Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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Doctorate

International Max Planck Research School on Astrophysics (IMPRS)

Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics • München





Overview

Degree	PhD – Dr rer nat
Doctoral degree or degree awarded by	LMU Munich or Technical University of Munich
Course location	München
In cooperation with	LMU Munich, Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics (MPA), European Southern Observatory (ESO), University Observatory Munich (USM)
Teaching language	• English
Languages	The IMPRS programme is designed for international students. Therefore, all the teaching and communication is in English. Nevertheless, we provide the possibility and funds for IMPRS students to attend German classes.
Full-time / part-time	• full-time
Programme duration	6 semesters
Beginning	Winter semester
Additional information on beginning, duration and mode of study	The IMPRS programme always starts on 1 September each year. Earlier or later starts are possible in consultation with the PhD supervisor. At the beginning of September, there is an IMPRS welcome workshop during which the students are introduced to the course programme and the formalities (e.g. enrolment processes at the university).
Application deadline	Application deadline is 1 November every year. Applications must be submitted via our online application portal. It will be accessible from around mid-August to 1 November. If you would like to receive a notification as soon as the application portal has been activated, please send a short e-mail to office@imprs-astro.mpg.de.

Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Combined Master's degree / PhD programme	Yes
Joint degree / double degree programme	No
Description/content	The International Max Planck Research School on Astrophysics is a graduate school that offers a PhD programme in Physics, Astrophysics, and Astrochemistry. Open for students from all countries worldwide, the school intends to attract highly-qualified and motivated young scientists aiming for a graduate degree in Physics and Astronomy. Outstanding research facilities and training programmes as well as grants for all PhD students provide a unique environment for participants. The IMPRS on Astrophysics is a joint programme of: • the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics (MPE) • the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics (MPA) • the University Observatory Munich (USM) • the European Southern Observatory (ESO) Together, we form one of the largest centres of astrophysical research in the world, covering every subject from planets, stars, galaxies and cosmology to the development of scientific instruments and detectors. Access to the world's largest telescopes and a stimulating scientific environment provide our students with the ideal conditions for their PhD research.

Course Details

Course organisation	During the course of the PhD, all students have to take part in an additional teaching programme, consisting of an Introductory Course and a set of up to seven Advanced Courses. The IMPRS Introductory Course is combined with the Essentials of Advanced Astrophysics MSc programme at LMU Munich. It is mandatory for all IMPRS students to pass a written exam at the end of the Introductory Course. The exam mostly provides an evaluation of the student's general astronomy background and should indicate where further learning is desirable. The IMPRS Advanced Courses consist of seven one-week morning lectures on various topics of modern astrophysics taught throughout the year. They are given by professors and lecturers from all member institutions (MPE, USM, MPA, ESO). In addition to the courses taught at and relevant for the IMPRS, most lecturers teach other courses at the LMU Munich or Technical University of Munich in the framework of the university’s regular course programme. IMPRS students have access to these courses as well. Biannually, an IMPRS student symposium is held, which gives students the opportunity to present their research work to their fellow students. Optional transferable skills courses and career coachings round of the course programme. At the IMPRS, PhD projects are carried out under the supervision of an IMPRS professor from one of the member institutes or from a research group associated with the IMPRS. A thesis committee will monitor the student's progress regularly. Also, a mentor programme is implemented.
International elements	• International guest lecturers • Language training provided • International comparisons and thematic reference to the international context

	• Projects with partners in Germany and abroad
Special promotion / funding of the programme	• IMPRS
Course-specific, integrated German language courses	No
Course-specific, integrated English language courses	No

Costs / Funding

Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Semester contribution	During their PhD studies, IMPRS students have the option to be enrolled at the local university for up to six semesters. The enrolment fee is about 150 EUR per semester. This includes a basic transport ticket for the public transport system. The ticket is valid for the whole semester.
Funding opportunities within the university	Yes
Description of the above-mentioned funding opportunities within the university	Students at the IMPRS in Garching work on their PhD theses for three to four years. During their studies, they get a work contract with a gross salary of 28,000 - 35,000 EUR, depending on the year of studies, their family status and tax class.

Requirements / Registration

Academic admission requirements	Academic admission requirements include an MSc in Physics or Astrophysics or an equivalent university degree including a Master's thesis that corresponds to a research project of at least 60 ECTS points. Outstanding students with an excellent Bachelor’s degree (i.e., a Bachelor’s degree with “very good” results or proven placement among the top 10% in their class) can be granted direct admission to doctoral studies by the LMU Munich. Before starting the doctoral project, however, one must first acquire 60 ECTS points from one of the Master’s programmes of the Faculty of Physics for further qualification. This requires usually five weekly lectures (two hours each week, plus tutorials) in the winter AND summer semesters. The decision on whether students with an excellent Bachelor’s degree can be granted direct admission is with the LMU exclusively and is not a decision taken by the IMPRS. For more information on this, please check the website of the LMU Munich at https://www.physik.lmu.de/en/research/doctoral-study-and-habilitation/doctoral-study/index.html or contact the IMPRS office.
Language requirements	Candidates whose native language is neither English nor German should provide a certificate documenting proficiency in English, for example, TOEFL (of at least 75 points iTB / 550 PBT) or IELTS (of at least a band score of 6) or equivalent.

Application deadline	Application deadline is 1 November every year. Applications must be submitted via our online application portal. It will be accessible from around mid-August to 1 November. If you would like to receive a notification as soon as the application portal has been activated, please send a short e-mail to office@imprs-astro.mpg.de.
Submit application to	We only accept online applications! Please check the following website and the subsequent links: https://www.imprs-astro.mpg.de

Services

Accommodation	We support all students in finding suitable accommodation in the Munich/Garching area.
Structured research and supervision	Yes
Research training / discussion	Yes
Career advisory service	IMPRS students get broad support from different facilities within the institutes (e.g., there are career seminars and recruitment days as well as a lot of possibilities for networking with high-ranking scientists from all over the world). To support our PhD students with their professional growth and personal development, we offer optional transferable skills courses and career coaching in order to prepare the students for the challenges of starting a professional career on the global market, whether in academia or industry.
Support for international students and doctoral candidates	• Welcome event • Buddy programme • Tutors • Specialist counselling • Visa matters
General services and support for international students and doctoral candidates	Our international students are supported by our staff in all steps of pre- / on- and off-boarding to make the transitions as smooth as possible.

Our Partners

Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics

Our PhD students do their research in one of our participating institutes. These institutes include the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics (MPE), the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics, the Observatory of the LMU Munich (USM), and the European Southern Observatory (ESO). Together, these institutes form one of the largest centres for astrophysical research in the world.

Additionally, our PhD students are enrolled either at the LMU or at the Technical University of Munich (TUM). The relevant university depends on the supervisor's affiliation. Both universities are top listed both in national and international rankings.

Location

Munich is one of Germany's most popular destinations. Visitors from all over the world are attracted to Munich not only because of the Oktoberfest but also because of sites like the historic centre, the space age design of the Olympic stadium, the Allianz Arena, and the attractive surroundings of the Alps as well as a wide range of world-class museums, galleries, and cinemas. In addition, Munich has been the safest German city with over a million inhabitants for decades.

Our students also enjoy the green surroundings of the research institutes: parks, lakes, the banks of the Isar river and several beer gardens invite you to recharge your batteries for your research work.

More information about living and studying in Munich can be found on Munich's official website:
http://www.muenchen.de/int/en/living/studying-in-munich.html.

Contact

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IMPRS on Astrophysics

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Last update 23.04.2024 10:45:41

International Programmes in Germany - Database

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Editor
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German Academic Exchange Service
Section K23 – Information on Studying in Germany
Kennedyallee 50
D-53175 Bonn
www.daad.de

GATE-Germany
Consortium for International Higher Education Marketing
www.gate-germany.de

The publication is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and by contributions of the participating German institutions of higher education.