



Freie Universität



Berlin

柏林自由大学

## Freie Universität Berlin – China Scholarship Council PhD and Postdoc Program 2017

2017年度柏林自由大学—中国国家留学基金委  
公派博士生及博士后项目

PhD Studies and Postdoctoral Research at Freie Universität Berlin –  
A Leading German Research University



**FUB-CSC PhD  
Program 2017**

**FUB-CSC Postdoc  
Program 2017**

- PhD and Postdoc Positions / Projects offered by Freie Universität Berlin
- Scholarships provided by China Scholarship Council

[www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china)



## I. INTRODUCTION TO FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN – PURSUING EXCELLENCE IN GERMANY

Founded in 1948, Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) is a leading research institution and one of Germany's eleven Universities of Excellence. Five Nobel Prize laureates teach or have taught at Freie Universität Berlin. Sixteen scientists of FUB were awarded Germany's most prestigious science award, the Leibniz prize.



Brandenburger Tor in Berlin

For foreign scientists such as scholarships holders of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Freie Universität Berlin is the university of preference and among international students it is the most attractive university in Germany.

FUB is a full-spectrum university (without engineering) with 15 departments and central institutes offering 160 degree programs (BA, MA, PhD) across a wide range of subjects for more than 31,000 students (21% international students), of whom 5750 are PhD students.

The location of Freie Universität Berlin on the Dahlem Research Campus in immediate proximity to outstanding research institutes like the Max-Planck Society provides world-class research opportunities.

## II. COOPERATION PROGRAMS WITH THE CHINA SCHOLARSHIP COUNCIL (CSC) FOR PHD STUDIES AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH

Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) and the China Scholarship Council (CSC) signed agreements (2008 and 2013) for promoting high quality research opportunities for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers from major Chinese universities. With more than 200 CSC scholarship holders, Freie Universität Berlin is the most important host university in Germany and is one of the major partner universities of the CSC worldwide. The program includes all fields of studies at Freie Universität Berlin.

The Beijing Office of the Freie Universität Berlin, founded in 2007, acts as a bridge connecting professors of FUB and Chinese CSC applicants in the framework of the FUB-CSC Program: Professors of FUB are interested in supervising Chinese PhD students or in offering postdoc research positions; Chinese candidates who want to apply for a CSC scholarship are looking for a PhD supervisor or a postdoc research group.



图片来源: Bernd Wannenmacher

Each year in September, Freie Universität Berlin offers an extensive number of open PhD and postdoc positions in a variety of research areas for CSC candidates who want to conduct their research in Berlin with a CSC scholarship. Around 45 descriptions of PhD and postdoc projects are listed in the FUB-CSC Program 2017 for research at FUB commencing in September 2017.

### Two types of CSC scholarships:

**For PhD Studies:** The China Scholarship Council offers two different types of CSC scholarships:

- Full PhD studies: Scholarships for full PhD studies leading to a doctoral degree awarded by Freie Universität Berlin. Duration of the scholarship: 3 – 4 years.
- Sandwich PhD studies: Scholarships for candidates who are already doctoral students in China. Following the so-called Sandwich Model, Chinese PhD candidates can do PhD research both at the home university in China and at Freie Universität Berlin. The PhD title will ultimately be conferred by the Chinese university. Duration of the scholarship: 1-2 years.

### For Postdoctoral Research:

- Starting in summer 2017, each postdoctoral researcher will be funded by the CSC at first for 12 months. If both parties – Chinese postdoc and German research group leader – agree, there is a possibility to apply to the CSC for extension to a second year which is funded by the German side.

### Two application processes:

The FUB-CSC Program is arranged in two steps and entails two application processes:



### **Application 1: Application to the Beijing Office of FUB to receive an invitation:**

The Beijing Office of FUB is in charge of advising about the program and open positions offered by the professors, as well as of processing the applications. **Each application is to be submitted to FUB's Beijing Office (not to the professor!):**

- Application deadline for Postdoc: November 6, 2017
- Application deadline for PhD: January 4, 2017

Following initial evaluation, each application will be forwarded to the professor by the Beijing Office. The professor can contact the applicants after receiving the application, at the latest at the beginning of December (postdoc) or February (PhD).

### **Application 2: Application to the CSC for scholarship / funding:**

After being contacted, interviewed and accepted by the professor, an **invitation letter** will be issued by Freie Universität Berlin/The Center for International Cooperation (not by the professor!) to applicants in the framework of the FUB-CSC Program:

Postdoctoral candidates receive the invitation letter in December, 2016 and PhD candidates in February, 2017. **The FUB invitation letter must be submitted by applicants in the second application process to the CSC, which applicants must organize independently.** For more information on the process and regulations, please see the CSC website: [www.csn.edu.cn](http://www.csn.edu.cn). The application periods of the China Scholarship Council (CSC) are:

- PhD: March, 20 to April, 5
- Postdoc, CSC application: January 5-15, 2017

## **III. BENEFITS FOR CSC SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS OFFERED BY FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN**



PhD Workshop 2013

Apart from having the chance to perform doctoral studies and postdoctoral research at a top German research university, CSC scholarship holders receive a number of additional benefits offered by Freie Universität Berlin for FUB-CSC Program scholarship holders:

- Support with the visa application process
- Support with arranging accommodation in Berlin

- Support with registration as a PhD student at Freie Universität Berlin
- Preparatory two day seminar in Beijing in June 2017, including Q+A sessions with alumni of Freie Universität Berlin and CSC representatives
- Orientation week at Freie Universität Berlin in September 2017
- A six-week German crash course offered in September 2017 at FUB
- Access to free German and English language courses throughout the entire research stay at FUB

**NOTE: No tuition fees** for PhD studies and postdoctoral research **and no agency fees** will be charged!

## **IV. PHD STUDIES AT FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN**

### **Two types of PhD programs:**

There are two different forms of PhD studies at FUB: Individual studies and structured PhD programs.

#### **Individual PhD studies:**

PhD students are under the direct supervision of one professor who is an expert in a given research area (**Apprentice Model**). The PhD student could be described as **research assistant** who works independently in a certain field of research. At present, the majority of German and international doctoral students at Freie Universität Berlin follow this model. Generally speaking, any professor of Freie Universität Berlin can supervise PhD candidates.

**The FUB-CSC PhD Program is for individually supervised PhD students** on the projects of professors in a wide range of subject areas.

- See PhD positions for individual PhD studies listed in **Appendix 1** (enclosed supplement sheet).
- For more detailed information and project descriptions for the PhD positions available, please visit the homepage of FUB's-Beijing Office: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china) (Scholarships).
- Applications and advice are managed by FUB's-Beijing Office.

#### **Structured PhD Programs:**

At FUB, there are a variety of Graduate Schools (GS) and Research Training Groups (RTG) focusing on interdisciplinary research. PhD studies can be undertaken within structured training program.

- Some PhD programs are offered by Graduate Schools, jointly organized by Berlin universities (FU Berlin, TU Berlin, HU Berlin) i.e. Berlin Mathematical School.



- Training Groups listed in **Appendix 2** (enclosed supplement sheet).
- For more detailed information visit the homepage: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china) and check the respective websites of the Graduate School/RTG for more details.
- Questions will be answered directly by the program coordinators in Berlin.
- **Applications for Graduate Schools and RTG should be submitted directly to the structured programs in Berlin, not to the FUB's Beijing Office.**

**NOTE:** The doctoral degree/PhD degree awarded is the same for both types of doctoral studies!

#### Requirements for individual PhD studies applications (FUB/SCS PhD Program):

- Outstanding performance in a **Master's Degree**
- **Language skills:**  
**Very good English skills** if English is the language of instruction. No prior knowledge of German required in the following disciplines: Biology, biomedicine, chemistry, pharmacy, earth sciences, mathematics, computer science, physics, and veterinary medicine.  
**Very good German skills** if German is the language of instruction for PhD studies, particularly in humanities and social sciences but usually depending on the professor's requirements.
- **Motivation letter** and a convincing **statement about the research topic** related to your own academic background and focusing on the respective PhD offer.

#### Application procedure for individual PhD studies (FUB-CSC PhD Program)

The application and evaluation process for CSC candidates is coordinated by the Beijing Office of Freie Universität Berlin. All inquiries concerning the FUB-CSC Program and open positions should be sent in the first process only to the Beijing Office (not to the professor).

Contact: [beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de).

In order to become a PhD student at Freie Universität Berlin in the framework of the FUB-CSC PhD Program **two applications are necessary:**



图片来源: FUB-Beijing Office

Pre-Departure Seminar 2016 in Beijing

- **Application for an open position, submitted to Beijing Office of Freie Universität Berlin**
  - **First check the website of FUB's-Beijing Office** for the list of open, individually supervised PhD positions offered by FUB professors.
  - If there is a matching offer, **apply to FUB-Beijing Office** for the position. **Please note!** Apply only for a research project if your academic background meets the description of the offer!
  - The application should be submitted only to the Beijing Office. Contact: [beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de).
  - **Application deadline for PhD studies: January 4, 2017.**
  - The Beijing Office of FUB will check and evaluate the applications and forward them to the respective professor.  
The professor will contact candidates who submit a **complete application**.
  - Following an interview with the respective professor at FUB, the final decision is made by the professor based on academic qualifications.
  - We inform the applicants of the decisions at the latest **mid of February**. **Please note: Be patient and do not contact the professor before the decision is made. We appreciate that very much!**
  - If the professor accepts the PhD candidate, he/she contacts the PhD candidate to **discuss the research proposal** which is required for the second application process (CSC application at the end of March 2017).
  - Freie Universität Berlin (Centre for International Cooperation) will issue the invitation letter to accepted PhD candidates. The **invitation letter** is needed for the application for CSC scholarship and will be issued to the students by the FUB's-Beijing Office end of February, 2017
  - All accepted PhD candidates will be listed on the official **nomination list** of the FUB-CSC Program, which will be forwarded to the CSC by the FUB's-Beijing Office.
- **Application submitted to CSC (usually it is March 20 – April 5):**
  - This is a **separate second application** which is handled only by the CSC. If you have questions concerning the CSC scholarship, please contact the CSC directly.
  - Apply **within the FUB-CSC Program!** (otherwise you cannot be a member of the program and profit from its benefits)
  - The **invitation letter** issued by the Freie Universität is required for the scholarship application to the CSC in the framework of the FUB-CSC PhD Program. For the exact application period of CSC-scholarships (usually March 20 – April 5), please see the CSC homepage: [www.cs.edu.cn/Chuguo/Default.aspx?cid=13](http://www.cs.edu.cn/Chuguo/Default.aspx?cid=13)



- Confirmation of the **scholarship awardees** of the CSC will be announced at the latest at the end of May.
- Successful scholarship holders **start their research stay in Berlin** in September 2017.

#### Application documents (PhD)

1. Application form for the FUB-CSC PhD Program: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china)
2. **Curriculum vitae (CV)**
3. **Letter of Motivation**
4. **Abstract of your Master thesis** in English
5. **University degrees**, each with: degree certificate (学位证), graduation certificate (毕业证), academic record (成绩单). Note: Authorized (由学校出具) English translations of Chinese documents are sufficient for this application. Notarization (公证) of the translations will only be required at a later stage.
  - Candidates for full PhD studies: If the Master studies have not been finished by the time of application to Freie Universität Berlin, a statement certifying when the Master Diploma will be obtained is sufficient.
  - Sandwich candidates: an admission certificate to PhD-studies in China
6. Convincing **statement (or research proposal) about the research topic** offered by the professor and related to your own academic background, focusing on the respective PhD offer (2-3 pages), and a time schedule for the research stay in Berlin
7. **Two letters of recommendation** by university professors with letter head, seal of the institute and signature of the professor.  
For full PhD studies: One of the letters has to be issued by the PhD supervisor of the Master's thesis in China  
For Sandwich candidates: One of the letters has to be issued by the PhD supervisor in China
8. **Language certificates** for English OR German (depending on the requirement of the position you would like to apply for)
  - **English:** IELTS certificate with an overall rating of 6.5 (no module below 5.5) or a TOEFL iBT certificate with a total score of at least 95 points (no test section below 20 points)
  - **German:** TestDaF certificate with a total score of at least 16 points – no subtest below 4 – OR DSH-2 certificate

#### Application deadline (PhD)

- **Application deadline: January 4, 2017**
- **Please note:** Your application documents must be submitted by e-mail **only**

#### to the Beijing Office of FUB.

Contact: [beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

- Please submit only **PDF** files. Make sure that each file does not exceed **300 KB**. If necessary, please lower the resolution of the pictures or use compressed file formats like JPEG.
- Only complete applications submitted on time to the Beijing Office of Freie Universität Berlin will be considered!

图片来源: Freie Universität Berlin



## V. POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH AT FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

Freie Universität Berlin provides a list of open postdoctoral research positions available only for Chinese PhD holders who graduated from a Chinese university or research institution.

#### Postdoctoral positions (offered by professors / research group leaders of FUB)

- Check the list of open postdoctoral positions on the website of the FUB's-Beijing Office: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china) (Scholarships). See also the postdoctoral positions listed on **Appendix 3** (enclosed supplement sheet).
- For more detailed information and descriptions of each postdoctoral research project, please visit the homepage of FUB's-Beijing Office: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china).
- Apply only to the Beijing Office of FUB, not to the professor or research group leader.

#### General Requirements (postdoc):

- The call is open to experienced researchers (preferably from 985 universities and research institutions i.e. CAS institute) who match the offered postdoc positions offered by Freie Universität Berlin
- Candidates with a PhD degree and candidates receiving their PhD degrees by summer 2017
- Applicants must submit a statement or research proposal based on the research fields of the postdoc projects available (list of postdoc positions are on the website of FUB's-Beijing Office: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china)).
- The language of instruction will be German or English, depending on the research area. Excellent language skills are required and can be verified by certificates or a personal statement by the research group leader after an interview.



#### Application procedure (postdoc):

- Apply directly to the FUB Beijing Office
- The FUB-Beijing Office will evaluate applications and forward all information to the professor/research group leader
- In mid of December, the FUB-Beijing Office will issue all selected candidates with an invitation letter and register the successful candidates on the nomination list of the FUB-CSC Program, which will be forwarded to the CSC.
- After receiving an invitation/acceptance letter from the Freie Universität Berlin/Center for International Cooperation (NOT the professor!), candidates must apply independently to the CSC a scholarship during the application period January 5, to January, 15 (forms are available online at <http://apply.csc.edu.cn/csc/main/person/login/index.jsf>).
- The CSC will evaluate the candidates and provide Freie Universität Berlin with a final list of scholarship recipients. The results will be published by the end of May.

#### Application Documents (Postdoc):

1. **Application form** for the FUB-CSC Postdoctoral Research Program (download as Word or PDF file: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china))
2. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
3. **University degrees** (MA, PhD if completed)
4. **Abstract of the PhD thesis** in English
5. **Project statement** focusing on the respective postdoc position and relating to your own research background (2-3 pages)
6. **Research proposal** (desirable)
7. **List of publications** (please indicate the language of each publication)
8. **Two letters of recommendation** (including institute's letter head, seal, signature)
9. **Transcripts of records (ToR)** of the Master and PhD program (in English and authorized)
10. **Languages certificates** (IELTS 6.5 OR ROEFL 95 ibt) are preferred but language skills can also be verified by the research group leader at FUB after conducting an interview



图片来源: Freie Universität Berlin

#### Application deadline

- **November 6, 2016** (submitted only to the Beijing Office of FUB)
- Application documents must be submitted **by e-mail only** to the FUB-Beijing Office.  
Contact: [beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:beijing3@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

- Please submit **PDF** files. Make sure that each file does not exceed **300 KB**. If necessary, please lower the resolution of the pictures or use compressed file formats like JPEG.
- Only complete applications submitted on time to the Beijing Office of Freie Universität Berlin will be considered.

#### VI. FURTHER INFORMATION

- If you have any questions, please contact the Beijing Office of Freie Universität Berlin directly, preferably by e-mail.
- **Please note: To avoid additional efforts and workload, please do not contact the professor/supervisor.** He/she will contact you after receiving and reviewing your complete application via the FUB's-Beijing Office.
- Due to the number of applications for all open positions, it can take 3 to 5 weeks before the professor gets in touch with you. Please be patient!

#### VII. CONTACT

##### Freie Universität Berlin – Beijing Office

DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service  
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Homepage: [www.fu-berlin.de/china](http://www.fu-berlin.de/china) (FUB-Beijing Office)  
[www.fu-berlin.de](http://www.fu-berlin.de) (Freie Universität)



图片来源: Freie Universität Berlin



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I got my PhD degree at Freie Universität Berlin in less than three years, in the framework of the Freie Universität Berlin - China Scholarship Council PhD Program. My research focuses on Hydrogeology, one direction in the department of Earth Sciences. I really enjoyed the three years research life there since my colleagues were very friendly and my supervisors were highly responsible. Berlin is also a fascinating city. These are wonderful memories in my life.

I could also experience research on a top-level, discuss innovative ideas with experts, and share my experiences with international friends. My research stay at FU Berlin helped me also to develop my academic career. After I came back to Beijing, I immediately found a job in a famous research institute.

**MA Miaomiao, PhD, graduated from the Department of Earth Sciences at FU Berlin in 2013**