sufficient that you indicate their names in your Statement of Purpose and enlist them in our online admissions system. We will review your choice(s) during the application process.

- Should you have specific questions in regards to your choice we would advise to forward your question to our Admissions Officer who will then forward your inquiry within BIGSSS in order to ensure that you get the feedback you need.

6. STATEMENT OF SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE WITH METHODS OF EMPIRICAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

- Please provide information on your knowledge of research methods (including methods courses taken). Applicants from disciplines with little or no standard

methods training should provide other pertinent information on relevant research skills. Statements must have a length of at least 1/2 a double-spaced page.

7. MA/BA/DIPLOM/MAGISTER CERTIFICATES

- Please provide a pdf-document of each degree certificate earned, e.g. Bachelor and Master (max. 4 documents). If a certificate is not issued in English or German, provide a German or English translation. If you are shortlisted we will ask you to bring a notarized (or officially certified) photocopy of your original certificates and of the English or German translation.

8. UNIVERSITY GRADE TRANSCRIPTS

- Please provide pdf-documents (max. 4 documents) of your official grade transcripts. If work is in progress, you should submit a supplementary transcript at the end of the term. If a transcript is not issued in English or German, provide a German or English translation.

- If you are shortlisted we will ask you to bring a notarized (or officially certified) photocopy of your original transcripts and of the English or German translation.

9. CERTIFICATION OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

- Proof of high C1-level English language skills or the equivalent. Please upload a Certification of English proficiency in our online admissions system. For TOEFL scores, upload a copy of your personal score report – do not use the institutional code. Equivalent IELTS and CAE scores are also accepted. All scores must be officially reported and valid. (Please note that TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for 2 years only.)

    o **Scores:**
      TOEFL: paper-based 600, computer-based 250, internet-based 100
      IELTS: Band 7.5
      Cambridge Certificate: pass CAE

- Exempt from the English proficiency requirement are applicants who are native speakers of English or who have received either their Hochschul-zugangsberechtigung (e.g. passed their A-levels) or earned a higher-educational degree at an institution where the language of instruction is English.

- No previous knowledge of German is required.

10. ETHICS FORM

- Please complete the Ethics form on the research project you are applying with for the BIGSSS-departs PhD Program.

- Please fill in the form and upload it into the BIGSSS-departs admission system. The form can be downloaded from our [website](#).

- You can also download guidelines on how to complete the Ethics form from our [website.](#)

11. EU MOBILITY RULE (EUMR) AND EARLY-STAGE RESEARCHERS (ESR) CONFIRMATION FORM

- All BIGSSS-departs applicants must confirm that their application complies with the conditions of the EU Mobility Rule (EUMR) and the Early-Stage Researchers (ESR) regulations:

  o **EU Mobility Rule**: All accepted researchers must move to Bremen for the BIGSSS-departs PhD Program. Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Germany for more than 12 months during the 3 years prior to the date of their recruitment. Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account. All nationalities are welcome to apply.

  o **Early-Stage Researchers requirement**: All applicants shall, at the date of their recruitment, be in the first four years (full-time equivalent research experience) of their research careers and not yet have been awarded a doctoral degree.

- Please fill in the form and upload it into the BIGSSS-departs admission system. The form can be downloaded from our [website](#).

12. TWO RECENT LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Request these from persons qualified to evaluate your academic and professional qualifications, familiar with your academic achievement and in a position to assess your potential for success in BIGSSS. At least one of these letters must be from a professor who has instructed you.

- The referees should submit the letter electronically, via our online admissions system.

- Each applicant is asked to provide contact information for their referees in their online application to BIGSSS, and each referee will be sent an email with instructions on how to upload their letters into the system.

- If you are shortlisted we may ask you to bring the letters of recommendation in hard copy. The referee should then submit the letter either in hard copy directly to BIGSSS, or in a sealed envelope to the applicant.

13. GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION (GRE) (optional)

- Applicants may include a GRE score report in their application to support the selection process, although this is not required.

Information on Electronic Applications

- Only include documents in pdf-format. You can download a free version of PDFCreator.

- Please submit these documents electronically:

    (1) Personal information form (to be completed in the online admissions system)

    (2) one pdf with your CV,

    (3) one pdf with your Preliminary Dissertation Proposal,

    (4) one pdf with your Proposal Abstract,

    (5) one pdf with your Statement of Purpose,

    (6) one pdf containing your Statement of Skills,

    (7) pdf scans of your Degree Certificates,

    (8) pdf scans of your Grade Transcripts,

    (9) one pdf with your English Language Test Score (if applicable),

    (10) the Ethics Form,

    (11) the EU Mobility Rule (EUMR) and Early-Stage Researchers (ESR) Confirmation Form,

    (12) Two Recent Letters of Recommendation (to be submitted by referees via the online admissions system),

    (13) and (not mandatory!) your Grade Record Examination.

- Each pdf must be below 3 MB.

- In the first application stage, we require our applicants to upload scans of the original documents supporting their application to BIGSSS, however, please bear in mind that if you are shortlisted, we will ask you to provide the originals of the following documents:

  - Degree Certificates (a notarized, or officially certified, photocopy of each degree certificate earned)

  - University Grade Transcripts (a notarized, or officially certified, photocopy of each grade transcript earned)

  - a hard copy of your letters of recommendation

- Filenames: Replace each FILENAME with your surname + reasonable abbreviation for the file content, using no more than the first 10 letters. In filenames,

  - only use the letters a-z, figures 1-0, hyphen - , dot .

  - do not use space characters

  - do not use special characters such as ä, ü, ß, ~ , accents of any kind, etc.