

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

BIGS-DR'S MAIN SELECTION CRITERIA ARE:

- an excellent master's or equivalent degree;
- relevant work experience;
- an excellent research proposal;
- certified proficiency in English.

There is no age limit for applying to BIGS-DR. However, the applicant's last academic degree should have been obtained less than six years ago. The entire program is conducted in English. International students can attend a two-month German language course prior to the study program, starting on August 1st each year. The course program starts in October.

The application deadline for DAAD scholarships for enrollment in the subsequent year is August 31st. Applicants for other scholarship schemes or candidates with individual funds can submit their application to BIGS-DR at any time.

APPLYING FOR BIGS-DR:

Online registration at www.zef.de

CONTACT

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DONORS

The main donors of BIGS-DR are: The German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) via the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), state funds of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Foundation fiat panis and the Robert Bosch Foundation. BIGS-DR receives further financial support from other generous organizations and governments.



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BIGS-DR

BONN INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

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BIGS-DR: DOCTORAL RESEARCH AT ZEF

The interdisciplinary research agenda of ZEF tackles issues relevant to the Global South such as climate change, governance and conflict, biodiversity, mobility, food security, health and gender. ZEF founded its interdisciplinary doctoral program in 1999. Since its inception, BIGS-DR has had over 700 participants. The program is unique in Europe in terms of interdisciplinary set-up, diversity and size. Around 130 participants take part at any time and are trained to act as future agents of change.

LOCAL SETTING: INTERNATIONAL BONN

Bonn is a hub for international organizations such as the United Nations and several international research and development policy institutes. This stimulating setting enables students to participate in joint conferences and workshops and they benefit from cooperation arrangements and interaction with professionals from these organizations.

WHO CAN APPLY ?

Young scientists from all over the world with an outstanding master's or equivalent degree in economics, political science, anthropology, agricultural and resource economics, agronomy, biology, ecology, forestry, mathematics or earth sciences can apply. Candidates should have work experience in national or international research institutions, governments or the private sector. The program aims at educating highly qualified scientific staff, advisers, and managers for both the private and the public sector. Interest in interdisciplinary research is essential for a successful application.

WHAT TO EXPECT ?

BIGS-DR offers a broad, interdisciplinary approach to development research and a sound training in theories and methods of selected disciplines. The doctoral students conduct practice-oriented field research in developing countries or development related institutions. Combining theories, methods, and practical experience in the areas of social, economic, and ecological change enables students to explore new fields and be competitive on an international job market.

STEP BY STEP TO A DOCTORATE

BIGS-DR has a time frame of three to four years. During the first six to 12 months, the students participate in a doctoral course program at ZEF and work with their supervisors on their research plan. After their supervisors have approved their plan, the students travel abroad to conduct field research, which takes one to two years. Subsequently, the students return to ZEF to write up their doctoral theses during the last 12-24 months of the program.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

BIGS-DR raises no tuition fees. However, students need a scholarship or adequate resources to finance their study period. Living costs in Germany amount to approximately 1,100 Euros per month, in addition to costs for field research. BIGS-DR offers a limited number of scholarships to candidates from developing countries, made available by the EPOS program through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and other donors.

TAILORED QUALIFICATION

During the first year, students participate in courses offered by ZEF professors and senior researchers, as well as professors from the University of Bonn and visiting international and German scholars. The courses provide students with interdisciplinary skills and disciplinary knowledge as well as with tools for their development-related field research.

The courses comprise of:

Module I: A two-month interdisciplinary course in development research;

Module II: Disciplinary courses in economics, social sciences and ecology;

Module III: Courses in research methods, statistics, remote sensing, geographic information systems, modeling, leadership and intercultural skills, and research ethics.

OBTAINING YOUR DOCTORAL DEGREE

After completing the course program and the doctoral thesis, students obtain a doctoral degree granted by the respective university faculty affiliated with ZEF. Students may pursue their doctoral studies under direct supervision of ZEF professors but can also be associated with ZEF while being supervised by a professor from another university.