

Application

The call for applications for the academic year 2026/27 will be published in fall 2025.

Applications can be submitted in German or English exclusively via the [online portal](#) of the Dahlem Research School. All information regarding the application process can be found on our [website](#).

The HCS doctoral program accepts up to 10 doctoral students each year for the winter semester.

Application Documents

- Letter of motivation
- Description of the planned dissertation project
- time and work plan
- Curriculum vitae in tabular form
- a letter of recommendation from a university lecturer
- Work sample (e.g. part of the Master's thesis or an essay)
- Copies of degree certificates from the university degrees
- Language certificates for German and English (one language at least at level C1, the other at least at level B2) if these languages are not your native languages
- any other language certificates required for the doctoral subject

Contact

Department for History and Cultural Studies
Doctoral Studies Program
History and Cultural Studies

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Doctoral Studies Program

History and Cultural Studies



About HCS

HCS offers doctoral candidates a curricular program that promotes independent research work and enables them to complete their dissertation project within three years. The courses are designed to ensure a balance between interdisciplinary and subject-specific modules. The aim is to deepen knowledge of scientific methods and promote professional exchange in a research-intensive environment. The teaching languages are English and German.

Doctoral students are also members of the Dahlem Research School, which aims to impart interdisciplinary key qualifications in addition to scientific skills. These include project management, presentation techniques and scientific communication in German and English.

You can do your doctorate in one of the following history and cultural studies subjects:

Ancient Near Eastern Languages and History	History Education
Arabic Studies	Iranian Studies
Art History of Europe and America	Islamic Studies
Art History of East Asia	Japanese Studies
Art History of Africa	Jewish Studies
Chinese Studies, Sinology	Korean Studies
Classical Archaeology	Near Eastern Archaeology
Egyptology	Prehistoric Archaeology
History	Religious Studies
	Semitic Studies
	Turcology

HCS includes subjects that work historically, deal with material, visual and written cultures, research antiquity as well as the present, examine literatures, textual traditions and languages of cultures in the Near and Middle East, deal with various regions in East Asia or deal with religions and cults. The doctoral program unites these approaches in the common interest of combining a cultural studies orientation with subject-specific knowledge and skills and developing a practice of interdisciplinary work.



HCS takes into account both the tradition of the German *Kulturwissenschaften* as well as the Anglo-American *Cultural Studies* developed on (socio-)political issues. On the basis of these two discourse formations, the program offers the opportunity to put one's own research into perspective from a cultural studies perspective and to discuss it regularly. Participation in the HCS requires both profound specialist knowledge and a keen interest in theoretical and methodological issues at an interdisciplinary level.

The program does not award scholarships, however we are happy to support you in applying for doctoral scholarships!

Location

The academic location of Berlin, with its numerous university and non-university institutions, museums, collections, archives, libraries and rich cultural offerings, provides an ideal environment for academic work.

In addition, research networks and projects at the department, at Freie Universität and at other institutions in Berlin enable intensive exchange on site as well as networking with international guest researchers.

The workplaces of the doctoral candidates of the HCS are located in the building at Koserstraße 20, where the joint library of the History and Art History departments is also housed. The other institutes and the campus library are within walking distance at Fabeckstraße 23-25. Other Freie Universität facilities such as the University Library, the Botanical Garden and a canteen are also located in the immediate proximity, as are the Dahlem Research Campus of the State Museums, the Museum of European Cultures (MEK), the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (MPIWG) and the Secret State Archives of Prussian Cultural Heritage.

