

Call for Applications

SMUS Action 3: (Pre)Doctoral Programme

Action 3 Step ONE – SMUS PhD Training Programme Scholarships

Application Deadline: 17 January 2025

This SMUS call is funded by DAAD with funds from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ)

Writing a doctoral research proposal

Formulating a sound proposal to conduct doctoral research is challenging and oftentimes met with difficulty and frustration. Step ONE of the SMUS Action 3, (Pre)Doctoral Programme, is a six-month training programme that provides participants with the opportunity to obtain enough knowledge and skills to develop a doctoral research proposal consistently relative to both content-related issues (research questions and hypothesis; research design; selection of methods; etc.) and logistics (timetable, budgets, fieldwork planning, etc.). Selected candidates will receive a six-month scholarship to come to Technische Universität Berlin (TUB), where the training programme will be hosted. During their stay, participants will have access to the TUB library as well as thematic excursions. In addition to lectures and presentations on topics like research design, sustainability research, transdisciplinarity, and a host of others, participants will be assisted in their search for suitable supervisors. These can be based at any (partner) university around the world.

By the end of the training programme, participants will prepare all the documentation required to apply for the three-year fully funded doctoral scholarship programme by SMUS—that is, Step TWO of the Doctoral Programme.

Step TWO: PhD Scholarships within the network (2026–2029)

After the training programme and PhD proposal has been submitted, 9 applicants are chosen and granted a 36-month fully funded scholarship. The PhD scholarship will only be awarded to applicants who are planning to seek funding to complete their doctoral dissertations—in any of the SMUS partners universities.



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This call is open to all researchers at the Universidad Veracruzana and pursues the promotion of innovative ideas for doctoral research centred on matters related to urban sustainability and their underpinning **wicked urban problems (WUPs)**. Likewise, it seeks to further research competences in the university teaching and research staff centred around on the principles of **transdisciplinarity** and **spatial and practice-led research**. **The ultimate outcomes of the PhD Training Programme are the writing of doctoral research proposal and the submission of an application to obtain funding.**

Important facts:

- The earliest possible start date of the scholarships is: **1 April 2025**.
- The duration of the scholarship is: **6 months**.
- The latest completion date for all scholarships is: **31 October 2024***.
- Expected outcomes/deliverables: **A completed doctoral research proposal and submission of an application to obtain backing** either with SMUS or other funding institution.
- Host institution of the PhD Training Programme: **Technische Universität Berlin**.

*In case the start of the PhD Training Programme and thus the scholarship is subject to delays (for instance, due to visa application issues).

Eligibility

This call open to all research and teaching scholars at the Universidad Veracruzana.

Candidates need to be suitably qualified to write a doctoral thesis. In other words, they must hold the equivalent of a **master's degree by the time of submitting the application**.

Candidates may either be considering or have recently begun to write their doctoral thesis. Hence, they should preferably either have recently graduated or be in a very **early stage of their doctorates**.

Candidates selected for their research proposals **topics related to wicked urban problems (WUPs)** connected with [the targets of SDG #11](#) identified in the local, regional or national context. Likewise, the way the chosen WUPs are to be approached from a transdisciplinary, spatial and practice-led perspective is properly outlined. In addition, bear in mind that only research proposals that comply with this requisite are suitable to apply for a scholarship to complete the doctorate (i.e. step TWO).

Candidates must be both willing and able to **travel to and stay in Berlin for the full duration of the Training Programme, six months** (initially, **from 1 April to 30 September 2025**; however, **the stay may well have to be prolonged till 31 October 2025!**).

Chosen candidates who do not show up will have to repay any funding they have already received, including non-refundable bookings (e.g. for flights).

Financing

The scholarship includes:

- A round-trip flight to Berlin.
- A monthly scholarship of €1.300 to cover accommodation, local travel and living expenses.
- A monthly financial support of up to €145** for health, accident and personal liability insurance.
- A sum of up to €150 for visa fees, Covid-19 necessary vaccinations and tests and international money transfer. Please note that, according to DAAD regulations, receipts/invoices of these expenses must be provided for them to be reimbursed.

The scholarship is meant to cover living expenses and thereby allow both **taking part in the PhD Training Programme and writing the grant proposal full time**. Please note that any additional income during the scholarship period has to be reported to TUB. Earnings above €450 per month will be deducted from the scholarship monthly payment.

**Should the amount effectively spent be under €145, that would be the amount to be reimbursed.

Deadline for Application

Open from 19 December 2024 until 17 January 2025.

Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Timeline

Review process	17 - 27 January 2025
Notification of scholarship holders	30 January 2025
Earliest start of scholarship	1 April 2025
Latest end of the scholarship	31 October 2025***

***In case the start of the PhD Training Programme and thus the scholarship is subject to delays (for instance, due to visa application issues)..



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Application Procedure

Applications should be submitted in digital form as **one single .pdf file** to **iboltvinik@uv.mx**. Furthermore, all applications must be prepared in the English language and include the following documents:

1. A two-page (maximum) description of the research general ideas upon which the research proposal would be eventually developed. Indicate any **wicked urban problems (WUPs)** connected with [the targets of SDG #11](#) identified in the local, regional or national context that would be tackled in the proposal. Likewise, outline how the chosen WUP is to be approached from a **transdisciplinary, spatial and practice-led** perspective.
2. Your CV with academic and professional achievements. It must include contact email, telephone and address.
3. A copy of the passport page showing clearly its period of validity.
4. List of your publications.
5. Example of written text (publication, book chapter, review, etc.)

For any further information or doubts please contact:

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Instituto de Artes Plásticas
Universidad Veracruzana

Note: Incomplete applications will not be considered!

Non-discriminatory Selection Processes and Promoting Underprivileged Groups, Scholars from Different Disciplines and World Regions

Consideration is given to the thematic and professional spectrum of different disciplines and to the representation of the world regions within the SMUS partners network. SMUS follows the non-discriminatory selection processes of DAAD (see DAAD Selection of scholarship holders within the “In-Country/ In-Region Scholarship Programme” March 2020, p. 5):



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DAAD's goal is to continuously increase the participation of less represented (social) groups in our programmes, as we are convinced that diversity and inclusion characterise universities that are particularly high performing. The scholarship programme therefore aims to increase the participation of less strongly represented target groups and the diversity of scholarship holders. For this very reason it is particularly important that the selection processes are carried out without discrimination. Particular care must be taken not to disadvantage applicants with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or other social aspects of disadvantage. The applicants have the possibility – if they wish – to provide information in the application form about disadvantages they have suffered during their studies or in their research due to their disability, chronic illness or other disadvantage (e.g. longer duration of studies due to disability or childcare, necessity to work, etc.). (...)

In the context of gender equality, we would like to point out that DAAD gives preference to female applicants if they are equally qualified. To adhere to and promote the non-discriminatory DAAD selection of the scholarship holders procedure, SMUS will seek to ensure diversity and inclusion in awarding the scholarships. We will include candidates of different career stages from diverse world regions, social and economic backgrounds, and a range of social sciences, engineering, architecture and planning disciplines.