

FAQ - IEG FELLOWSHIPS FOR POSTDOCS

1. Requirements for Application

Who can be funded by the IEG? Who can apply for a fellowship?

The IEG awards fellowships to postdoctoral researchers from Germany and abroad working in the fields of European history, history of religion, historical theology or other historical disciplines, including Digital Humanities.

What does the IEG fellowship fund?

The IEG Postdoctoral Fellowship is intended to support you in developing your own research project in close collaboration with scholars at the IEG and to contribute to the Institute's ongoing research activities.

There is the possibility of developing prospects for further cooperation with the IEG. If a promising application is submitted to a third-party funding body, the fellowship may be extended.

Are there thematic guidelines concerning the funding?

In general, research projects eligible for funding should cover the period from the Early Modern period to contemporary history.

We are particularly interested in projects

- with a comparative or cross-border approach
- on European history in its relation to the wider world
- on topics of intellectual and religious history
- that make use of digital tools and methods
- with relation to environmental history

There are no guidelines concerning the specific topic itself.

What is the aim of the fellowship – a research article and/or the preparation of a larger application?

The IEG awards fellowships to early-career researchers (postdocs) who have completed their dissertation and are pursuing a new research project. There are no requirements specifying particular research outputs. The fellowship is intended to support you individually in your research work; accordingly, different focuses and aims for the stay are conceivable. The fellowship supports you in developing your own research project in close collaboration with the research staff at the IEG. Your contribution also consists of bringing your research interests into the Institute's ongoing research activities.

Which activities are supported by the postdoctoral fellowship?

The IEG postdoctoral fellowship supports outstanding postdocs who develop a new research project at the IEG following completion of their dissertation and who wish to continue this project at the IEG or in cooperation with the IEG after the fellowship.

Can I apply simultaneously for a fellowship at another institution?

Yes, in principle you may apply simultaneously to other institutions. Please inform us promptly of any parallel applications or decisions taken during the selection process.

What is the expected length of a fellowship at the IEG?

The fellowship involves a research stay of six up to twelve months, during which fellows are required to reside at the Institute. Fellows live and work at the Institute building. Depending on the availability of partner rooms, fellows may also share accommodation in the hall of residence with their partners.

Exceptions may be made for fellows accompanied by their children (and, where applicable, their partners).

To whom should I address my application?

Please submit your application digitally using the online form linked in the call for applications. The Fellowship Office is responsible for the application process.

Is it possible to change the fellowship period retrospectively?

The fellowship is limited to the period stated in your letter of acceptance. Adjustments to the period may only be considered in justified exceptional cases, and must be requested well in advance of the fellowship start date.

Can I apply for a postdoctoral fellowship before completing my PhD?

Your dissertation must be completed before the application deadline. It forms part of the application documents.

If your viva takes place within four weeks of the application deadline and you are able to submit your confirmation and certificate promptly, you may still apply. Unfortunately, applications cannot be considered beyond this four-week period without a fully completed doctoral procedure.

Can I apply for a postdoctoral fellowship when the viva is scheduled after the application deadline?

In exceptional cases, yes, if it falls within a maximum of four weeks after the application deadline. The complete application must be submitted by the deadline, with all required documents and a note explaining the situation. Please inform us proactively of the outcome of your viva and send us the certificate without being prompted.

Please also indicate the reasons why you are applying before the successful defence of your PhD thesis.

Later dates cannot be accepted, as the award of the title forms part of the eligibility requirements for the fellowship. If your viva is scheduled for the following year, you unfortunately do not meet the eligibility requirements. However, we warmly encourage you to apply for the next call, which is announced annually.

How recently may my PhD have been completed?

At the time of application, no more than three years may have passed since you completed your PhD. Non-academic activities are not included in this period. If you nevertheless wish to apply, please indicate in your application why you consider yourself eligible and whether there are

grounds of hardship. We cannot say in advance whether your application will be considered, but we encourage you to describe your individual circumstances and the reasons for the longer interval between your viva and your application at the IEG.

How is the date of the PhD determined?

The relevant date is the date of completion of the last academic achievement required for the doctoral procedure (e.g. the viva or final oral examination). In general, this date is stated next to the date of issue on the doctoral certificate. The application deadline for IEG Fellowships for Postdocs is taken as the cut-off date for calculating the period after the PhD.

Which graduation date applies if I have more than one PhD?

In the case of multiple PhDs, the PhD whose subject matter is closest to the proposed research project is relevant. Please indicate both PhD graduation dates, along with the corresponding subjects, on your CV. In addition, copies of both doctoral certificates must be submitted, and both dissertations must be listed in your full publication list.

Can I request an extension of the fellowship?

No, it is not possible to extend the stipend. However, the research stay may be continued as a Visiting Fellow, provided the stay is funded from other sources or self-financed.

The call for applications states that proficiency in English is required. What does this mean?

Good English skills are a prerequisite for participating in discussions at the Institute. You must have both sufficient written and oral language skills in order to engage in discussion. Please consider carefully whether your skills meet this requirement. German skills are not required but are welcomed.

Am I required to provide a language test?

Yes, you are expected to be able to substantiate the English language skills stated on the form with certificates or diplomas. This may include school reports or evidence of an English-language degree. If proficiency is clearly evident from your degree certificates, these are sufficient as proof.

If your certificates are older and your current language level is higher, please indicate this.

Would a letter from my supervisor confirming that I have sufficient language skills be acceptable?

Yes. A letter confirming that you have sufficient spoken and written English skills to participate actively in discussions would be entirely adequate.

May I upload my academic transcripts or a letter of confirmation from my university as proof of my English language skills?

If you would like to use your academic transcripts as proof of your English language skills, please indicate this in your application. A letter of confirmation is also sufficient.

Can I present language skills acquired during school years?

Yes, language skills acquired at school are also recognised if they can be documented with the relevant certificates.

2. Residential Obligation

What does the residential obligation mean?

Fellows reside and work in the Institute building throughout their fellowship. Fellows with partners may also share accommodation in the Institute's dormitory, subject to the availability of double rooms. Exceptions may be discussed with the Fellowship Office for fellowship holders with children.

Fellows are expected to attend public lectures and the weekly research colloquia at the IEG. Attendance at other academic events, such as workshops or conferences, is welcomed but not required.

Am I allowed to leave the institute for an extended period of time during my fellowship?

Extended archival visits or journeys away from the Institute are not permitted under the residential obligation. If you anticipate needing extensive archival research, we suggest that you consider applying for a fellowship elsewhere for that phase of your dissertation. Shorter day trips to archives, libraries, external experts and specialist conferences are permitted within the residential obligation and are arranged with the Fellowship Office.

Can I apply if I do not wish to use IEG housing?

As a rule, all fellows reside at the IEG for the duration of their fellowship, the only exception being fellows with children, for whom we are unable to provide on-site accommodation. Fellows with children may live elsewhere in Mainz. A workspace at the Institute will be provided. Further exceptions may be considered on an individual basis for fellows with children who wish to commute to Mainz.

I would like to come with my children. Can I move into a dormitory room?

Unfortunately, the Institute building is not equipped to accommodate families with children. Fellows who wish to bring their family to Mainz must therefore arrange their own accommodation in Mainz or the surrounding area. The IEG is unfortunately unable to assist with accommodation. However, the Fellowship Office will be happy to advise you on finding suitable accommodation. A workspace at the Institute will be provided.

I would like to come with my partner. Do I need to find my own apartment?

A limited number of partner rooms are available in the dormitory. Please inform the Fellowship Office in advance if you wish to come with a partner. Ideally, this information should be provided on the application form. Requests submitted after the application process has been completed may not be considered.

3. Application Process

What is the deadline for submitting an application for a postdoctoral fellowship?

An overview of current calls, with the exact application deadline in each case, is available on our website. The application deadline for IEG Postdoctoral Fellowships is generally 15 October each year.

Am I bound to the start date stated in the call? Until when can I begin the fellowship?

The date stated in the call is always 1 April of the relevant year. This is the earliest possible start date. It is possible to apply for a fellowship for a later period; however, the desired fellowship period may not begin more than twelve months after the date stated in the call. For later periods, please apply for the next call.

When and how often do selection meetings for postdoctoral fellowships take place?

Selection meetings for postdoctoral fellowships are held each winter.

Do you confirm receipt of my application and of further documents?

We will notify you as soon as your application has been received. Please check your mailbox over the following days in case we have any queries.

When will I receive a decision on my application?

Following the selection meeting, we will inform you of the committee's decision by email. The selection process may take several months (typically three to four months). We kindly ask you to refrain from making enquiries in the meantime.

Can incomplete applications be considered?

No. The two reference letters are also required for an application to be considered complete. If these are not provided, the application will be deemed incomplete and cannot be considered. If, for understandable reasons beyond your control, the submission of a specific document is delayed, please inform us proactively.

See also: *What happens if one of the reference letters cannot be submitted by the application deadline?*

Is it possible to apply again after a rejection?

Yes, you may apply again. However, this is only advisable if your project has progressed substantially and is clearly distinguishable from your previous application.

Where can I find the application form?

The application form is an online form linked in the call for applications. To access it, scroll down the call and click on 'Apply online'.

What should I bear in mind when completing the form?

Please read the form carefully before completing it. Please have the documents listed in the form ready before you begin so that you can upload them. Please use the pause function if you wish to continue editing the form later. Once submitted, your application cannot be edited or corrected.

Are there any guidelines for the work and time schedule?

There are no official guidelines for the schedule. We recommend presenting the information in tabular form, with details of the time periods and the corresponding work steps.

Is it necessary for copies of university degrees and certificates to be authenticated?

No, copies of your university degrees and certificates do not need to be authenticated at the time of application. At the beginning of your fellowship, you will be expected to submit the originals or authenticated copies to the Fellowship Office.

What documents are needed for an application?

Please refer to the list in the relevant online form. In addition to your own application documents, two reference letters are required, which you should arrange in good time.

In which languages may I submit my application and research project outline?

You may write in either English or German; we recommend writing in the language in which you are most proficient.

Do I need to attach my thesis to my application documents?

Yes, please attach your completed dissertation (full manuscript) as a PDF file to your application documents.

Do I have to send the full text of my thesis, or may I submit an article or an abridged version?

In any case, please send us the full text of your dissertation as a PDF.

My dissertation was not written in German or English. Do I need to have it translated into German?

Please upload your dissertation as it stands. You do not need to translate it. If you have articles on your thesis in German or English, you may submit these alongside the dissertation.

Do the reference letters have to be written by professors?

The first reference should be sent by the primary academic advisor of your dissertation. All referees must be authorised to supervise PhDs at their institution.

Does the external referee have to be from a different institution?

The external referee should preferably be from another university or, in exceptional cases, from a closely related discipline if relevant to the topic of your dissertation. The external referee should not be the second academic supervisor of the dissertation project.

What format should the references take, and what should they contain?

As a rule, references should be approximately two pages long. They should comment on:

- the academic qualification of the applicant
- the topic, aim and current status of the dissertation project
- the synopsis, work plan and timetable for the research stay in Mainz

The references should also refer directly to your planned research stay in Mainz. General recommendation letters will not be considered. Referees should email an up-to-date reference directly to the IEG by the application deadline to: application@ieg-mainz.de

Is a second reference required?

Yes, both references must be sent by email to application@ieg-mainz.de by the application deadline. Please also enter the contact details of the referees in the application form so that we can assign the references. An application without two references is incomplete.

Should references be sent directly to the IEG or together with the application?

Both referees email an up-to-date assessment as a PDF file to application@ieg-mainz.de by the application deadline.

May the external referee already be retired?

All referees must be authorised to supervise PhDs at their institution, even if they have already retired.

In which language may the references be written?

References may be written in English or German.

What happens if one of the references cannot be submitted by the application deadline?

We understand that there may be personal reasons for a delay in submission by professors. Please contact us proactively and inform us in advance of any expected delay. Late submissions are only accepted if this has been agreed with us in advance. However, references must be received no later than two weeks after the application deadline, as no further documents can be accepted after this date.

4. Funding

What is the amount of funding for a postdoctoral fellowship?

The postdoctoral fellowship amounts to €2,100 per month. The fellowship is paid directly to fellows by the IEG.

Can I request family allowance for the duration of the fellowship?

Yes, the IEG offers a family allowance.

Fellows whose spouse or partner accompanies them to Mainz, shares their residence (registration certificate) and does not have their own income exceeding €603 per month are eligible for a partner allowance. Please indicate in your application whether your partner will accompany you to Mainz.

Fellows with children who either move to Mainz with their children or commute to their primary residence to care for their children may apply for a family allowance: €400 per month will be paid for the first child and €100 per month for each additional child as an allowance on top of the scholarship.

This may be combined with the partner allowance. Please also indicate your children on the application form.

Please contact the Fellowship Office if you have any questions or require clarification regarding your eligibility.

Does the IEG pay a children's allowance for children coming to Mainz with me?

Yes, fellows who come to Mainz with their dependent children may apply for a children's allowance. The same applies to fellows whose children remain at their primary residence.

Do I receive a grant for health insurance?

No, there is no grant available for health insurance.

Can IEG fellowships be combined with other fellowships or employment?

No, for the duration of the funding, fellows are not permitted to take up other gainful employment or receive other financial support.

Can I apply for a fellowship if my research project has already been funded by another institution?

Yes. Prior receipt of another fellowship is not an exclusion criterion; subsequent funding is possible.

Are there grants for travel expenses?

No grants are awarded for travel expenses.

Are IEG fellowships tax-exempt?

Yes, the fellowship is tax-exempt under § 3 Nr. 44 EStG. Appropriate certification for submission to the tax office may be requested from the Fellowship Office, if required.

5. Data Privacy / Privacy Policy

What happens to my application once submitted?

Personal application documents are generally deleted three months after the completion of the application process. However, this does not apply where legal requirements prevent deletion, where further storage of data is necessary for evidential purposes, or where you have expressly consented to extended storage of your data.

6. Other

Which commitments do I enter into by accepting the fellowship?

- a. By accepting the fellowship, all fellows commit to providing the Institute's library, unprompted, with a copy of their published academic publications resulting from their work at the IEG.
- b. Fellows live and work in the IEG building for the entire duration of their fellowship (residential obligation). Exceptions for families must be agreed in advance and on a case-by-case basis.

To whom can I turn if I have further inquiries?

If you have further questions that are not answered in this FAQ, please contact the [Fellowship Office](#).

(21 August, 2026)