



# International Max Planck Research School

*for Evolutionary Biology*

## GUIDEBOOK



## **IMPRS GUIDEBOOK**

IMPRS FOR EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

PLÖN, GERMANY

CONCEPT AND EDITION: JOHANA FAJARDO, NICO FUHRMANN, MARIA BARGUÉS I RIBERA,  
MAXIME GODFROID, JAMIE PARKER, LIZEL POTGIETER (IMPRS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
2018/2019)

WRITING, LAYOUT AND FIRST EDITION: KERSTIN MEHNERT AND JOHANA FAJARDO

EDITED BY ANGELA DONNER, JULY 2024

COVER PICTURE: ONUR ÖZER

## **Foreword to the first edition**

Congratulations on your new doctoral student position! A three-year doctoral program is waiting for you with great opportunities to do top level research and to prepare your next career step. We are committed to do our best to support you in this endeavour.

This guidebook should be your first stop when looking for information related to your doctorate and living in Germany. It includes important instructions and details regarding your registration at the University, the curriculum, the thesis advisory committee (TAC), day-equivalents and more. It provides also some information on social life, as well as contacts and advice in cases of conflict or health problems. We hope that you find it useful.

Make sure you read it thoroughly and come back to it whenever you have questions about formalities or whom to contact for further questions. Your feedback will allow us to update this booklet continuously.

*Plön, Germany*

*March, 2020*

### **Some useful abbreviations used throughout this document**

IMPRS: International Max Planck Research School

MPS/MPG: Max Planck Society (or Max Planck Gesellschaft, in German)

MPI: Max Planck Institute

CAU: Christian-Albrechts-Universität (Kiel University)

GEOMAR: GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel

MNF: Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences

DR: Doctoral researcher

TAC: Thesis Advisory Committee

GSC: Graduate Studies Committee

<b>I. IMPRS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. General information .....	5
2. IMPRS organizational structure .....	5
a. <i>Steering committee</i> .....	5
b. <i>Faculty</i> .....	6
c. <i>IMPRS Coordination</i> .....	6
d. <i>Doctoral researchers' representatives</i> .....	6
e. <i>Doctoral researchers</i> .....	6
<b>II. FORMALITIES BEFORE AND UPON ARRIVAL IN GERMANY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
1. Visa and Residence permit .....	8
2. Contracts and Stipends .....	8
3. Health insurance .....	9
a. <i>With a stipend</i> .....	9
b. <i>With a work contract</i> .....	10
4. What needs to be done upon arrival in Germany .....	10
a. <i>MPI Plön</i> .....	10
b. <i>Kiel University</i> .....	10
<b>III. DUTIES AS A DOCTORAL STUDENT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
1. IMPRS training period .....	11
2. Registration at the CAU Kiel .....	11
a. <i>Application for acceptance as a doctoral researcher at the CAU</i> .....	11
b. <i>Doctorate statistics</i> .....	12
c. <i>Enrollment at the CAU Kiel</i> .....	12
d. <i>Registration at the Graduate Center</i> .....	12
3. Other official requirements at the beginning of your doctoral project .....	13
a. <i>Secondary supervisor</i> .....	13
b. <i>IMPRS doctoral researcher supervisor agreement</i> .....	13
c. <i>Good scientific practice and legal requirements</i> .....	13
d. <i>Biostatistics, GSP and RDM courses</i> .....	14
e. <i>Thesis Advisory Committee</i> .....	14
4. Throughout your doctoral project .....	14
a. <i>Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)</i> .....	15
b. <i>Celebration Day</i> .....	15
c. <i>Thesis Advisory Committee meetings</i> .....	15
d. <i>Curriculum and Day-equivalents</i> .....	16
e. <i>Workshop and conference funding through the IMPRS</i> .....	19
f. <i>Publications</i> .....	19
g. <i>Possible extensions of the doctorate time</i> .....	19
h. <i>Wrap-up funding</i> .....	19
5. Concluding your doctoral project .....	20
a. <i>Thesis submission and oral examination process</i> .....	20
b. <i>Dissertation formatting</i> .....	21
c. <i>Thesis submission</i> .....	22
d. <i>Thesis examination committee</i> .....	22
e. <i>Defence (disputation)</i> .....	23
f. <i>Thesis publication</i> .....	23

g.	<i>Doctoral degree certificate</i> .....	23
h.	<i>IMPRS certificate and supplement</i> .....	23
<b>IV.</b>	<b>SOCIAL LIFE</b> .....	<b>24</b>
1.	German courses .....	24
a.	<i>Courses at the MPI</i> .....	24
b.	<i>Courses at Kiel University</i> .....	24
c.	<i>Other offers</i> .....	24
2.	Buddy system .....	24
3.	Other ways to meet with doctoral researchers .....	25
a.	<i>Kiel Graduate Center</i> .....	25
b.	<i>IMPRS social events</i> .....	25
<b>V.</b>	<b>IN CASE OF PROBLEMS</b> .....	<b>26</b>
1.	Contact persons for General conflicts / Bullying .....	26
2.	If mediation is needed .....	27
3.	Mental health problems.....	28
4.	Contact persons in case of scientific misconduct.....	29
5.	Contact persons in case of discrimination .....	29
6.	Contact persons in case of Sexualized Acts .....	30
7.	External legal consultation (only available for MPI staff members).....	30
<b>VI.</b>	<b>LIST OF DOCUMENTS IN THE (INTERNAL) SHARE</b> .....	<b>31</b>
1.	General information .....	31
2.	Official IMPRS information.....	31
3.	Official CAU information .....	31
<b>VII.</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF MOST RELEVANT CONTACTS</b> .....	<b>32</b>

### 1. General information

The general concept of the IMPRS is described in <https://www.mpg.de/en/imprs>:

*" Since 2000, the International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS) have become a permanent part of the Max Planck Society's efforts to promote Ph.D. students. Talented German and foreign junior scientists are offered the opportunity to earn a doctorate under excellent research conditions. A shared characteristic of the graduate programmes at Max Planck Institutes is a close collaboration with universities.*

*Currently, there are 68 IMPRS. The research schools are established by one or several Max Planck Institutes. However, these IMPRS work in close cooperation with universities and other – sometimes foreign – research institutions. This provides an extraordinary framework for the graduate students to work in, and is a great advantage in interdisciplinary research projects, or in projects that require special equipment. Currently, approx. 80 Max Planck Institutes are associated with an IMPRS.*

*In general, about half of the junior researchers who receive their training at an IMPRS are from Germany and the other half from around the world. The principal component of the 3-year study programme is the doctoral thesis representing a major piece of independent research, mainly in an interdisciplinary topic. Doctoral students also benefit from regular workshops, which facilitate exchange of information and provide students with the opportunity to see their research topic from different perspectives. The right to confer degrees remains with the respective university. However, supervising tutors at both the universities and the Max Planck Institutes look after the students, instruct them and test them."*

The IMPRS for Evolutionary Biology is based on a close cooperation between the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology (MPI-EB), the Christian Albrechts University in Kiel (CAU) and the GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel (GEOMAR). The graduate school provides its fellows with opportunities for top level research projects in all areas of contemporary evolutionary biology. Furthermore, the program serves as an excellent starting platform for a successful career in the fields of molecular evolution and genomics, behavioural biology, evolutionary theory and organismal evolution – or a variety of career opportunities outside of academia.

### 2. IMPRS organizational structure

#### a. Steering committee

The IMPRS is headed by the steering committee, which, together with the coordinator of the program, manages all major decisions with respect to the organization of the program, recruitment of doctoral researchers (DR) and new faculty members.

Spokespersons of the IMPRS steering committee (since January 2021):

Paul B. Rainey (MPI) and Eva Holtgrewe-Stukenbrock (CAU).

Additional members of the steering committee are: Arne Traulsen (MPI), Tal Dagan (CAU), Hinrich Schulenburg (CAU), Thorsten Reusch (GEOMAR).

### **b. Faculty**

The IMPRS faculty currently consists of 39 group leaders from all three participating institutions. The faculty is actively involved in the recruitment of new IMPRS candidates and the Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings (see section 2a). Furthermore, they attend IMPRS activities, such as the retreat and the presentations after the training phase. A [list of the faculty members](#) can be found on the IMPRS website.

### **c. IMPRS Coordination**

Contact: Angela Donner, +49 4522 763 233, [donner@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:donner@evolbio.mpg.de)

The IMPRS coordinator's major tasks are the preparation and organization of the recruitment procedure, the support of doctoral researchers in all kind of relevant matters, coordination of courses and lectures, preparation of retreats (together with the DRs), as well as the content management of the IMPRS website and the MAX Intranet. Furthermore, the administrator is the intermediary of all IMPRS doctoral researchers and the IMPRS faculty. She collaborates with the administrative and secretarial staff of the MPI and the University, the Welcome and International Offices at the MPI and at CAU, and the Graduate Center of the University.

### **d. Doctoral researchers' representatives**

Contact: [imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de) or [individually](#) (list of all DR representatives)

#### **• Internal**

The DR representatives, or speakers, *are easy-to-reach contact persons for all IMPRS doctoral researchers. They ensure that the interests of the DRs in the IMPRS are represented in general and in the faculty meetings as well as that they are integrated in structuring the program.*

*The IMPRS DR representatives are elected each year during the IMPRS retreat. Re-election is possible, and preferably, at least one representative from each location (Kiel: CAU/ GEOMAR and Plön: MPI) should be elected. You can send them your comments, questions, ideas, concerns etc. via the IMPRS representatives mail address (see above).*

#### **• External**

External representatives are elected for a term of one year by all MPI DRs. They represent the institute within the Max Planck PhDnet, which in turn is the network of all doctoral candidates and their external representatives of the Max Planck Society. The PhDnet was founded in 2003 to improve interdisciplinary cooperation, to optimize doctoral education and scientific exchange, and to strengthen academic solidarity.

### **e. Doctoral researchers**

57 doctoral researchers are currently (January 2025) members of the IMPRS. They come from 22 different countries with 77 percent of them from outside Germany.

There are two ways of becoming a member of the IMPRS:

First, there is the annual round of recruitment, which is widely advertised and aims at filling the positions that are provided by the core funding of the IMPRS and other positions available at the time of the advertisement (e.g., funded through the ERC or the DFG German Science Foundation). The candidates are pre-selected by the relevant PIs and the MPI Graduate Studies Committee, all members of the IMPRS faculty are involved in the final selection process.

Second, individual recruitments aim at filling positions funded by third party sources at the time when these funds become available throughout the year and when the position is dedicated to the subject of the IMPRS EvolBio. Those recruited by the MPI will have to be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and will automatically join the IMPRS with an obligatory 6-months stipend (funded by either IMPRS or research group). The IMPRS-MPI DRs also have access to the IMPRS conference funding.

Those individually recruited by CAU or GEOMAR become associated members. The joining procedure is started by the PI, registering a new DR by sending an email to the IMPRS coordinator that specifies why the DR would fit into the IMPRS (150-300 words). During the first Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting for this DR, the TAC members should make the formal decision to accept the DR based on the presented project report. Associated members are eligible to participate in the annual retreats, social events and MPI in-house courses, they cannot apply for IMPRS conference funding.



## II. FORMALITIES BEFORE AND UPON ARRIVAL IN GERMANY

---

Contact for 1. – 3.:

MPI: [personal@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:personal@evolbio.mpg.de) or the respective colleague's personal evolbio-email address (until the end of 2024 this was Lisa Haack, MPI DRs personnel administration, +49 4522 763 228, [lisa.haack@vw.evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:lisa.haack@vw.evolbio.mpg.de))

CAU: Christiane Voß (HR CAU), +49 431 880 4900, [cvoss@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:cvoss@uv.uni-kiel.de)

### 1. Visa and Residence permit

Nationals from non-EU countries with a stipend or funding contract need a permit for their residence in Germany right from the start. Before entering Germany, you have to apply for a visa in your home country. You will find information of the requirements for entry [here](#).

Always contact the German Embassy of your home country for further details on what kind of visa you should apply for and what kind of documents are required for your application. Once in Germany, you need to apply for a residence permit.

### 2. Contracts and Stipends

During their doctoral project, all IMPRS DRs receive financial support. The rules for contracts and payments depend on the institution you work for and on the source of funding. MPI and CAU doctoral researchers from the annual intake are also eligible for a six-month stipend (grant)<sup>1</sup> prior to the contract. Stipends and DR's personal third-party grants are not subject to social security and tax. [Here](#) you can find information on the differences between a stipend (grant) and an MPI funding contract.

The amounts for the three types in the below table are rounded approximations and depend on your personal circumstances.

	Stipend <sup>1</sup>	MPG funding contract <sup>2</sup>	Contract of employment <sup>3</sup>
duration	6 months	3 years	flexible
employment status	none	comparable to public service employment	normal public service employment
payment level per month	1468 € incl. subsidies*	3000 € first year (65 % of TVöD13)	65% of TVöD13 or TV-L13, for sums see correspondent links below <sup>3</sup>
social security and tax deductions	none	approx. 778 €	
health insurance cost <sup>4</sup>	210-320 €, subsidy of 100 € might be paid	approx. 240 €	
parental allowance	400 € for the first child, 100 € for each additional child	Child benefit (Kindergeld): 250 € for each child	Child benefit (Kindergeld): 250 € for each child

<sup>1</sup>IMPRS (MPG) funded positions during the training phase are stipends  
(*Promotionsstipendium*)

Stipends constitute an “allowance towards living expenses”. Stipend holders do not have a contractual employment relationship, meaning that they do not have any obligations to take part in activities not related to their research project, such as teaching, or compulsory attendance. Stipends are tax-free and beneficiaries will not pay social insurance contributions like pension insurance or unemployment insurance, but a health insurance contract is compulsory. The stipend ends automatically with finishing the training phase. The maximum duration is six calendar months.

\*In addition to the scholarship, a contribution to material costs can be granted. This is intended to help with procuring special items for the research projects where these cannot be provided by the institute (e.g., specialist literature, special software etc.). Evidence of using the contribution to material costs is no longer required.

<sup>2</sup>IMPRS funded and institutional positions at the MPI are special funding contracts  
(*Promovierende mit Fördervertrag*)

Doctoral researchers at the MPI receive an MPG funding contract. It allows doctoral researchers to devote themselves to their scientific work independently and without restriction. Payment is based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service (TVöD) corresponding to at least 65 % of Pay Group 13 of TVöD (maximum level 2), see “[TVöD Bund Gehaltsrechner](#)”. Taxes and social insurance contributions (health insurance, nursing care insurance, pension insurance, unemployment insurance) are directly deducted from the salary. The contract ends automatically with finishing the dissertation (month of the final exam).

<sup>3</sup>Contracts of Employment are used for CAU and GEOMAR institutional funding, third party funded positions, extensions or wrap-ups

Contracts of Employment give you the status as a normal employee. At the university, such positions usually include teaching obligations. For MPI-DRs, payment is based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service (TVöD) corresponding to Pay Group 13 TVöD Bund (usually 65%), see “[TVöD Bund Gehaltsrechner](#)”. For CAU-DRs it is based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service of the Länder (TV-L) corresponding to 65 % of Pay Group 13 TV-L, see “[TV-L Gehaltsrechner](#)”. Taxes and social insurance contributions (health insurance, pension insurance, unemployment insurance) are directly deducted from the salary. Contracts end after the time specified in the contract.

<sup>4</sup>Health insurance

In order to receive the stipend, stipend holders have to take out a private health insurance that covers the same conditions as a state health insurance (acc. to § 257 SGB V). Under certain circumstances stipend holders can become voluntary members of a state health insurance. The costs of private insurances vary depending on the scope of benefits provided or the age of the person. You will receive a subsidy of up to 100 € per month from the MPG if this applies.

Employees with an MPI funding contract or a work contract are members of the state health insurance system. However, you have to personally apply for membership, but you may choose one among a variety of providers.

### **3. Health insurance**

A health insurance is required by law in Germany. There are two general types of health insurance: private and state health insurance. You must ensure that you have comprehensive health insurance cover immediately on entering Germany. This also applies to members of your family travelling and staying with you. Obtaining the health insurance that is most suitable to you is in principle your responsibility.

#### ***a. With a stipend***

Stipends are free of taxes and outside the scope of the national insurance system. Stipend holders can take private insurance or under certain circumstances become voluntary member of a state health insurance.

The costs of private insurances vary depending on the scope of benefits provided or the age of the person. If you choose a private health insurance that covers the same

conditions as a state health insurance, according to § 257 Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) V, you will receive a subsidy of up to 100 € per month.

**b. With a work contract**

Employees with an MPI funding contract or a contract of employment become a compulsory member of a state health insurance. However, you may choose one among a variety of providers. You have to take out a contract with the health insurer personally in time before the contract begins.

**4. What needs to be done upon arrival in Germany**

*Contact: Angela Donner (MPI Welcome Office), +49 4522 763 233, [welcome@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:welcome@evolbio.mpg.de)*

*Nancy Smith ([CAU Welcome Center](#)), +49 431 880 2727, [welcomecenter@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:welcomecenter@uv.uni-kiel.de)*

*Doc pilot at CAU graduate center, [doc-pilot@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:doc-pilot@uv.uni-kiel.de)*

For a detailed explanation on which arrangements and formalities need to be completed before and after arriving to Germany, please check the brochures [Welcome to Germany](#) and the [MPI Welcome booklet](#), which you received upon arrival.

This checklist provides the most important actions after arrival:

- Registering address at the residents' registration office 'Rathaus/Bürgerbüro'
- Obtaining a residence permit (if applicable)
- Opening a bank account
- Finding permanent housing

**a. MPI Plön**

The [MPI Welcome Office](#) is happy to assist you with all formalities you need to deal with upon arrival.

**b. Kiel University**

**• Doc Pilots**

Once you are registered with the CAU Graduate Center, the doctoral candidates' support service of the Graduate Centre ([Doc Pilots](#)) can help finding accommodation and dealing with the city administration, banks and insurances. It can also help with planning childcare and other questions that relate to your arrival in Kiel.

**• The Welcome Center at Kiel University**

The [CAU Welcome Center](#) offers services to international scientists and scholars coming to Kiel University. The center can inform you on matters such as visas, residence permits, housing, health, liability and accident insurance, registering as a resident, how to open a bank account, the tax office and matters regarding accompanying family members.

**• The International Center of the CAU**

The [CAU International Center](#) coordinates most of the international partnerships and co-operations. The International Center is also in charge of the admission of international (doctoral) students, and it offers advice to foreign students and scientists throughout their stay in Kiel. It provides information about financial aid and international exchange programs for German students, graduates and scientists. It also offers courses and seminars designed specifically to address the needs of graduate students from abroad.

### III. DUTIES AS A DOCTORAL STUDENT

---

Contact: Angela Donner (IMPRS coordinator), +49 4522 763 233  
donner@evolbio.mpg.de

#### 1. IMPRS training period

The doctoral researchers from the annual IMPRS cohort as well as, in general, individually recruited MPI doctoral researchers start their doctoral programme with a training period of six months after their arrival in Plön or Kiel. During the training period, all IMPRS doctoral researchers receive financial support.

Ideally, in this period, they visit a lab in another research group of the IMPRS, preferably in one that is not in the doctoral researcher's home institution. The aim of the training period is to familiarize newly recruited doctoral researchers with the IMPRS and vice versa. In addition, they can learn new methods and techniques to prepare for their doctoral project ('upskilling').

On successful completion of the six-month training period the students will be transferred to an MPI doctoral funding contract or CAU/GEOMAR work contract for further three years (i.e., a total of 42 months of funding). A formal assessment of progress, involving written report, oral presentation and *viva voce* will take place three months into the contract. Successful passage through this appraisal is necessary to be confirmed as a doctoral candidate and to continue the doctoral studies.

#### 2. Registration at the CAU Kiel

Most of you will defend your thesis at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNF) at Kiel University. The graduation criteria are laid down in the Faculty's [Doctoral Degree Regulations](#), which require also a number of formal registration actions. Your registration at different places with different forms and requirements may seem overly bureaucratic. We are working to simplify this in the future, but please be aware that all these registrations come with concrete advantages towards safeguarding your successful doctoral project within the IMPRS. **You will need to provide electronic copies for steps a. and c. to the IMPRS coordinator.**

a. Application for acceptance as a doctoral researcher at the CAU *All DRs must register their dissertation* at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNF) in order to be accepted as a doctoral researcher at the CAU Kiel. This is to ensure that your prior academic qualifications are acceptable to the MNF. Accordingly, this must be done before the commencement of work on the doctoral project. To do this, the following two forms must be filled and submitted with the respective supporting documents:

[application form](#) (including required certificates)  
[supervision agreement](#) of the MNF

Please read the [checklist](#) and the forms carefully, fill them with the help of your supervisor, gather all supporting documents, such as a scan of your master's degree, and upload all via the link given on their webpage. Most MPI DRs need to include the application of their group leaders as well (see below). The supervisor also has to write an email to Ms. Bahar Kaya at [promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de](mailto:promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de) to state who will be the possible second examiner. At least one of the examiners must be an appointed member of the MNF.

An electronic copy of the letter of approval of the Faculty and of the CAU supervision agreement need to be sent to the IMPRS coordinator.

*Important for MPI DRs' supervisors:* As members of a non-university research institution, most of the MPI group leaders (apart of Professors Rainey, Stukenbrock, Traulsen, and Emmy Noether PIs) must hand in an application to the Doctoral Degree Committee (Promotionsausschuss) of the MatNatFaculty for supervising their doctoral researchers. This has to be done by the respective PI.

In order to apply, you can adapt the [application template](#) (in German). Please provide the following further information with this application: CV, publication list, motivation, scientific achievements, including how the evaluation of your position as independent researcher took place. Send all documents by email to Gesa Koberg at [promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de](mailto:promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de)

*Exception:* Doctoral researchers who do not find a suitable second examiner at the CAU might register with another university where they find such a qualified person, e.g. at the university in Lübeck. The defence would take place at this university according to their rules and regulations. Such DRs may still become members of the IMPRS so that they can benefit from the training programme. The following items will apply also for them, only that the responsible institution will be their respective university.

**b. Doctorate statistics**

*All doctoral researchers must register online in the CAU's doctorate statistics.* By law, universities have both the permission and the obligation to collect data from you as a doctoral candidate and deliver them to the statistical authority of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein. You will receive the link to the [CAU's doctorate statistics](#) from the Dean's office as soon as you have submitted your supervision agreement and your degree certificate. You need to provide a copy of the confirmation email of your registration to the IMPRS coordinator.

**c. Registration at the Graduate Center**

*All IMPRS DRs must be registered at the Graduate Center.* This provides general support in areas of interdisciplinary qualifications, funding, consulting of doctoral teams, among others. Most importantly, the Graduate Center offers soft skill courses relevant for your IMPRS curriculum, as well as German courses. For complete [registration](#), you need first to be registered with the MatNatFaculty (see [section III.1.a](#) above).

**d. Enrollment at the CAU Kiel**

*In addition to the MNF registration, the IMPRS strongly advises all DRs to enroll at the CAU.* This gives you access to all benefits reserved for matriculated students. While this comes with a cost (current fee [here](#), plus one-off registration fee of 55 EUR) this is more than offset by the benefits. Most importantly, as a registered student, you will get a "Semesterticket", which is a state-wide transportation ticket that allows you to use public transport in the whole of Germany (no IC/ICE trains). Hence, it includes also the free transport between the institutes in Kiel and Plön. Further, you can get many student discounts, you are eligible to register for the sport courses in Kiel and you can use the psychological helpline of the student union (Studentenwerk). Here you can find additional information on the "[Semesterticket](#)" in general (in English).

*International doctoral researchers* need to enroll via the [CAU International Center](#) (Kiel, Westring 400) by sending the **MNF letter of acceptance, bachelor's and master's degree** (certificates, transcripts of records in German or English) and a **CV** to [apply-international@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:apply-international@uv.uni-kiel.de)

The responsible officer (currently Katja Scholz) from the CAU International Center will then inform you about other necessary documents, such as a confirmation of your health insurance (during stipend "exemption from compulsory insurance" - statement issued on request by any AOK or online by [Techniker Krankenkasse](#)) and a confirmation of payment of semester fee.

**Deadlines for the initial enrollment at the CAU International Center are**

1 March-30 April summer semester

1 September-30 October winter semester

If you are unable to meet the enrollment deadline, please contact the International Center as soon as possible: [apply-international@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:apply-international@uv.uni-kiel.de)

*Doctoral researchers from Germany* are looked after the CAU "[Studierendenservice](#)" (Kiel, Christian-Albrechts-Platz 4). For your enrollment, you will find relevant information, such as required documents and the exact times to enroll (see "zulassungsfreie Fächer") [here](#) (including the "[Erklärung zur Einschreibung für das Studienziel 'Promotion'](#)" and "Antrag auf Einschreibung aus der [Online-Einschreibung](#)") or.

Note that all of you would have to [re-register](#) and pay the fee each semester. Re-registration needs to be done in the beginning of the year for the summer term and in the middle of the year for the winter term. You will get a reminder for each term after the first registration.

**Generally, times for (re-)enrollment are**

15 February-15 March summer semester (April – September)

1 August-30 September for winter semester (October – March)

**3. Other official requirements at the beginning of your doctoral project**

**a. Secondary supervisor**

Your principal supervisor will appoint a secondary supervisor who will establish and maintain a close contact with you. The secondary supervisor is a PI who is an expert in the field of your doctoral thesis and can be a member of any German or international institution. The secondary supervisor is a back-up in the event that the principal supervisor cannot fulfill his/her task for a (temporary) period of time.

**b. IMPRS doctoral researcher supervisor agreement**

Our IMPRS developed an [agreement between the doctoral researcher on the one hand and the principal supervisor and the secondary supervisor on the other hand](#), which contains detailed information on the program, e.g., general structure, supervision, thesis and curriculum. The objective of this agreement is to have a written document for all involved on how the program works and to provide a list of "rights and duties", which both parties can rely on if any problems occur.

Both, doctoral researcher and supervisors should read this document carefully and sign it. A copy of the signed agreement should be sent to the IMPRS coordinator.

This agreement should not be confused with the supervision agreement of the MatNatFaculty (see above). These are two different documents!

**c. Good scientific practice and legal requirements**

All scientific work within the IMPRS is based on the [Rules of Good Scientific Practice of the Max Planck Society](#). Please read the guidelines carefully and follow them at all times.



Work in laboratories is subject to security and other regulations. You need to attend the courses and advice provided by your institute before starting your work in a laboratory.

Work with animals that are subject to regulations according to the animal welfare law require to take a special [course](#) before handling the animals.

**d. Biostatistics, GSP and RDM courses**

The CAU offers a [biostatistics course](#) in the beginning of each year as part of the Evolutionary Master program (MAMBE). All IMPRS DRs should attend this course ideally in their first year. Information on how and when to register will be sent out by the IMPRS coordinator. We also strongly recommend to take courses on "Good Scientific Practice" and "Research Data Management".

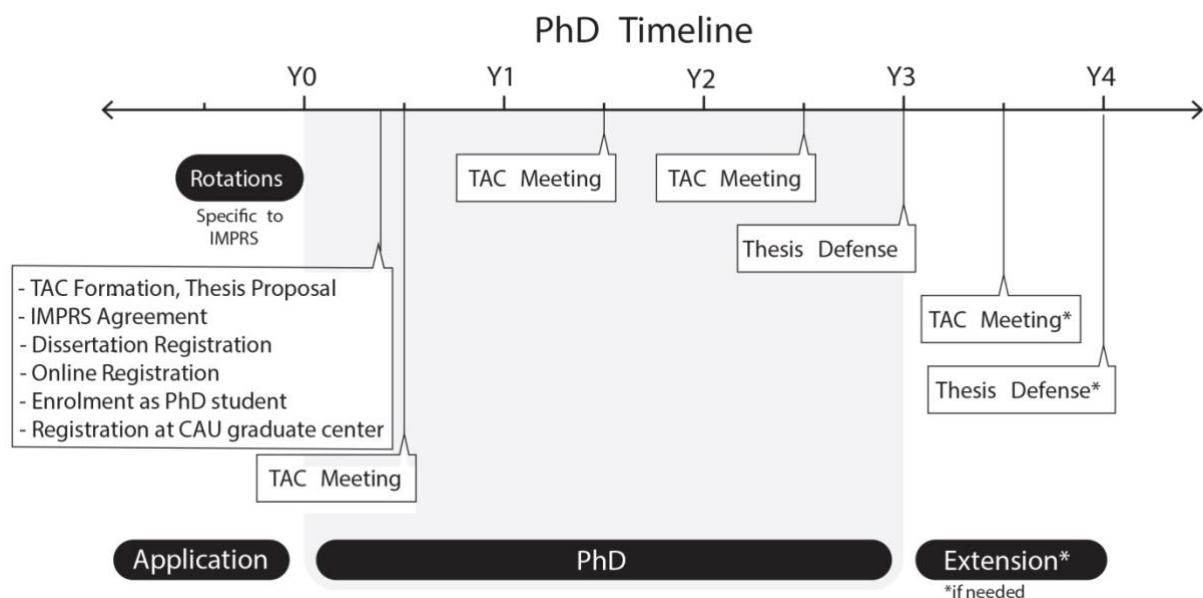
**e. Thesis Advisory Committee**

*Every doctoral researcher must have a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC).* The committee will discuss with you your progress in regular intervals, which should be viewed as positive check points to assure the quality of your thesis. Furthermore, the TAC members are possible contact persons in case of conflicts or other problems.

The TAC consists of at least three members. One member is your principal supervisor, the two other members are normally also group leaders from the IMPRS faculty, but one external member or one advanced postdoc would also be possible. At least one member should come from Kiel and one from Plön. Ideally, the CAU affiliated member will also later be your thesis' second referee. Note that members of the committee have to be independent of one another.

The committee should be formed within the first six months after the doctoral project starts, latest towards the end of your first year. This is to avoid disappointment that "popular" PIs may not be available anymore if you leave it too late.

**4. Throughout your doctoral project**



**a. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)**

This panel was established in 2022 by the then new speaker Paul Rainey. The members are senior scientists from the MPI, their membership is rotating. Currently, these are Paul Rainey (chairperson), Julien Dutheil, Nathalie Feiner, Neda Barghi and David Rogers.

The GSC provides guidance at the time of selection, support and mentorship to the first-year doctoral researchers, and they play a central role at the nine-month assessment (see b. Celebration Day).

The GSC hosts monthly informal coffee meetings at the MPI-EB from the start of the new cohort in fall of each year until shortly before the Celebration Day.

The GSC support is aimed preliminarily at the IMPRS-MPI DRs, but CAU/GEOMAR DRs are also welcome to take advantage of it.

**b. Celebration Day**

Approximately nine months from the start of the doctoral project, this event marks the transferal from the stipend to the three-year MPI doctoral funding contract or CAU work contract respectively. Each DR presents their project and themselves in a 15-minute talk followed by a 5-minute discussion. The Celebration Day is open to all members of the IMPRS and the MPI-EB. It will take place in the MPI in Plön on a single half day and will be connected to a social event. Currently, we have one event per year in June.

The DRs submit a written report on their project (no more than 5,000 words) to the PI and GSC two weeks prior to the Celebration Day.

Within two weeks of the oral presentations, each of the MPI-DR will attend a viva with a panel comprised of the GSC (or at least two representatives of), the PI, and TAC members in case it has been formed. CAU-DRs are exempt from this part.

The DR will receive verbal and written feedback. In the case of problems, solutions will be identified. In situations where it is clear that problems stem from the DR (lack of engagement, effort, commitment, etc.), they will be given two months to address concerns and a second viva will be conducted.

Supervisors of DRs that successfully pass through the nine-month assessment phase are expected to do whatever is necessary to ensure completion of the DR's dissertation.

**c. Thesis Advisory Committee meetings**

TAC meetings should be held as required, but as a general rule once per year. At least two should be held during the course of your doctoral project. The first coincides with the *viva voce* nine month into your doctoral project.

For the following TAC meetings it is your task to organize these meetings. Please use <https://terminplaner.dfn.de/> to comply with the MPG rules for finding a date for the meetings. As soon as you have fixed a TAC meeting date, inform the IMPRS coordinator about it.

At the latest one week before every TAC meeting you must send a written report to your TAC members (please use this [cover page](#)). You will also provide them a [list of courses](#) taken (see d. Curriculum and Day-equivalents) so the TAC members can make additional suggestions for participating in specific teaching modules that could complement your skills. When preparing the list, you are welcome to consult the IMPRS coordinator on questions regarding day equivalents if in doubt.



To ease the preparation for the TAC, a [checklist for TAC meetings](#) has been set up. In the checklist you will find information about how to organize this meeting, what documents need to be prepared and sent and what topics should be talked about during the meetings.

After the meeting, you should write a protocol based on the established [protocol form](#), make sure that you and your supervisor sign it, and send it to your TAC members.

Once the protocol is signed by your supervisor, do not forget to send these documents to the IMPRS coordinator by e-mail:

- ✓ TAC report
- ✓ TAC protocol, signed by at least the student and the supervisor
- ✓ list of courses
- ✓ proofs of attendance

#### ***d. Curriculum and Day-equivalents***

All IMPRS DRs need to complete a curriculum of modules before they can submit their thesis. There is a high flexibility for the combination of modules to support the specific scientific interests, as well as for providing general soft skills. It is recommended that the choice of modules should be discussed with the supervisor and/or the thesis committee.

To make the time investments comparable, we calculated a "day-equivalent" (d.e.) factor for each module, based on the approximate time that one is spending for it. You should aim for 60 day-equivalents over the three-year (and a half) doctorate period. This may initially sound much, but you will realize very soon that it is actually straight forward to achieve this.

Modules include *courses, lectures, seminars* and *soft skill training*. Further, *laboratory exchanges*, participation in *conferences* as well as the *organization of conferences* or *the IMPRS retreat* are highly supported elements of the teaching curriculum. It is generally up to you how you distribute these elements over the entire period of your doctoral project.

You need to provide the IMPRS coordinator with an [accumulative chronological course list](#) as well as documentation for the attendance of each module.

Overview of activities and corresponding d.e.

<b>Activity</b>	<b><i>Day-equivalents</i></b>
Lectures/seminars	<i>2 day-equivalents per 1 hour (per week/ per term)</i>
Journal Clubs and Lab seminars	<i>2 day-equivalents each per year</i>
Practical courses	<i>1 day-equivalent per day or 5 day-equivalents per week</i>
Workshops (with active participation)	<i>1 day-equivalent per day</i>
Conference visits	<i>4 day-equivalents for preparing a poster or a talk</i>
IMPRS or other retreats (research group, other programmes) or other internal meetings, such as Aquavit or DOKMA	<i>2 day-equivalents for active participation (workshops)</i>
Organization of workshops, conferences, retreats or internal meetings	<i>5 day-equivalents for working in the organization committee</i>
Lab exchange	<i>5 day-equivalents per week</i>
Soft skill training	<i>1 day-equivalent per day</i>
Teaching (on a complete voluntary basis)	<i>not more than 5 day-equivalents per 60 day equivalents</i>

Here is some further information about the most common curriculum activities:

- Lectures/seminars

Lectures and seminars serve to enhance the doctoral researcher's conceptual understanding of specific topics in evolutionary biology. They are usually offered by IMPRS faculty members and can change over the years. This is complemented by participation in ongoing group seminars and journal clubs.

- Practical courses

Practical courses usually take place over one to two weeks and provide an opportunity for the doctoral researchers to learn specific methods or techniques. Faculty members offer these courses but external courses can be attended too.

- MAMBE courses

The Master of Science in Molecular Biology and Evolution ([MAMBE](#)) at Kiel University is an international program, taught entirely in English. Together with several collaborations, it specifically combines the areas of evolution and molecular biology. The program begins every winter semester, in October. Specific basic courses can be attended by IMPRS doctoral researchers if places are available.

You can find the complete list of courses including descriptions, names of course leader(s) and registration deadlines [here](#). Note that there are limited places for many of these courses, so you should contact the course leader early if you are interested in attending one of them. For these courses, registration is not done through the university, but directly by writing an email to the course leader.

- Transferable skills/ Soft skill training

Soft skill courses train transferable or personal skills, which should improve the junior researchers employment opportunities and future career performance in or outside academia. Possible topics are presentation skills, grant writing, paper writing, teamwork, time management or job application. They are mostly coordinated and offered by the Graduate Center of Kiel University (only registered DRs) but also by the IMPRS, and the MPG. Ideally, each DR should visit several such courses.

A list of upcoming courses can be found [here](#).

- Lab exchange

Lab exchanges within the IMPRS are meant to offer doctoral researchers the option to gain insight into another project or a new technique. They are organized on an individual basis between researchers who are interested. They usually last one week.

- Conference visits

Starting in the second year of thesis, each IMPRS researcher can apply to visit international conferences, under the condition of presenting a talk or a poster. For funding opportunities see [section c](#), below.

- Retreats (IMPRS, own research group or other program)

Once a year, the DRs together with the IMPRS coordinator organize a retreat where the DRs are asked to engage in year specific workshops held by IMPRS faculty members. The DRs are invited to present their projects on a poster. Guest speakers give scientific or science related talks. The DRs have the opportunity to networking and discussing collaborations. Furthermore, organizational questions for the IMPRS program are discussed during these days and DR representatives are elected.

Besides the scientific impact, the social component is important during the retreat. It gives the DRs and faculty members the possibility to get to know each other better and to discuss scientific topics and other matters on a relaxed basis. This significantly improves our IMPRS community.

Also retreats of other programs of which you are member, or group retreats can be counted.

- Organization of workshops, conferences or internal meetings

IMPRS doctoral researcher are invited to engage in organizing workshops or the IMPRS retreat. Each student should participate at least once in an organization committee.

***e. Workshop and conference funding through the IMPRS***

The IMPRS provides some central funding for attending (international) workshops and conferences. All IMPRS members can apply for up to three such trips during their PhD time (note that additional trips may be funded by other sources). Applications for international conferences can be made from the second year onwards, including the option for one application after the submission of the thesis to present the results of your thesis. Note that you need the support of your supervisor for all applications.

There are two calls per calendar year, application deadlines are announced by the IMPRS coordinator by e-mail. The approval depends on the total sum of all applications and is subject to sufficient funds in the IMPRS budget.

An [application form](#), including all requested information, such as an abstract (conference visits are only fundable under the condition that a talk is given or a poster is presented), an explanation about the clear focus on evolutionary biology of the conference and a statement of the supervisor needs to be submitted to the IMPRS coordinator.

Please read further [instructions and guidelines](#) before applying.

***f. Publications***

The IMPRS must be listed in the acknowledgments of all publications involving all IMPRS DRs with the text: "NN was supported by the International Max-Planck Research School for Evolutionary Biology (IMPRS EvolBio)".

***g. Possible extensions of the doctorate time***

Doctoral funding is provided for three years and you are encouraged to submit your thesis within this time. If an extension is needed (two times for six months each maximum), further financing should come from your supervisor's funds. This also means that all IMPRS faculty members accepting a doctoral researcher are expected to ensure that the funds required for a possible extension are available. If an extension is envisaged, the TAC needs to support this, i.e. organize a TAC meeting in time to allow the decision to be taken.

***h. Wrap-up funding***

The doctoral funding ends at the end of the month in which you defend your thesis. Your supervisor should then ensure a wrap-up funding for an additional six months period to write publications and prepare your next career step (e.g. write an application for postdoc funding). In case a supervisor cannot provide such additional funding, the IMPRS might help if the budget allows it. The respective funds available for this, as well as the application procedure are announced by the spokespersons, normally twice a year. Please check well in advance to the completion of the thesis the options for wrap-up funding with your supervisor.

## 5. Concluding your doctoral project

### a. Thesis submission and oral examination process

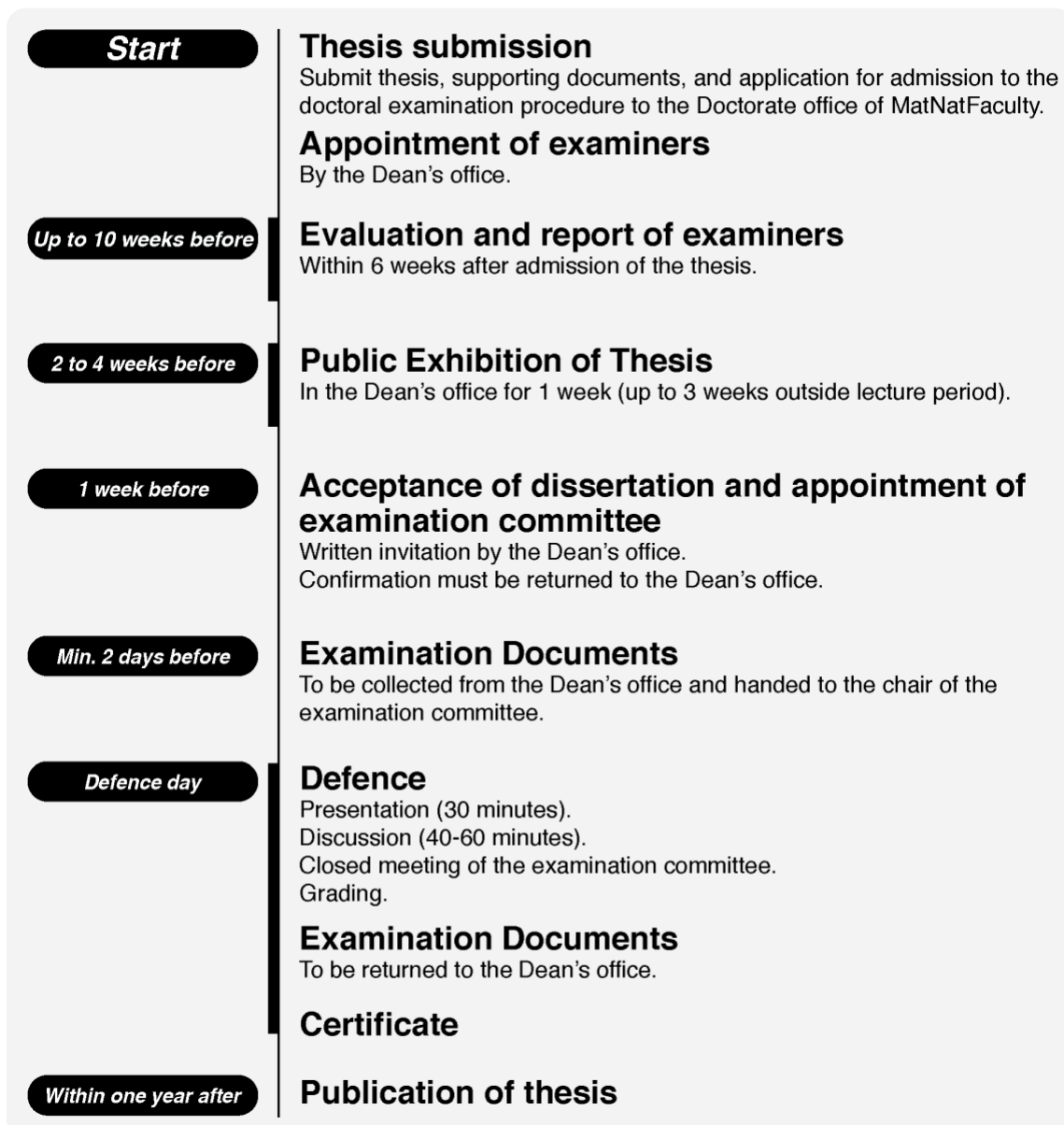
Contact: Angela Donner (IMPRS coordinator), +49 4522 763 233, [donner@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:donner@evolbio.mpg.de)

Gesa Koberg (CAU Dean's Office), +49 431 880-1539, [promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de](mailto:promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de)

The submission and successful defence of your thesis at the end of your doctorate program entitles you to the German doctoral degree "Doctor of Natural Sciences" (Dr. rer. nat.: doctor rerum naturalium), which is considered to be the equivalent to the international academic degree "Doctor of Philosophy" (Ph.D.). For most students, the doctoral degree is awarded by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the Kiel University. Other arrangements are possible in special circumstances.

Here you find all important [information on the procedure](#) including contacts, forms needed to be filled and a [detailed checklist on the thesis submission and oral examination process](#). A summary is provided in the following sections.

### Step-by-step defence timeline



The candidate is responsible for organizing the defence. This includes submitting the document, defining the date and finding a venue (a lecture room at the University of Kiel), establishing the Examination Committee including a chairperson, and collecting and returning the examination documents at the Dean's Office.

Gesa Koberg from the Dean's Office can provide the detailed information.

#### ***b. Dissertation formatting***

The dissertation can be produced as a monograph, cumulative dissertation or as a combination of both. Full official details can be found [here](#).

The **monograph** represents a comprehensive unitary study of a research topic. It does not contain any articles published in journals or chapters from books. A dissertation will also be classed as a monograph where the development of publications from the monograph is envisaged at the time of submission. The monograph is structured as follows: introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, bibliography and appendix.

The **cumulative or publication-based dissertation** draws on previously published articles in peer-reviewed journals or book publications. Even though setting a standard is difficult in such a diverse faculty, in the case of the MatNatFaculty, a cumulative dissertation *must contain at least 3 articles in peer-reviewed journals*, with at least 2 having been published (i.e. a DOI can be quoted). The doctoral candidate must have a significant role in these publications documented in a detailed declaration of own contributions to the publications.

Cumulative dissertations must also contain connecting elements (introduction, connecting passages, methods section, comprehensive presentation of underlying data material, categorization of the research issue and contextual connections between the articles).

The **combination dissertation** is a monograph that includes one or two articles previously published (with DOI) or submitted in peer-reviewed journals or book publications. In the case of publications, the candidate's own contribution must be clearly stated in a separate declaration. Additionally, in the case of combination dissertations, the publications must be incorporated into the dissertation itself and not presented purely as an additional element.

The doctoral dissertation may be written in German or English. It should contain a one-page abstract in German and English.

In case you add a digital supplement to your thesis, please follow these guidelines:

During writing of the thesis put your digital supplement in an open repository online. Find a directory of scientific data repositories best fitted for your data at "[re3data](#)". If there is no open repository in your field, you might also use the "[Zenodo](#)" repository at CERN, which is open for submissions of all types of research data, or the one from the Max Planck Society's MPDL, "[Edmond](#)" or the one from [CAU](#). Those repositories will provide you a DOI (digital object identifier) that you should insert in your thesis.

If you need any assistance or have further questions, please contact Iben Martinsen at the MPI library (+49 5422 763 56, [martinsen@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:martinsen@evolbio.mpg.de)) or at the CAU library Thilo Paul-Stüve (+49 431 880 1969, [paul-stueve@rz.uni-kiel.de](mailto:paul-stueve@rz.uni-kiel.de)), Thorsten Wetzenstein for MACAU (+49 431 880 2740, [wetzenstein@ub.uni-kiel.de](mailto:wetzenstein@ub.uni-kiel.de)) or in general [datenrepositorium@rz.uni-kiel.de](mailto:datenrepositorium@rz.uni-kiel.de).

In case you did not do the previous step before your thesis submission, do it afterwards. Add DOIs to your thesis and submit it online.

### **c. Thesis submission**

The application for admission to the doctoral examination procedure must include:

Four copies of the dissertation, including a bound signed statement confirming the following:

- that apart from the supervisor's guidance the content and design of the paper is all the candidate's own work;
- whether the *thesis has already been submitted* either partially or wholly as part of a doctoral degree to another examining body and whether it has been *published or submitted for publication*;
- that the thesis has been prepared according to the Rules of Good Scientific Practice of the German Research Foundation;
- if an academic degree has ever been withdrawn

A brief outline of the applicant's academic career, including details of nationality, degree programme and number of semesters spent at individual universities (does not have to be bound in the thesis).

Supporting documents for the required studies with the associated certificate and any other certificates of institutions of higher education.

Current certificate of good conduct for presentation to an authority (Führungszeugnis für Behörden – Beleg-Art O), purpose of use: doctoral degree (no more than 6 months old, to be applied for at the Bürger und Ordnungsamt (previously:

Einwohnermeldeamt): Take CAU's checklist with you to proof necessity of this certificate and the address it is to be sent to. Submit receipt of 13 € service fee with the rest of your documents, waiting for the actual certificate to arrive at CAU may prolong the process.

Two persons suggested by the supervisor as the possible second examiner using this [form](#) (in German).

Two copies of a letter written by the supervisor on the doctoral researcher's own contribution to publications that are the work of several authors.

These documents need to be submitted to [Gesa Koberg](#).

### **d. Thesis examination committee**

The thesis examination committee has to consist of at least 4 examiners appointed and invited by the Dean upon suggestions by the doctoral candidate and the supervisor.

The chair of the committee needs to be part of the "[Prüfungsausschuss](#)" (doctoral degree committee) or should be a chair or a deputy of the [section committee](#).

However, she/he cannot be a member of the working group in which the doctoral dissertation was written.

The supervisor will be *first examiner*. Furthermore, a *second examiner* and at least *another* university lecturer or private lecturer or adjunct professor who is *member of Kiel University* or another university has to be part of the thesis examination committee. Ideally, you already have asked the people of your choice if they would be willing to be members of your examination committee. The candidate's suggestions will be accepted where possible.

*At least one of the examiners must be an appointed member of the MatNatFaculty.*

This is especially important if the supervisor is a member of the MPI. Your supervisor officially needs to suggest two persons as possible second examiner with an extra form included in your submission documents (see link above in the "[Thesis submission](#)" section).

The majority of the thesis examination committee's members must be members of the faculty awarding the doctorate (MatNatFaculty). For example, if the ratio is two faculty



members vs two external members, you need to find a fifth committee member who is part of the faculty.

Group leaders that are not official members of the MatNatFaculty can apply to the Dean of the faculty to act as first examiners when they are supervisors of the doctoral candidate.

***e. Defence (disputation)***

The defence is carried out in the form of a disputation. The candidate may choose whether to conduct the defence in German or in English. The defence is open to the university public. An application to exclude the university audience must be well-grounded. ("I do not have the confidence for it" or "I am nervous" are not acceptable reasons.)

The defence consists of a presentation of the dissertation by the doctoral candidate lasting around 30 minutes, and a subsequent discussion with the Examination Committee on the topic of the dissertation and related fields lasting between 45 to 60 minutes.

For the overall grade, the mark for the dissertation is counted 60%, the mark for the disputation 40%. At the end of the disputation the committee decides also whether the dissertation is ready for publication, or whether amendments are necessary.

You will find up-to-date information on the procedures on the [CAU MNF website](#) and on their checklist for doctoral candidates.

***f. Thesis publication***

A dissertation that is acknowledged as ready for publication must be supplied to the faculty and published on the University server within one year of the oral examination.

If the dissertation needed an amendment after the disputation, the supervisor informs the Dean once it is ready (this may be communicated by email). In this case, an extra copy for the Dean's Office is to be enclosed with the copies for the University Library.

You can find more information on the required documents in the [checklist on thesis submission and oral examination process](#) and the [information sheet on the publication of dissertations](#), both provided by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

In addition, if you are affiliated with the MPI, you are obliged to report the dissertation to the MPI library via the [publication form](#) on our MAX Intranet.

***g. Doctoral degree certificate***

The doctoral degree certificate will be presented by the Dean within the scope of an award ceremony generally held once a semester. Upon request, the certificate can also be issued in the Dean's Office after meeting all the requirements. Once the candidate has received the doctoral degree certificate, he/she is entitled to include the doctoral degree title as part of his/her name. Before this, the candidate is not permitted by the University to use the doctoral degree title in any form.

***h. IMPRS certificate and supplement***

After a successful dissertation, each IMPRS participant also receives a certificate of the IMPRS. This certificate confirms the successful completion of the doctoral thesis within the IMPRS and lists all courses attended during this time. It can only be issued after having sent the IMPRS coordinator a scanned copy of the official CAU certificate.



### 1. German courses

Contact: Angela Donner (MPI Welcome Office), +49 4522 763 233, [welcome@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:welcome@evolbio.mpg.de)

#### a. Courses at the MPI

Currently, the MPI is offering up to two beginner German courses per year for newly arrived international scientists. IMPRS members working in Kiel are welcome to attend. These courses are free of charge with regular attendance of minimum 80% of the classes. One of these courses currently takes place in the beginning of each year, in a format of 1,5 hours/week during 10 weeks.

#### b. Courses at Kiel University

At Kiel University, there are several opportunities for learning German:

- [The CAU Graduate Center "Conversational German" course](#)

It is designed especially for doctoral researchers from abroad and their non-German partners who would like to learn German for use in daily life. The course takes place during the weekend at the Graduate Center.

You must be registered with the Graduate Center to participate in this course (see [Section III.1.d.](#)). Partners of registered doctoral researchers may also attend. [Here](#), you will find further information on how to apply, the teacher and the course itself.

- [The Department German as a Foreign Language](#)

It offers complimentary [German classes](#) to support your study or research program, as well as everyday life at Kiel University or anywhere else in Germany. Courses are offered at different levels. However, only a limited number of places is available.

You need to be enrolled at the university to take these courses.

#### c. Other offers

There are institutions that offer German courses in Plön and Kiel:

[Volkshochschule in Plön and surrounding](#) (adult education centre) – in German

[Volkshochschule in Kiel](#) (adult education centre) – in German

[Inlingua](#) Kiel

[Berlitz](#) Kiel

Please contact the institutions directly for information.

### 2. Buddy system

Contact: DR representatives, [phdrep@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:phdrep@evolbio.mpg.de)

The buddy system is a way to encourage contact and exchange between new and old doctoral researchers. In this way, new DRs will be integrated quickly into the German system and the IMPRS program, the intercultural life at Kiel University, GEOMAR and the MPI, or the cultural activities in Kiel and Plön. The system promotes friendship, and aims to support the new PhD students with their adaptation into their new life in Plön or Kiel.

The idea is that new doctoral researchers get matched with peers in their second year by the IMPRS coordinator. The first contact is arranged by one of the DR representatives. The buddies can keep in touch on their own and might meet in their free time as well. They decide how often they want to meet. Currently, we do not have the system running. If you are interested, please contact the IMPRS coordinator.

### **3. Other ways to meet with doctoral researchers**

#### ***a. Kiel Graduate Center***

- ***Docs Get-Together***

The "[Docs Get-Together](#)"-meetings are a perfect opportunity for you to meet other doctoral researchers from different countries, to share experiences and exchange ideas, to enjoy a fun evening and make new friends.

You can find further information about the upcoming meeting [here](#).

- ***Docs Build Bridges***

"[Docs Build Bridges](#)" give you the chance to meet other doctoral researchers at Kiel University. For this purpose they offer you a range of services, such as meetings, intercultural exchange or summer parties.

#### ***b. IMPRS social events***

The IMPRS office organizes social events for all IMPRS doctoral researchers throughout the year. Announcements are made by email.

These social events are mainly organized to get together all doctoral researchers of the IMPRS and to strengthen the communication between Kiel and Plön peers. Also, new members get to know each other faster and better in social activities.

Upon availability, money for travel costs and the program, such as entrance fees or guided tours, can be paid by the IMPRS; any food and drinks or additional costs have to be paid on your own. In general, the DR representatives will join these events and take good care of you.

Any suggestions on where you would like to go or what you would like to visit during such a social event are welcome and can be sent to the IMPRS DR representatives.

Wherever people come together, there will be conflicts and problems. Unresolved conflicts may have an impact on the overall working climate and may significantly affect your motivation.

However, you do not have to find a solution by yourself, if you find yourself in a conflict or problematic situation. There are different points of contact depending on whether it is a conflict with your peers, with superior or subordinate staff members, whether you feel discriminated against due to your personal situation, or if you are currently unable to perform the way you wish you could, owing to professional or private issues.

### 1. Contact persons for General conflicts / Bullying

- Supervisor

Your supervisor is always your first point of contact when it comes to conflicts within the team, with your peers from your own unit or from other units.

If your supervisor is involved in the conflict, or if you would generally prefer more distance and confidentiality, there are further points of contact that will provide help and advice for finding a solution:

- Members of the Thesis Advisory Committee

Members of the TAC can be contacted either in the context of a TAC meeting or at any other time. They can help to resolve conflicts with the supervisor or even help to find a new supervisor.

- Works Council

The Works Council with its members is the workforce representation of all staff members of your institution. It is bound to confidentiality and will only act in coordination with you.

All members of the Central Works Committee can be contacted.

- Contacts and further information on the works council of the MPI can be found [here](#) (only available for MPI members).
- Contacts and further information on the works council of the CAU Kiel can be found [here](#) (site only in German). General contact: [prw@personalrat-w.uni-kiel.de](mailto:prw@personalrat-w.uni-kiel.de)
- Contacts and further information on the works council of GEOMAR can be found [here](#).

- DR representatives

The representatives are contact persons for any issue. They might be able to solve a minor problem on their own but they can also redirect you to any other responsible person if needed. They also might help you seek for help regarding specific issues by contacting the PhDnet.

- IMPRS representatives' mail address: [imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de)

- Employee and Manager Assistance Program (EMAP)

EMAP is a professional, external and anonymous counselling service for employees and executives as well as stipend holders working for or being connected to the MPG. This means that IMPRS DRs at the CAU and GEOMAR can only use this service while they receive a stipend from the MPG. You will find more info [here](#).

The service, provided by [Fürstenberg Institut](#), is available to you if you need support with professional, personal or health-related issues: in person, by phone or online around the clock, as well as in emergencies at night, on weekends and on public holidays. The counselling is offered in German and English. Spanish, French, Dutch, Russian and Turkish are also available if the need arises.

#### How does the service work?

Fürstenberg Institut guarantees anonymity and absolute discretion, and will treat all information and data strictly confidential. The first step is to get an appointment with a counsellor who can help you with your specific needs. This can be done by calling the 0800/801007070 (free of charge, from abroad only via +49 69 25738395 with costs), or online via their website (for their Kiel office go [here](#)). After identifying the topic of the counselling, you will be put in touch with experts in psychology, medicine, health science, etc. Upon request, you may also arrange a personal consultation appointment at a location near you or use the video-chat or text-chat options. For a detailed list of the kind of topics that you can consult, take a look at the website.

When asked about who your employer is, please mention the MPG (this also applies for IMPRS doctoral researchers at the CAU or GEOMAR while they receive an MPG stipend). IMPORTANT: In case of an emergency, let them know and you will be immediately forwarded to a counsellor or receive a same-day appointment.

#### What issues can the EMAP help you with?

- Professional and workplace-related topics (e.g., occupational stress situations and conflicts, how to deal with increasing demands, change processes, decision-making, time- and self-management)
- Health and mental issues (e.g., stress and exhaustion states, psychosomatic complaints, sleep disorders, risk of addiction and addiction itself).
- Personal issues that affect your job in the workplace (e.g., work-life balance, relationship problems, coping with crisis situations such as illness, death, grief, financial difficulties, debts).

#### Therapy referral service

Most of the times, problems can be resolved when talking about them and with the help of advice. In case the counsellors of EMAP will indicate a need for therapy during the initial contact or over the course of consultation, you may benefit from the EMAP's therapy referral service.

Assistance will be provided regarding advice about a suitable form of therapy, search for a suitable outpatient or inpatient therapy place, support with necessary application procedures.

### **2. If mediation is needed**

- *MPI*

According to the mediation guidelines of the MPG, every MPI employee is entitled to apply for arbitration. This process is only possible in the case that complaints or disputes cannot be settled at an institute. The works council can give you more advice in the matter.

- *IMPRS – Kiel (CAU and GEOMAR)*

Two [persons of trust](#) have been assigned to the CAU Graduate Center to mediate and give guidance in cases of difficulties or conflict related to doctoral projects.

Please approach Sabine Milde (smilde@gz.uni-kiel.de) at the Graduate Center for a short talk (personally) to decide if asking for assistance from a person of trust would be helpful. In this way they can also recommend one of the persons of trust in particular, depending on your needs. After this initial interview you should contact the person of your choice by email.

### **3. Mental health problems**

You are in physical or mental distress? You are currently unable to perform the way you wish you could, owing to professional or private issues? Then do not hesitate to get help! In addition to contact persons at the institute, there are also public counselling and emergency services as well as medical help available. All conversations you have with any of the persons below are treated confidentially.

#### In case of emergency:

- The Emergency Room of the psychiatric-psychotherapeutical institute is open day and night: You can call the reception at +49 431 50 09 80 08, Niemannsweg 147, 24105 Kiel;
- Social Psychiatric Office: Fleethörn 18-24 (Haus der Gesundheit), phone: 0431/ 901-21 10 (Mon – Thu 8 am – 16 pm, Fri 8 am – 1 pm)
- Call 112 in a life-threatening situation!

#### Public counselling - support in English:

- Call the Crisis Hotline Referral Service: 0177/ 81 41 510
- Call the Helpline International (in Berlin): +49 30 44 01 06 07 (between 6 – 12 pm)
- For doctoral researchers enrolled at CAU: [Psychosocial consultation by the student union](#) (site in German but contact available)  
Mail: [psychologen.ki@studentenwerk.sh](mailto:psychologen.ki@studentenwerk.sh)  
or by phone within the office hours: +49 431 8816 325 (Mon+Wed 2-3 pm)
- For doctoral researchers enrolled at CAU: [Social Counselling Service International](#)  
Counselling centre of the student union, Leibnizstraße 12–14 (Mensa II) in Kiel (room 01), [sozialberatung@studentenwerk.sh](mailto:sozialberatung@studentenwerk.sh)
- For doctoral researchers enrolled at CAU: [Psychological and social support of the CAU](#) (information in German but contact available)
- Contact a physician or psychologist

Here are some tips in order to get a doctor's appointment (further information can be found in the booklet ["Living and working in Germany"](#)):

- Contact your health insurance
- Contact the "appointment service point"
- Get a referral from your general physician

#### Individual Coaching

For doctoral researchers registered at the CAU Graduate Centre: Coaching via the Scientific Qualification offers might be bookable via the Graduate Center, contact person Sabine Milde: smilde@gz.uni-kiel.de

### Summary of contact people at each institution

- Supervisor
- Work Safety Officers
  - at the [MPI](#) (only available for MPI members)
  - at the [CAU](#)
  - at [GEOMAR](#)
- Any official representative or other person of trust
- Company physicians
  - at the MPI: Please contact the [Work Safety Officer](#) for further information (only available for MPI members).
  - at the [CAU](#) (site only in German)
  - at GEOMAR: Please contact the [Work Safety Officer](#) for further information.

#### **4. Contact persons in case of scientific misconduct**

- *Ombudsperson*

The ombudsperson provides confidential advice in the case of conflicts that relate to matters of good scientific practice. These conversations are treated confidentially. Further information on the guidelines for good scientific conduct and the contact persons can be found here:

at the [MPI](#) (only available for MPI members)

at the [CAU](#)

at [GEOMAR](#)

#### **5. Contact persons in case of discrimination**

- *Gender Equality Officer*

You may contact the Gender Equality Officers of your institution, if you are under the impression that general principles of gender equality are not complied with. All conversations are treated confidentially.

Gender Equality Officers at the [MPI](#) (only available for MPI members). Alternatively, you may also contact the [Central Gender Equality Officer](#) of MPS.

Gender Equality Officer of the [CAU](#)

Gender Equality Officers at [GEOMAR](#)

- *Diversity Officer (at the CAU Kiel)*

The [Diversity officer at the CAU Kiel](#) represents the interests of all members of Kiel University, in particular those of students and doctoral researchers and is part of the planning and organization of study and teaching, research, training and administration or the reduction of still existing barriers and disadvantages.

The Diversity Officer provides anti-discrimination counselling to the CAU students and doctoral students.

- *Representative Council for Individuals with Severe Disabilities*

If you are a staff member with severe disabilities and feel discriminated against due to your status, you may contact the following people:

Representative for Individuals with Severe Disabilities at the [MPI](#) (only available for MPI members)

Team for Individuals with Severe Disabilities at the [CAU](#) (site in German only)

Representatives for Individuals with Severe Disabilities at [GEOMAR](#)

- *Employer's inclusion representative*

All employers must appoint an inclusion representative to represent them in matters concerning individuals with disabilities. In addition to the overall inclusion representative of the MPG, local representatives are appointed at each institute who are responsible locally and work closely with the representatives of individuals with disabilities, the works council as well as the competent authorities. Please ask the works councils or the administration of your institution for further contacts.

#### **6. Contact persons in case of Sexualized Acts**

The [Code of Conduct](#) or policy against sexualized discrimination, harassment and violence that was introduced at the beginning of 2018, highlights that the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft does not tolerate any misconduct in this context and it also specifies a procedure for handling conflicts. The CAU and GEOMAR have similar regulations.

You may contact the Gender Equality Officers at your institution regarding matters of sexualized discrimination, harassment and violence. Furthermore, you can also contact any member of the respective Works Council. In general, an initial complaint may be submitted informally. A written record of the incident that is signed by the complaining individual is required for the initiation of any further steps.

#### **7. External legal consultation (only available for MPI staff members)**

Victims of bullying, harassment, sexualized assault or discrimination are also able to consult a law firm for further information. This consultation is free of charge for MPI members. The lawyers will accept your information or complaints and give an assessment of whether these are likely to be legally relevant. It is up to you to decide if and to whom your report will be passed on. The confidants are bound to absolute secrecy if you wish so. Further information can be found [here](#).

## VI. LIST OF DOCUMENTS IN THE (INTERNAL) SHARE

---

### 1. General information

- MPG brochure "[Living and Working in Germany](#)"
- MPI and IMPRS [Welcome booklet](#)
- [Rules of Good Scientific Practice](#)

### 2. Official IMPRS information

- [IMPRS agreement](#) between the student and the supervisor (currently being revised)

#### Rotation

- ✓ [Rotation cover page](#)
- ✓ [Rotation guidelines](#)

#### TAC

- ✓ [Checklist TAC meeting](#)
- ✓ [Cover page](#) for TAC report
- ✓ [Form for protocol](#) of the TAC meeting
- ✓ [Template](#) for list of courses

#### IMPRS conference funding

- ✓ [Application Form](#) for IMPRS conference funding
- ✓ [Instructions and guidelines](#) for IMPRS conference funding
- ✓ [Form Travel Request](#)
- ✓ [Form Travel Reimbursement](#) - Plön
- ✓ [Form Travel Reimbursement](#) - Kiel
- ✓ [Form Travel Reimbursement](#) in advance

### 3. Official CAU information

#### Enrollment as PhD student

- [CAU International Center](#) for internationals
  - ✓ declaration of enrollment
  - ✓ application form for admission to studies for foreign applicants
- [Studierendenservice](#) for Germans
  - ✓ Erklärung zur Einschreibung für das Studienziel 'Promotion'

#### Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences

- [Doctoral Degree Regulations](#) of MatNatFaculty

#### Registration of PhD project

- ✓ [Application form](#) to register the PhD project with the MatNatFaculty
- ✓ [Supervision agreement](#) of the MatNatFaculty
- ✓ [Application template](#) for MPI group leaders in order to apply for supervision of the PhD candidate

#### Dissertation

- ✓ [Checklist](#) on thesis submission and oral examination process
- ✓ [Form Admission](#) to dissertation
- ✓ [Form Suggestion](#) to suggest second examiner for dissertation
- ✓ [Information sheet](#) on the publication of dissertations
- ✓ [Form Publication](#) of dissertation



## VII. SUMMARY OF MOST RELEVANT CONTACTS

---

### IMPRS and MPI DR: Angela Donner

Contact person for any questions related to the IMPRS, doctoral education or defence of thesis

Phone: +49 4522 763 233, Email: [donner@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:donner@evolbio.mpg.de)

### Current IMPRS doctoral student representatives (2024 – 2025):

General contact: [imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:imprsrep@evolbio.mpg.de)

Individually:

Alejandro Bonive Boscan (MPI): [bonive@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:bonive@evolbio.mpg.de)

Jasmin Cichy (MPI): [cichy@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:cichy@evolbio.mpg.de)

Jannika Elfert (MPI): [elfert@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:elfert@evolbio.mpg.de)

Emmanuel Kofi Quaye (CAU): [e.quaye@iem.uni-kiel.de](mailto:e.quaye@iem.uni-kiel.de)

Rajalekshmi Narayana Sarma (MPI, external): [rajalekshmin@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:rajalekshmin@evolbio.mpg.de)

### MPI personnel administration:

Daniela Barth, Lisa Haack, Petra Salenz, Katharina Schrader

Contact persons for any questions related to your contract or stipend (e.g. during IMPRS rotation period), visa or health insurance

Email: [personal@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:personal@evolbio.mpg.de)

### Welcome Office (MPI): Angela Donner

Contact person for any questions related to formalities upon arrival and German courses (available for all IMPRS members)

Phone: + 49 4522 763 233, Email: [welcome@evolbio.mpg.de](mailto:welcome@evolbio.mpg.de)

### Doctoral candidate's support service of the CAU Graduate Centre:

Email: [doc-pilot@uv.uni-kiel.de](mailto:doc-pilot@uv.uni-kiel.de)

### Doctorate Office of MatNatFaculty: Bahar Kaya and Gesa Koberg

Contact persons for any questions related to registration (Bahar Kaya), thesis submission and oral examination process (Gesa Koberg)

Phone: +49 431 880 1539, Email: [promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de](mailto:promotion@mnf.uni-kiel.de)