

Guidelines for Application to the PhD Programme

Thank you for your interest in the PhD programme at Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGS MCS). These guidelines will help you to prepare your application:

Outline of your dissertation project

The outline of your proposed dissertation project should have a maximum of six pages and should include the following points:

- Summary of no more than half a page
- Context, scientific questions and objectives of your research project
- Current state of research and most relevant literature
- Tentative theoretical framework and research methods
- Source material
- Time schedule

Please note that you can submit an outline for one project only.

Choice of discipline (see application form)

PhD students at BGS MCS are concurrently enrolled in a university department. You are therefore asked to select the discipline in which you will be obtaining your PhD. It is important that the choice of discipline should relate to your previous academic achievements. Please select the discipline from the list enclosed in the application form (dropdown menu).

Suggested principal investigators (PIs) (see application form)

Every dissertation project is supervised by two to three academic supervisors, so called principal investigators (PIs). Please make sure that the discipline of your first PI corresponds with the discipline of your dissertation project (i.e. Islamic studies, political science etc.). Your first and second PIs should be officially affiliated with BGS MCS – please select their names from the list enclosed in the application form (dropdown menu) to indicate your preferred choices. This selection is not binding and there is no need to contact the PIs during the application process.

All the principal investigators affiliated with BGSIMCS are listed on our homepage:

<http://www.bgsimcs.fu-berlin.de/en/people/pis/index.html#PIs>. Please note that, as a rule, an *associate* PI cannot be chosen as your first principal investigator.

Letters of recommendation (referees must be indicated in the application form)

Two letters of recommendation by academic scholars are required. It is advisable to choose scholars who are familiar with your previous academic performance and/or your dissertation project. Your **referees should email their recommendations directly** to BGSIMCS as **signed electronic letters**. Please make sure that the letters of recommendation arrive in good time. Holders of PhD scholarships that were awarded on the basis of academic references for the same project with which they are now applying to the Graduate School can submit copies of these references.

Language skills (see application form)

As **English** is the primary language of communication at BGSIMCS, you are expected to have advanced English-language proficiency. Please hand in one of the following certificates as proof of proficiency in English:

- ETS TOEFL certificate (minimum score of 600 for the paper-based test, 250 for the computer-based test and 100 for the internet-based test)
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English, CPE (any grade)
- Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English, CAE (grade A or B)
- IELTS test (level 7.0)

If you cannot submit the test results with your application package because you have not received your score report yet, please inform us about the results as soon as possible. The last deadline for handing in the certificate is the date of your interview, if you are invited. Native speakers or applicants who have graduated from an English-speaking university in a country with English as an official language are exempt from this requirement.

In addition, we ask you to list the **language(s) relevant to your dissertation project** (e.g. Arabic, Turkish, Urdu etc.). As proof of your proficiency, you may hand in a transcript of records from your university, a certificate from a language school or the like.

Certified copies of degrees

You should submit certified copies of:

- High school diploma (i.e. Abiturzeugnis, A-level, Baccalauréat or IB) or your country's equivalent document, qualifying for admission to university

- Bachelor's certificate
- Master's certificate – if you cannot submit your MA degree with your application package either because you have not received the document yet but expect it to arrive shortly or because you are in the final stage of your exams or thesis, you may hand in your application anyway. The admission and grants committee will decide whether your (incomplete) application can be assessed as qualified.

Certified copies of your degrees can be issued by your university.

If your certificates are issued in languages other than English or German, please submit certified English or German translations.

Submission of application

The application package, complete with all documents signed and scanned and compiled into **one PDF file**, should be sent by email to:

application@bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de

Your application can only be processed if your application materials are complete. Please do not send any other materials except those listed on our homepage (see application form).

The application deadline is **15 November 2015**.

Schedule

Interviews will take place for those who have been shortlisted in February 2016. If you cannot be present in Berlin, the interview can be conducted via Skype or telephone at the set appointment time. We will inform you about the results of the application process by March at the latest.

Please understand that we are unable to give you information on the application process or provide you with an individual review of your application.

If you have further questions, please contact: application@bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de

We look forward to your application.