



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



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# Doctorate



## Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS)

Bielefeld University • Bielefeld

### Overview

Degree	Dr phil in History or Sociology
Teaching language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• German</li><li>• English</li></ul>
Languages	Up to 30% of the courses are held in English, approximately 70% are taught in German.
Programme duration	9 semesters or more
Beginning	Winter and summer semester
Application deadline	15 June for the winter semester 15 January for the summer semester
Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Combined Master's degree / PhD programme	No
Joint degree / double degree programme	No
Description/content	<p>The Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) offers doctoral researchers an innovative research environment that fosters creativity through interdisciplinary exchange. The main characteristic of the graduate school is the integration of research from a variety of fields (sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and gender studies) into a joint organisational framework and a joint curriculum.</p> <p>Because innovative science emerges from and thrives in a creative atmosphere, the BGHS promotes small working groups with individualised guidance and supports the formation of a diverse and lively community among its doctoral researchers. Young researchers are also supported in their efforts to combine family life and an academic career.</p> <p><b>Diverse disciplines under one roof</b></p> <p>Under the umbrella of the graduate school, international doctoral programmes in sociology and history are offered. However, we accept not only historians and sociologists, but explicitly welcome doctoral researchers from other fields whose research contains a promising sociological and/or historical focus. The graduate school is founded on the bottom-up principle and places great value on the independent initiative of its doctoral researchers.</p> <p><b>Career development and employment prospects</b></p> <p>One of the explicit aims at the BGHS is to prepare our doctoral researchers for the academic or non-</p>

academic labour market in Germany and abroad. The graduate school collaborates with foreign researchers, promotes the participation of our doctoral researchers in international conferences, and helps build key skills so that our doctoral researchers can position themselves well in the international scientific community. As preparation for work in a non-academic context, the graduate school provides career service and programmes to enhance key qualifications.

#### Interdisciplinarity and internationality

The graduate school promotes intellectual and interdisciplinary exchange across national borders.

## Course Details

### Course organisation

Doctoral researchers are encouraged to put together their own course of study geared towards their individual interests and needs.

Courses in the doctoral programme are taught in both German and English. Seminars, research classes and colloquia are taught by members of the Departments of History, Sociology, Political Science and Social Anthropology. This should aid doctoral researchers in reflecting on the historical conditionality and the constructivist character of theories and the interdependence of theoretical and practical research. Research classes give doctoral researchers the opportunity to work on problems of their research projects in cooperation with other doctoral researchers as well as with supervisors over an extended period of time. The research classes are based upon the cooperative work of the group and the principle of peer learning. In addition, both faculties offer numerous colloquia that cover key areas of research in their respective disciplines. The research training programme is topped off by a variety of courses aimed at improving key skills and providing career guidance.

Alongside thematic seminars and workshops, the graduate school also offers study groups as an exceptional form of studying. Study groups are organised and led by doctoral researchers. As the groups are small, they promote intensive dialogue, close working relationships and the exchange of expertise.

As members of the BGHS, all doctoral researchers are required to provide their supervisors and the graduate school with an annual progress report on their doctoral project. The introduction of reporting duties helps all parties to engage in critical reflection on the doctoral researchers' progress. This strengthens the supervisory relationship and supports goal-oriented study. At the same time, problems that might hinder the successful completion of the doctoral programme can be recognised early on and rectified.

### International elements

- Language training provided
- International guest lecturers
- Specialist literature in other languages
- Courses are led with foreign partners
- International comparisons and thematic reference to the international context

### Diverse intercultural background of students

BGHS doctoral researchers come from all over the world.

### Course-specific, integrated German language courses

Yes

### Course-specific, integrated English language courses

No

## Costs / Funding

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**Tuition fees per semester in EUR**      None

**Semester contribution**      Since Bielefeld University does not charge tuition fees, every student only has to pay a social fee. The [social fee](#) includes the contribution to the [social ticket](#) for free public transport in the city and area of Bielefeld and on regional trains and buses in North-Rhine Westphalia for the whole semester.

The current semester contribution is approximately 300 EUR.

**Costs of living**

Costs for studying in Germany are relatively high due to the living expenses.

- Rent in a room in student halls of residence or a private student hall, in a room or flat comes to approx. 280 EUR per month.
- The expected costs for student health insurance and other medical fees are about 80 EUR per month.
- Depending on your lifestyle, you might spend about 150 EUR on food each month.
- Altogether, monthly costs for food, clothes, leisure activities, social fees, travel expenses, telephone bills, and the other mentioned expenses add up to approx. 850 EUR.

There are several ways of cutting expenses in Bielefeld. For example, it is possible to rent a room in a student residence for about 230 EUR, and a meal at the student canteen (Mensa) costs only about 2.60 EUR.

**Funding opportunities within the university**      No

## Requirements / Registration

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**Academic admission requirements**

To join the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology, you must be accepted into the doctoral programme either in history or in sociology. Decisions on admission are made in the doctoral degree committees of the respective faculties. Applications are to be made online through the BGHS website.

Applicants should have an above-average degree in social sciences or the humanities, preferably in history, sociology, anthropology, or political science. Applications from graduates of other related fields are welcome.

**Language requirements**

The BGHS doctoral programme consists of courses in both German and English. Applicants to the graduate school must therefore have a good command of either German or English. Doctoral researchers with no knowledge of German are encouraged to learn the language as it is the primary means of communication at Bielefeld University, and fluency in German makes daily life easier.

**Application deadline**

15 June for the winter semester  
15 January for the summer semester

**Submit application to**

Apply via the [online portal](#).

For further information about the application to the Master's programme, please use the following link: [www.uni-bielefeld.de/bewerbung](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/bewerbung).

# Services

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## Possibility of finding part-time employment

Basically, with your residence permit (stamp in your passport), you will receive a work permit for 120 work days per year. This allows you to work 120 full days (eight hours per day) or 240 half days (up to four hours per day). This condition must be noted expressly in the passport by the authorities.

## Accommodation

Please try to secure accommodation in Bielefeld as early as possible. In Bielefeld, a broad range of accommodation options can be found at affordable prices. Students residences are run by the public "Studierendenwerk" or private organisations, and shared flats are very common.

Offers of accommodation can be found online by following the links below:

- [Studierendenwerk Bielefeld](#) (dormitories)
- [WG-gesucht.de](#) (private shared accommodation)

The International Office supports students who are searching for accommodation.

## Structured research and supervision

Yes

## Research training / discussion

Yes

## Career advisory service

Career planning is a step-by-step development and clarification process that requires individual strategies. Based on a strengths- and resource-oriented approach, we support you in developing your own career prospects.

Depending on your needs, our Career Service at Bielefeld University will accompany you throughout the entire process or in individual steps.

<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/career-service>

## Support for international students and doctoral candidates

- Welcome event
- Buddy programme
- Accompanying programme
- Cultural and linguistic preparation
- Visa matters
- Help with finding accommodation
- Support with registration procedures
- Specialist counselling

## General services and support for international students and doctoral candidates

At PunktUm, our German Learning Centre, we offer a comprehensive range of academic support programmes that are designed to meet the needs of international members of the Bielefeld University. These include the Academic Mentoring Programme for Master's students, the Peer Mentoring Programme for Bachelor's students, and semester-long workshops designed to help all students and researchers with academic writing. We also offer individual consultations on academic writing in German as a Foreign Language (DaF) or German as a Second Language (DaZ).

The International Office provides an orientation programme for all international members of Bielefeld University, including degree seekers (BA and MA), double degree students, Erasmus/cooperation students, doctoral students, scholars, interns, and refugees/preparing applicants. Example of activities include Café International, campus tour, introductions to digital services and administrative procedures.

# Contact

## Bielefeld University

Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS)

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🌐 Course website: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/bghs/programm/>

📘 <https://de-de.facebook.com/BielefeldUniversity/>

🐦 <https://twitter.com/unibielefeld?lang=en>

📷 <https://www.instagram.com/bielefelduniversity>

📺 <https://www.youtube.com/bielefelduniversity>

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# International Programmes in Germany - Database

[www.daad.de/international-programmes](http://www.daad.de/international-programmes)  
[www.daad.de/sommerkurse](http://www.daad.de/sommerkurse)

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## Disclaimer

The data used for this database was collected and analysed in good faith and with due diligence. The DAAD and the Content5 AG accept no liability for the correctness of the data contained in the "International Programmes in Germany" and "Language and Short Courses in Germany".

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