

Application Information

BIGSSS-DAAD Graduate School Scholarship Programme "Contentious Politics in the Digital Age" (CoPoDi)

General information about applying - please read carefully!

Application Material

Candidates are asked to submit the following application documents **in one single pdf file** via email: application@bigsss-bremen.de. Applications consisting of several documents cannot be accepted.

You may use a free version of the [PDFCreator](#) to create the pdf file with all applications documents. The maximum size of the application file must not exceed 20 MB. Please make sure to digitally downsize picture files (e.g. photos of qualification documents) in order to not exceed the maximum size.

Please be advised that an acknowledgement email will be sent upon receipt of your application. Should you not receive a response within one week, we recommend that you contact us again to confirm receipt at this address: admissions-officer@bigsss-bremen.de

To help us to better process and evaluate your application, we ask you to follow the below order of application documents exactly!

1. Personal Information Form

Please note that there is a separate Word document for personal data on our website. You are requested to fill in all required fields. After you have filled in the form, please convert it into a pdf and place it at the top of the application file.

2. Curriculum Vitae

Your CV should include information on your educational and work history, publications, language abilities, extracurricular interests. You must include a statement in your CV on transferable skills.

3. Preliminary Dissertation Proposal

We do not expect you to have a final version of your research proposal upon application. Nonetheless, we ask for a well-developed version of your preliminary dissertation proposal.

It should be written in English, be between 5 and 10 double-spaced pages in length and

include the following elements:

- (1) Summary
- (2) Introduction and problem description
- (3) State of research (highlighting theoretical and empirical debates on your topic and deficits in the literature that your project would address) and theoretical framework
- (4) Your research experience/competence in the field
- (5) Research question(s), objectives and scientific added value of your planned project
- (6) Planned methodology and methods
- (7) Work plan (table), including
 - a schedule of your planned research work, and
 - information about possible field studies/stays outside Germany.
 - If you plan a field study/stay abroad, please submit also a short working plan and schedule of the field trip/stay (when, where, what, how long)
- (8) Bibliography

Please note: By submitting your application, you consent to have your dissertation proposal checked for plagiarism and inappropriate use of generative AI.

4. Statement of Purpose

Your statement of purpose (max. 2 double-spaced pages) should provide a clear picture of your academic and professional interests, background, and career plans. It should also describe how your interests fit in with the BIGSSS/ DAAD-GSSP CoPoDi PhD program and the selected project line(s).

You must indicate at least one potential supervisor from the CoPoDi for your proposal. Please be sure to check the webpages of the BIGSSS/ DAAD-GSSP CoPoDi project lines for guidance concerning potential supervisors. Please note that you should not contact the potential supervisors directly. Instead, it is sufficient that you indicate their names in your Statement of Purpose and list them in our Personal Data Sheet. We will review your choice(s) during the application process.

Should you have specific questions regarding who to choose, we advise that you forward your question to our Admissions Officer Noha Mahmoud (admissions-officer@bigsss-bremen.de) who will then consult within BIGSSS in order to ensure that you get the feedback you need.

5. Statement of Skills and Experience with Methods of Empirical Research

Please provide information on your knowledge of research methods (including methods courses taken). Applicants from disciplines with little or no standard methods training

should provide other pertinent information on relevant research skills. Statements must have a length of at least half a page (double-spaced).

6. Certificates of Educational Degrees (MA / BA / DIPLOMA / MAGISTER)

Please provide a pdf-document of each degree certificate earned, e.g. Bachelor and Master (max. 4 documents). If a certificate is not issued in English or German, provide a certified German or English translation. If you are shortlisted, we will ask you to bring a notarized (or officially certified) photocopy of your original certificates and of the English or German translation. As a rule, applicants should not have graduated any longer than six years before the time of nomination.

7. University Grade Transcripts

Please provide pdf-documents (max. 4 documents) of your official grade transcripts. If work is in progress, you should submit a supplementary transcript at the end of the term. If a transcript is not issued in English or German, provide a certified German or English translation. If you are shortlisted, we will ask you to bring a notarized (or officially certified) photocopy of your original transcripts and of the English or German translation.

8. Certification of English Language Proficiency

Proof of C1-level English language skills or the equivalent is required. Please upload a certificate of English proficiency with your application. For TOEFL scores, upload a copy of your personal score report – do not use the institutional code.

Equivalent IELTS and CAE scores are also accepted. All scores must be officially reported and valid. Please note that TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for 2 years only.

Scores:

- TOEFL: paper-based 600, computer-based 250, internet-based 100
- IELTS: Band 7.5
- Cambridge Certificate: pass CAE

Exempt from the English proficiency requirement are applicants who are native speakers of English or who have received either their *Hochschulzugangsberechtigung* (e.g. passed their A-levels) or earned a higher educational degree at an institution where the language of instruction is English.

In case your University language of instruction is not mentioned, you are requested to submit a letter from your University stating that the language of instruction was in English during your studies.

9. Two Letters of Recommendation

Request these from persons who are qualified to evaluate your academic and professional qualifications, familiar with your academic achievement and in a position to assess your potential for success in BIGSSS. At least one of these letters must be from a professor who has instructed you. Letters of recommendation should be sent directly to our Admissions Officer by email (admissions-officer@bigsss-bremen.de) or mail (Noha Mahmoud, Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), University of Bremen, Postfach 33 04 40, D – 28334 Bremen, Germany). A template can be found at: <https://www.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/recommendation.doc>

Each applicant is also asked to provide contact information for their referees in the Personal Data Sheet. The letters of recommendation should not be older than three years. If you are shortlisted, we may ask you to bring your letters of recommendation in hardcopy. We reserve the right to contact your referees directly.

Further Information

If you have any questions regarding the admissions process, please consult the FAQ on our website. If you then have any further questions, please contact our Admissions Officer Noha Mahmoud (admissions-officer@bigsss-bremen.de).