

Instructions and Requirements for your Application to the International Giessen Graduate Centre for the Life Sciences and to the PhD Programme of the Faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine - **External Candidates**

Welcome

Thank you very much for your interest in our graduate centre! Before applying, please make sure to read these instructions carefully. They guide you smoothly through the application process. The better you follow them, the better are your chances to succeed.

What are you applying for?

The **International Giessen Graduate Centre** for the Life Sciences (GGL) provides a 3-year, interdisciplinary, concisely structured graduate programme for all Life Science disciplines at the Justus Liebig University and will support you in achieving your degree and launching your career. **The GGL does not award degrees; only the respective faculties can award those.**

The application portal was designed to match applicants and their specific skills, educational background and aims with supervisors who wish to recruit doctoral researchers for their projects. On this website, you will have access to open research projects from several different disciplines. But please remember, you are not applying for a grant or position, but rather a specific project that best fits your personal skill set.

As an external candidate looking for a project and supervisor, you are applying for an open project advertised on this website and

- **GGL membership** or
- **GGL membership in combination with** admission to the **PhD Programme*** (only for projects advertised by the faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine) or
- Admission to the PhD Programme only
- **GGL membership in combination with** admission to the **Clinical Sciences Programme**

***You should avoid applying to the PhD Programme only**, because you will have no access to GGL training. Thus, you might experience difficulties fulfilling the requirements of the PhD Programme. This option is only recommended for members of research training groups (see information on the PhD Programme below).

Your doctoral degree

Several internationally acknowledged **doctoral degrees** can be issued by the five Life Science faculties of JLU. These are *Dr. med.*, *Dr. med. dent.*, *Dr. biol. hom.* (Human Medicine), *Dr. med. vet.*, *Dr. biol. anim.* (Veterinary Medicine), *Dr. rer. nat.* (Natural Sciences – Biology and Chemistry), *Dr. agr.* and *Dr. oec. troph* (Agricultural and Nutritional Sciences). They usually are specific to the issuing faculty. **All titles demand the completion of a full research project including a written thesis and oral defense.**

Additionally, the **faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine** of JLU allow- for the demands of internationally oriented young researchers - to obtain the title of “Doctor of Philosophy” **PhD**, this is called the PhD Programme. This title is awarded when thesis work has been conducted over a three-year period and the required course programme has been fully completed. Even if you have completed your studies in another related natural science (e.g. biology or human biology), you may conduct scientific thesis work under the supervision of a member of the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine or Medicine.

Applications for **GGL membership** are accepted in both summer and winter semesters (February/July). The **PhD Programme**, however, only accepts applications for the winter semester. Summer semester candidates who would like to join the PhD Programme will be considered for admission only for the winter semester.

(Term dates: winter: October to March, summer: April to September)

Please note: The project descriptions will indicate whether or not you can join the PhD Programme.

Online Registration

Applications must be submitted using our online application form. We will not consider applications sent to us via e-mail or mail. At the beginning of your application process, you will need to register as an applicant. At this early step you will also have to indicate whether you are looking for a project and supervisor or not.

Password

You will automatically receive a **registration number and password via E-Mail**. Please use an e-mail address that you check regularly. Without further notice from you, this address will remain permanently in our database to be used for all email communication (also after admission into the programme).

You can use **registration number and password** to log into the portal where you can enter information and save your application draft to edit it later or upload required documents.

Funding

Not all of the advertised projects are fully funded. That means that supervision and lab space may be available, but you will need to find funding for your personal living costs, e.g. scholarship from your home government or the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). **If you are not able to obtain the required financial support, this may inhibit your admission.**

Please make sure that you include information about possible financial support in your letter of intent (name of scholarship programme, duration of scholarship etc.). **We highly advise against the use of private funding (i.e. your own savings) during your doctoral thesis work.**

Choose a project

During the application period, you can find descriptions of open projects [here](#). Carefully select a project of interest from the list of open projects and note down the corresponding ID. If you can provide your own scholarship/stipend or other approved financial support, you may also choose a project with partial funding. You will be able to apply for up to three projects.

Note: Only contact the supervisor if you have specific questions concerning the project. For general questions, please refer to the websites of the [GGL](#), [PhD Programme](#) or the [JLU](#).

Required documents

1. A **Letter of Intent** in English using the online form (no uploads please), in which you describe your:
 - Academic aptitude
 - Academic and professional interest
 - Interest in the specific project that you have chosen
 - Motivation for joining the GGL or PhD Programme
 - Future career goals
 - Funding details (if partially or non-funded)
2. A **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** (optional)
3. A **recent photograph** (to be uploaded, no larger than **2 MB**).
4. Certified copies of **all certificates** awarding relevant degrees and mentioned in the CV. This usually **includes your secondary school certificate** (high school/A-level), **bachelor's degree** and **your master's degree or diploma**. The master's degree or equivalent must show above-average grades. **All certificates must be in English or German**. If your documents are issued in any other language, please submit certified translations **and** the documents in the original language. The certificate should contain an explanation of the grading scale (to be uploaded, PDF, each file no larger than **2 MB**). If you are accepted you might have to present the original documents at the Dean's Office or the PhD Office.
5. For the bachelor's and master's degree (or equivalent) the official **degree certificate** of your university/institution should be provided **as well as** your **transcript of records** showing your studied subjects and the grades or points earned. Information on your **ranking** in relation to all graduates of your year **or the average grade of your class** (e.g. upper second division, 3rd out of 120) should also be included.
6. Proof of **proficiency in English**
The GGL requires a level of B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).
The following tests are accepted with a minimum score as listed below:
 - **TOEFL**
 - 85 points (internet-based test)
 - **IELTS**
 - 6.5 Overall Band Score(To be uploaded, PDF, no larger than **2 MB**). Internal candidates **may also take a language test at the GGL** if you cannot provide a certificate at the time of your application.
Native speakers are exempt from this requirement.

Formats

Supported file types are: **pdf, jpg, jpeg, and gif**.

Please do not submit any locked or protected pdf files!

The maximum file size is **2 MB**.

Other formats or files exceeding the maximum size will automatically be rejected.

References

When filling the online application, you will be asked to indicate two referees who are able to assess your personal and academic background. The referees suggested by you will receive e-mail requests sent to the addresses you provided. **Please note:** These requests will be sent **automatically** as soon as you submit your completed application. **You should therefore inform your referees in advance about your intention to apply to our program and allow enough time for them to write the review.**

The deadline for the letters of reference is two weeks after your submission. Only letters that reached us before the deadline can be considered. In case your referees do not send their recommendation letters in time, your application will still be processed, but it will be evaluated based only on the documents available.

Formats

Supported file types are: **pdf, jpg, jpeg, and gif.**

Please do not submit any locked or protected pdf files!

The maximum file size is **2 MB.**

Other formats or files exceeding the maximum size will automatically be rejected.

Submission

Incomplete applications cannot be submitted. **Be sure to allow enough time for your submission.** If you have last-minute technical difficulties, we might not be able to assist you during the last few days before the closing date.

After submission, your application will be forwarded to the supervisor(s) of the projects(s) that you have selected, to the GGL Study Board and respectively the PhD Study Board. If you are shortlisted by the prospective supervisor(s), they will contact you directly for a telephone or Skype interview. Please ensure that your contact information (e.g. telephone number, e-mail address) is correct.

Deadline

The deadlines for submissions for the **summer term (usually in March) and winter term (usually in July) will be published on our [website](#).**

Admission

Once you have been selected, **your supervisor must provide you with a letter of consent** for admission to the GGL and/or PhD Programme.

Admission to the GGL graduate study programme is granted by the GGL Study Board (represented by members of all five Life Science Faculties of the JLU). Admission to the PhD graduate study programme is granted by the PhD Study Board of the Faculties of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. Accepted candidates will be notified before the beginning of the semester.

Due to the large number of applicants, we may not be able to answer individual enquiries or give information about the current status of your application.

Once the GGL Study Board has approved your application, you will have to **apply as a doctoral candidate at the** Examinations Office of the Life Science **faculty** from which you would like to obtain your formal doctoral title (usually the one your supervisor belongs to). As long as your candidature has not been confirmed by the doctoral committee of the chosen faculty, your admission to GGL will be on a temporary basis. If you apply for the **PhD** Programme, this additional step is not necessary.

We wish you much success with your application!

The GGL Team