

**BERLIN PROGRAM**  
for Advanced German & European Studies

German  
Studies  
Association **GSA**



**Dear Superapplicant,  
Congratulations! Your proposal  
has been selected for the  
Berlin Program.**

ONLINE WORKSHOP

# How to be a Superapplicant

with Veronika Fuechtner and Johannes von Moltke

Nov 4, 2021  
4–6 pm CET  
via Webex

# General pointers / advice – provide a

- Clear summary
- Clear stakes/research questions
- Clear structure
- Unpack theory and methodology
- Research plan for the academic year and local sources to be used
- Description how your material will connect to your arguments
- Reflection on possible challenges and how to address them

# Pointers / Advice: “Do’s”

- Carefully observe funding / application requirements
- Formulate clear research questions (also: “hook” for busy readers)
- Answer “so what” question: why should people care who don’t know anything about your topic - or even your field?
- What makes you particularly well suited to carry out the proposed research: background, preparation, previous work, preliminary research, contacts?
- Aim for clear structure and writing (topic sentences! jargon-free!)
- Include subheaders
- Use powerful images and anecdotes (but strategically)
- Be as specific as possible on why you need to be based in Berlin and make sure your information on archives and faculty is up-to-date.
- Include a clear and realistic (!) timeline

## Pointers / Advice: “Dont’s”

- Avoid laundry lists (of relevant work, of your own work)
- Don’t assume familiarity with a particular theoretical discourse or a particular theorist or historical figure
- Critique previous scholarship, but also acknowledge your debt to it
- Lack of scholarship in a particular field doesn’t justify that it should be studied
  - make the stakes very clear
- Don’t overload your sentences (we know you are smart)
- Don’t introduce a new aspect or question at the very end of your proposal and don’t let your proposal peter out. Be as careful with the ending as with the beginning.
- Don’t over-evidence the obvious.