



International Graduate Centre
for the Study of Culture



Gießener Graduiertenzentrum
Kulturwissenschaften



International PhD Programme
Literary and Cultural Studies

JLU

NEUE WEGE. SEIT 1607.

JUSTUS-LIEBIG-
UNIVERSITÄT
GIESSEN

Your application at the GCSC

Lena Nüchter

Extended script contents:

1. Your Application: Requirements, Formalities, Tips
2. GCSC Scholarship vs Membership
3. Other Funding Options: External Scholarship or Job?
4. Support for International Members at the GCSC



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Your Application: Requirements, Formalities, Tips



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Formal criteria

- No more than 1 year of work on your PhD project
- Fluency in German OR English
During the membership you are expected to learn /
improve the other language
- Final university transcript/certificate until
30 September 2024 at the latest



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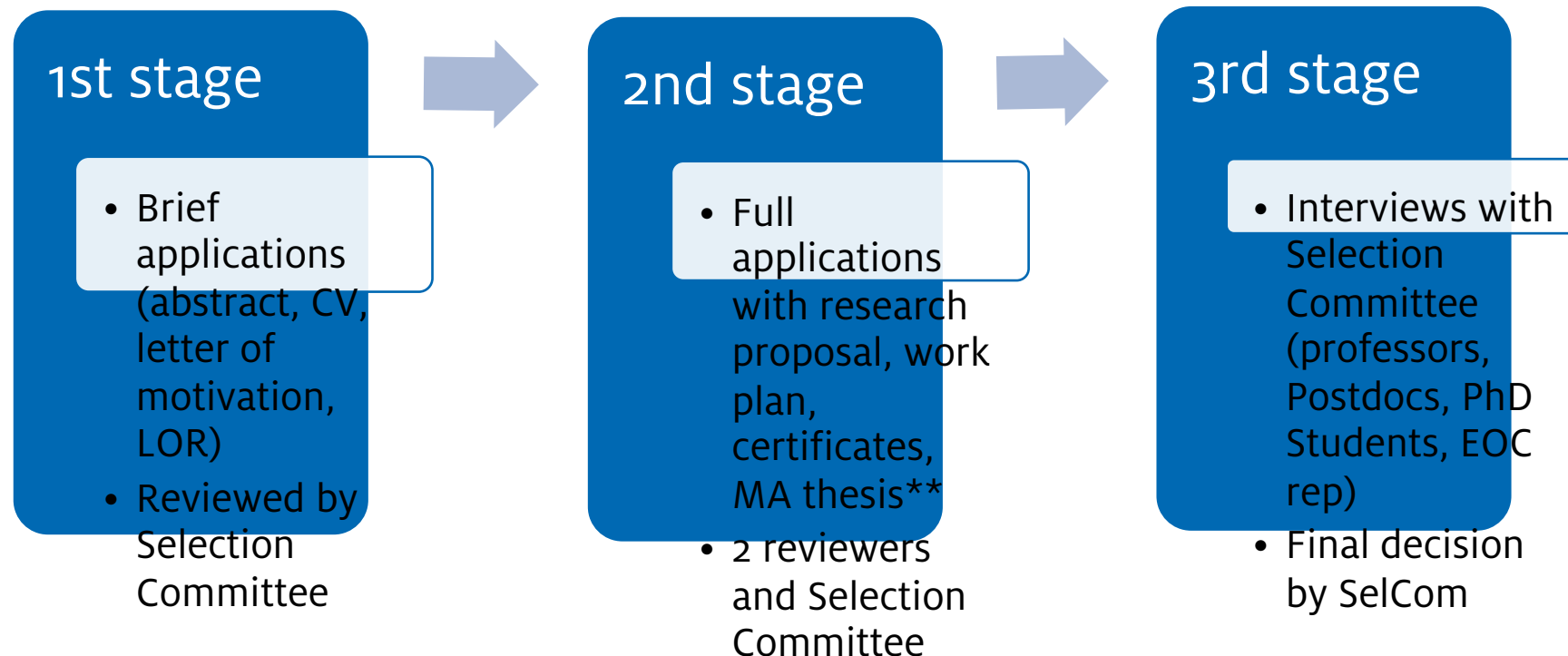


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Criteria of evaluation

- Quality of research proposal
- Fit of project with GCSC research profile
- Excellent marks in a two-year research-track MA programme (equivalent to German 2,0 and up)
- Interdisciplinarity of project
- International orientation of project
- Can be supervised at JLU

Scholarship application process



**** For MA theses written in languages other than English or German, please submit your original thesis as well as a summary (2 pages, see FAQ).**



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The Selection Committee

12 members, some by office and some elected.

By Office	Elected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 members of the GCSC Executive Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 professorial members from the GCSC PIs 1 Postdoctoral member 2 current doctoral students
„By elected office“:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 deputy of the (elected) Equal Opportunities Committee 	



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First stage: Deadline 1 February 2024

- Fill in the online application form
- Upload documents in PDF format:
 - Abstract
 - Letter of Motivation
 - CV
 - Letters of Recommendation



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Your letter of motivation

- Introduce yourself
- Why are you applying **at the GCSC?**
- How does your project contribute to the GCSC's research profile?
- Watch out for language and style



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Your abstract

- Ca. 500 words
- Working title and research question / aim
- Methodology and theory
- Succinct and clear
- Well-structured
- Make us curious about your project!



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Your CV

- Tabular
- Well-structured
- No unexplained gaps
- Up-to-date
- Includes date

It should include:

- academic and employment history
- final examinations (incl. grade)
- international experience
- volunteer / community engagement

It may include:

- personal data (date of birth, family status)
- additional qualifications (if applicable)



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Your letters of recommendation

Formalities:

- Official stationery with contact information of referee
- At least 1 letter from a full professor (holding a chair); second referee PhD+
- Must be up-to-date!

Content:

- How do they know you?
- Assessment of your ability to work academically, your aptitude and experience in your subject
- No need to comment on your PhD project



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Second Stage: Deadline 12 March 2024

Send as PDFs to gcsc-application@gcsc.uni-giessen.de:

- Certificates: high school (e.g. A levels) and university (certified copies not necessary)
- Research proposal (max. 10 pages plus bibliography)
- Detailed work plan and schedule, ca. 1-2 pages
- MA thesis / final thesis



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Your research proposal

Working Title / Topic

1. Research objective
2. Literature review / state of research
3. Methodology and method
4. Preliminary structure
5. Situating your project within the GCSC research profile
6. Bibliography



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Criteria for excellent research proposals

- Innovative research question(s)
- Familiarity with the subject area/topic
 - Situates project within current scholarship
 - Knowledge of relevant sources and literature
- Interdisciplinarity / relevance for GCSC's research profile
- Well-thought-out and plausible argument
- Clear structure
- Knowledge of academic style and language



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The research objective

1.

- Central and innovative research question
- Succinct summary of project aims and goals
- Describes topicality, impact, and ,added value‘ of project
- Feasibility in 3 years
- Catch your readers‘ interest!



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The literature review

2.

- Concise, targeted presentation of relevant scholarship and current literature
- Highlight connections to your own project
- Demonstrate ‚added value‘, impact, topicality
- Highlight new research directions



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Methodology and method

3.

- How are you approaching your topic and why did you choose this way/method?
- Brief introduction of core methods and theories for your project
- Potential and limitations of these methods in the context of your project



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Preliminary structure

4.

- More detailed explanation of individual steps in accordance with work plan
- Justification of source selection, sample, object of investigation
- Concrete examples illustrating main hypotheses or arguments
- Goal-oriented (research) questions



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Situating within GCSC profile

5.

- Which research areas, ETRGs, AGs etc. does your project contribute to?
- How does it engage with concepts, theories, methods already employed within research being conducted at the GCSC?



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Your work plan

- Covering 3 years
- Ideally 2-4 months per item
- Most important steps in keywords
- Including planned field trips / stays outside Germany
- Ca. 1-2 pages
- Not incorporating the GCSC curriculum



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Third stage: Interviews

**Successful candidates will be invited to a
30-minute online interview.**

Dates: 2 and 3 May 2024



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Interview Procedure

You decide whether the interview takes place in German or English.

You may be asked a question in the other language.

- 5-min presentation of your project
 - Contribution to the GCSC's research profile
 - Situate yourself within the RAs / ETRGs
 - Method & methodology
- Selection Committee asks questions about your project
- Time for your own question(s)



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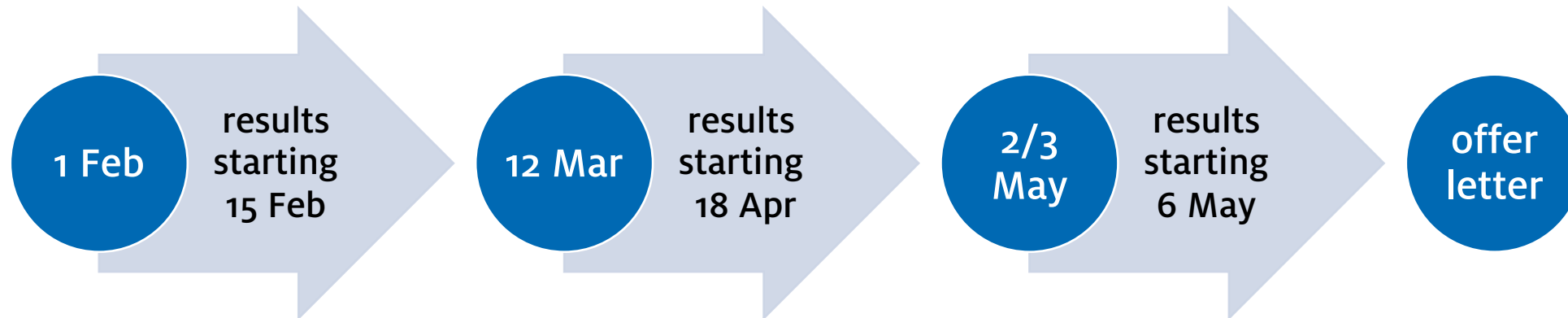


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Deadlines overview



GCSC scholarship vs membership: similarities and differences



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GCSC Scholarship

Fully funded membership

- Up to 6 scholarships of 1.468 €/month (incl. 103 € flat material cost)
- For up to 3 years
- 1 additional year for children aged <12; +400 € for child <18, +100 € for each additional child
- Financial support for research trips and language courses

GCSC Membership

Partially funded membership

- Financial support for research trips and language courses
- Scholarship advice



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Both membership and scholarship entail...

- A multi-faceted research programme in the study of culture
- Interdisciplinary PhD colloquia
- Collaborative research with other doctoral students, professors, postdocs
- A broad international network
- Different publishing opportunities (On_Culture, KULT-online etc.)
- International conferences and summer schools
- GCSC Teaching Centre: support in planning seminars and other didactic matters
- GCSC Career Service: preparation for further career

...and much more!



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Requirements and expectations

All members, incl. scholarship holders:

- **Independent work on a PhD project** that makes a recognisable contribution to the GCSC's research profile and that can be supervised at Justus Liebig University (first supervisor)
- **Engagement in the GCSC's Research Areas** (initiation, co-ordination and documentation of collaborative research projects, e. g. conferences, workshops, publications)
- **Active participation in the GCSC's curriculum**

Scholarship holders are expected to play an **especially active part** in the coordination and documentation of activities within the Research Areas.



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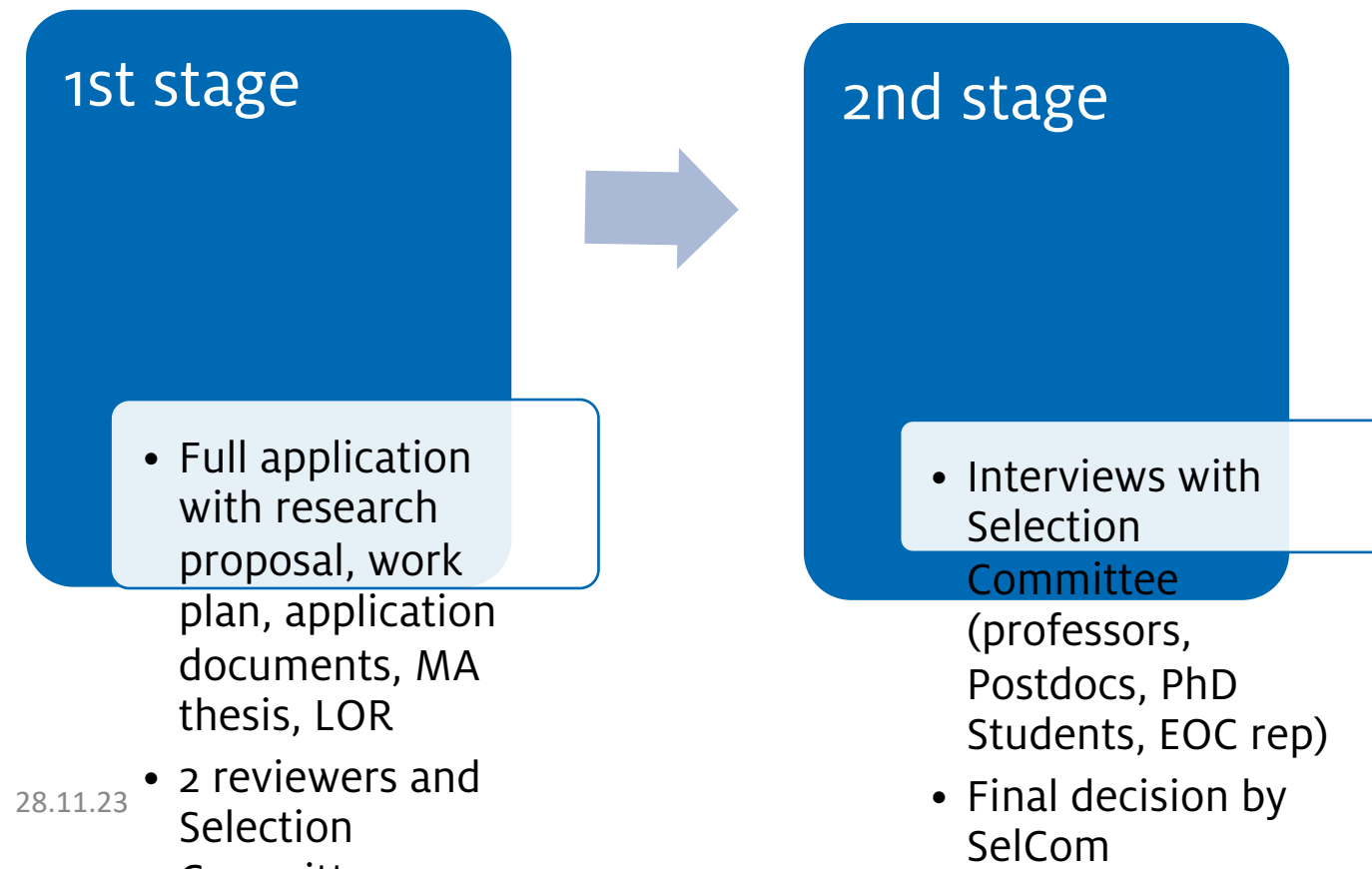


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Direct application for membership-only: Deadlines 1 Mar and 1 October





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Membership application

- GCSC online application form (see website) in English OR German
- Covering letter incl. your motivation for applying at the GCSC
- CV and copies of all transcripts and certificates
- Research proposal (max. 10 pages), which also situates your project within the GCSC's research profile
- Work plan covering 3 years
- **For JLU PhD students:** letter of recommendation from first supervisor, which comments on research proposal and work plan and explicitly endorses GCSC membership
- **For other applicants:** two letters of recommendation from professors at your home institution

Submit via e-mail or snail mail.

More information on the website under GCSC >> Doctoral Programme >> Membership.

Other funding options:
external scholarships, employment



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Other funding options

- **External doctoral scholarship**

GCSC members receive advice and support in their search for scholarships

- **Working in our outside of academia**

Less time for your PhD, but potentially holding a job you enjoy / that prepares you for your future career. GCSC members holding a job can extend their membership for up to one additional year.

- **Private funding**

Depends on your financial means...



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External scholarships

Financial support

Monthly grant covering living expenses

Additional money for research and family allowance often possible

Usually for 2 years (+ 1 year extension)

Academic / ideational support

Summer schools / seminars, interdisciplinary colloquia

Workshops (e.g. career counseling & leadership skills)

Excellent research network, liaison lecturers / professors at universities

Peer network

Potential contacts in industry, politics, media



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Types of scholarship providers

Religious foundations

e.g. Cusanuswerk (kath.), Evangelisches Studentenwerk Villigst

Foundations affiliated with political parties

e.g. Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, etc.

Independent foundations

e.g. Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes, FAZIT-Stiftung

Subject-specific foundations

e.g. Gerda-Henkel-Stiftung

Foundations for individuals in certain circumstances

e.g. Dr. Willy Rebelein Stiftung (for disabled and chronically ill students)

Support for international GCSC members



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We support international members...

- ... prior to arrival in Germany (together with JLU International Office)
- ... with university forms and applications
- ... with finding accommodation
- ... with funding for language courses

We look forward to
receiving your applications!