Cluster of Excellence “The Politics of Inequality”

Bridge Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

General Questions and additional clarifications

Who can apply?

Entitled to apply for a Bridge Fellowship are doctoral researchers who receive funding by the Cluster as well as doctoral researchers who substantially contribute to Cluster projects and receive, entirely or in part, funding in form of a scholarship or by a third party.

Application is also possible for postdoctoral researchers who receive funding from the Cluster.

Funding Purpose

The Bridge Fellowship is intended to cover the doctoral studies' completion and to bridge the term between obtaining a Ph.D. degree and taking the career to the next level. The scope of the funding framework includes postdoctoral researchers who have applied for external funding of their position and need interim financing for the time until a funding decision is made.

Along with financial support, participation in coaching sessions by the Academic Staff Development as well as consulting and tutoring provided by appropriate bodies and staff members of the University of Konstanz are recommended.

Application Documents

A due and complete application comprises the following documents:

- Updated Curriculum vitae containing information on prior employment and duration of current employment contract or scholarship (for doctoral and postdoctoral applicants).

- Statement not longer than 2 pages on how the funds applied for are reasonable in relation to the goals defined (for doctoral and postdoctoral applicants).

- Verification by the Supervisor/Host regarding the financial necessity (for doctoral and postdoctoral applicants).

- Proof of a submitted application for external funding to obtain a follow-up position. The decision on application needs to be pending with the date of submission not more than three months before this application (for postdoctoral applicants).
Please note:
We ask the work schedule to be accompanied by a timetable so that it is clear which tasks will be completed in which time frame.

If proof of a submitted application for external funding cannot be demonstrated by the time of applying for the Bridge Fellowship, we ask for a brief statement explaining the time frame. Proof can be submitted subsequently.

Process of Application and Deadline
Bridge Fellowships are offered twice a year, with the deadlines being in December/January and May of each year.
Applicants are asked to submit their applications via the Online Application Portal of the University.

Language Requirements
The Cluster uses English as its working language. Knowledge of the German language is no requirement for the application.

Conditions of the Fellowship

Duration
Bridge Fellowships are offered for a duration of 3 to a maximum of 6 months.

Employment contract
Bridge Fellowships take the form of an employment contract with the University of Konstanz (pay scale TV-L E13, 65%). The fellowship cannot be awarded as a scholarship.

Workplace
Provided the room situation allows it, a workplace is offered though cannot be guaranteed.
Call specific questions

What is meant by the goals that are to be achieved during the time being bridged?

The goals that are intended to be achieved during the Bridge Fellowship need to be clearly defined. In the case of doctoral researchers for example the defense or the publication of the Ph.D. thesis. The bridge fellowship is not intended to be a simple prolongation of a contract.

In the case of postdoctoral researchers, goals could be the completion of an article or book manuscript.

With respect to support for doctoral researchers in transition periods, what is understood as the next step in the career?

The next step in a career may be a position inside as well as outside of academia.

How much attendance in Konstanz will be expected?

Holders of a Bridge Fellowship are expected to actively take part in the varied program offered by the Cluster of Excellence.

I am part of the GSDS but not officially part of the Cluster. My research topics fit very well and my second supervisor is part of the cluster. Is this enough to fulfill the requirement that states the following: "Entitled to apply for the Bridge Fellowship are doctoral researchers who receive funding by the Cluster or who substantially contribute to Cluster projects and receive, entirely or in part, a scholarship or external funding. Holders of a Bridge Fellowship are expected to actively take part in the varied program offered by the Cluster of Excellence."

If the work you are doing in your department is contributing to one or more Cluster projects and you receive, entirely or in part, a scholarship or external funding at the time of application you are eligible to apply, and your supervisor can verify that with verification letter that is an obligatory part of the application package.

I am still a bit unsure what does the "contribute" implies in this case: just topic-wise or being part of the cluster team officially as well?

According to the Cambridge Dictionary contribution is defined as: “something that you contribute or do to help produce or achieve something together with other people, or to help make something successful." In this case, the Call has defined that the applicant has to substantially contribute to Cluster projects and if you, as the possible applicant, are not sure that you are substantially contributing to the Cluster project,
please consult your Supervisor to check that. Contribution to the Cluster project is part of the third selection criteria of this Call and will be considered by the selection committee.

Does my contract within a project financed by the Young Scholar Fund count as external funding?

For this Call, any funding not coming directly from the Cluster “The Politics of Inequality” is considered external funding.