

Berlin Graduate School of Ancient Studies (BerGSAS)

Announcement of 2 Scholarships for Doctoral Studies (October 2026 - September 2030) in the Doctoral Program “Ancient Objects and Visual Studies”

The Graduate School Scholarship Program (GSSP) of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is offering two (2) doctoral scholarships for aspiring PhD students within the framework of the “Ancient Objects and Visual Studies” doctoral program of the BerGSAS, <https://www.berliner-antike-kolleg.org/en/bergsas/programme/aovis/index.html>

We welcome applications from highly qualified graduates from the fields of:

Ancient Oriental Studies, Classical Archaeology, Egyptology and Northeast African Archaeology, Near Eastern Archaeology, or Prehistoric Archaeology.

Applicants must hold an excellent master's degree (MA, MSt, or MSc) in one of the aforementioned disciplines or be very close to completion. Very close to completion means that the Master's thesis must have been submitted and has already been graded at the time of application.

Objectives of the doctoral program “Ancient Objects and Visual Studies”

The doctoral program, is concerned, among other things, with the effects of images and the mechanisms that make up communication with images. Key questions are: Who produces images and for whom? What message do these images convey? What are the elements of meaning (image ciphers) that make up the semantic field of images? To what extent can images be precisely determined in their semantic content? Such questions need to be explored by looking at the archaeological or historical object/artifact in its respective cultural context. Starting from the individual object, the general cultural influences on the perception of images should be worked out. Furthermore, the knowledge of the respective functioning of ancient images and artifacts should be combined with the contemporary possibilities of visual presentation. International perspectives are highly welcome here, especially those that question both the European-influenced role of images and the role of the museums.

Who can apply? (Please note that these requirements are binding)

- This call is open ONLY to applicants who are not German citizens
- Applicants must not have completed a PhD previously
- The Master's degree must not have been completed before March 1, 2020
- Applicants must not have resided in Germany continuously before December 1, 2024

Duration of the scholarship and funding

The scholarship is available from October 2026 (Berlin winter semester 2026/27) for four years, subject to a satisfactory annual progress review. In accordance with DAAD guidelines, the scholarship holders receive a stipend of 1,300 Euros a month, a travel allowance, payments towards health, accident and liability insurance cover, allowances for study and research (and, where applicable, rent and family allowances) as well as financial support for a pre-session German language course. Plus, material resources of 1,000 Euros per year, administered by the supervisor's institute. Research stays outside of Germany during the funding period may be supported if they do not exceed 25% of the total funding period, and do not take place directly at the beginning of the funding period.

Application process

Applications must be submitted via the BerGSAS portal by **15 October 2025, 00:00 CET**, quoting the reference **2026-AOVIS-BerGSAS-GSSP**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

The application procedure takes place in two stages:

1 st stage	Please register at https://application.berliner-antike-kolleg.org/bergsas After you have created a personal account, you can begin to fill in the application form and you can upload your documents. It is possible to save the application form and continue with the process at a later date. Applications must be submitted by 15 October 2025, 00:00 CET. BerGSAS will invite shortlisted candidates to an online interview within two months of the application deadline.
2 nd stage	BerGSAS will nominate the candidates selected to the DAAD. The DAAD will make the final decision and will notify you accordingly. Please note that admission to doctoral studies and the receipt of a scholarship is subject to assessment by the host university (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, or Freie Universität Berlin) and by the DAAD.

Application documents

Your application documents	If registered at BerGSAS application portal (https://application.berliner-antike-kolleg.org/bergsas), you will find the list of required documents at the bottom of the form. This includes among other things, copies of various documents (which do not have to be officially certified!). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate of a language examination in English, e.g. IELTS Academic or TOEFL, at least B2 level. Please note: At the Freie Universität, a C1 certificate is required for admission to doctoral studies.• Certificates of any academic degree (B.A. and M.A.) or advanced qualifications indicating grades and explaining the grading system of your home university.
Two letters of reference	Two letters of reference from university professors are required, one of which must be from a professor at your home university! These letters are confidential documents and should be sent as a PDF file by the university professors directly to: application@berliner-antike-kolleg.org It is mandatory that the professors use the DAAD template , which can be downloaded here: https://www.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/recommendation.doc

Application deadline

The deadline for your application is 15 October 2025 at 00:00 CET. The selection committee will not consider incomplete or late applications.

For further inquiries, please contact the coordinator of the doctoral program:

Dr. Regina Attula, regina.attula@berliner-antike-kolleg.org

