



INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED
STUDY IN THE HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE
RUHR



KWI International Fellowships

Fellowships for the duration of 6 months from 1 October 2026 until 31 March 2027. [Applications](#) are due by February 28.

The KWI:

The **Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities** (KWI) in Essen is an interdisciplinary research institute for the humanities and social sciences in the tradition of institutes for advanced study. Located in the Ruhr Area, KWI offers a space for independent and innovative research in the humanities and various opportunities to engage and include the public. Currently, research at KWI focusses on the following areas: science studies, visual literacy, aesthetic practices, constellations of historical impact, dialogues between the cultural and social sciences. It is one of KWI's main goals to find new ways of linking research questions, concepts, methods and theories of philology, cultural studies and the social sciences. We are dedicated to pursuing our interdisciplinary agenda through international collaboration. An important contribution to our scholarly and political work comes from the Academy in Exile, offering research space to colleagues whose academic freedom is threatened.

Fellowship:

The KWI fellowship program is designed for excellent researchers from the humanities, cultural studies, and the social sciences. The institute provides fellows with modern infrastructure, office space, technical support and offers a library service, event and research management as well as administrative and communicative support. The programme is open to individual researchers only; applications from groups or teams will not be considered.

We invite applications from researchers who have completed their PhD and have up to six years of post-doctoral experience. Post-doctoral experience is counted from the date of PhD completion (PhDs completed in 2020 or later are eligible for this application). Applicants are welcome to address career breaks (for care-related reasons or for scholars at risk, etc.) in a cover letter. Project proposals should demonstrate a clear alignment [with KWI's research agenda](#). The KWI International Fellowship Program is open to researchers from around the world. German nationals may only apply if they are currently employed at an international institute.

Selected fellows will receive a fellowship contract (not a full-employment contract) and a monthly allowance of 3.000 € (pre-tax). This allowance is intended to cover rent, insurances and living expenses. Partial reimbursement of travel expenses for arrival at and departure from KWI is also possible. Fellows are responsible for covering any additional travel expenses, such as those related to conferences, using their allowance.

Expectations:

- The fellowship should be dedicated to research linked to the programmatic agenda of KWI. Various project formats are possible: You might devote your time in Essen to finishing a book or a special issue, to finalizing a research proposal or setting up a research group. We also welcome plans to establish or substantiate collaborations with the universities of the Ruhr Alliance.
- We expect the fellows to be present at least 3 days a week. Fellows will be expected to participate in entry and exit interviews.
- Fellows are requested to actively take part in the Colloquium, lectures, conferences, reading groups and other academic events at KWI. Moreover, we expect the fellow to contribute to the KWI Blog.
- Fellows are invited to actively take part in academic events at KWI. Selected candidates may have the opportunity to organize a workshop as part of the program, depending on available resources and scheduling constraints. While this is not a requirement for participation, we encourage applicants with an interest in hosting a workshop to express their ideas in their application.
- Fellows are not expected to teach, but always welcome to participate in lecture series and seminars at surrounding universities.
- Publications deriving from the time of residence should mention KWI.
- Knowledge of German is not required since the Fellowship Programme relies on a strong command of English.
- We expect successful applicants to begin their fellowship on the announced starting date (October 1). Due to our semester schedule and the design of the fellowship programme, the start and end of the fellowship are not negotiable.

Academic landscape:

Fellows will have the opportunity to liaise with researchers in a rich and diversified academic landscape: The **University Alliance Ruhr** (UA Ruhr), KWI's umbrella structure, strategically links the universities of Duisburg-Essen, Bochum, and Dortmund. Nearby, the universities of Duesseldorf, Cologne, Muenster and Bielefeld as well as the renowned Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen offer further possibilities for collaboration and exchange. The close proximity of Belgium and the Netherlands to North Rhine-Westphalia has engendered cross-border programmes and initiatives from which fellows might profit. For details on 14 collaborative research centres and 13 graduate training groups within the UA Ruhr see here: www.uaruhr.de/index.html.en.

The Ruhr Area:

The cities of Duisburg and Essen are situated right in the middle of the Ruhr Area. With more than five million inhabitants and an area of about 4,435 square kilometres, the Ruhr Area is one of the largest metropolitan areas in Germany and the fifth largest in Europe. The region's cultural appeal and diverse urban landscape were recognised by the European Union in 2010 when Ruhr Metropolitan Area, spearheaded by Essen, was granted the honour of being the "European Capital of Culture". After the transformation of traditional industries, it was an important concern to make the Ruhr Area greener again. By now, this characteristic region in the West of Germany has developed into a cultural hub with manifold outdoor possibilities. The cities of Cologne and Düsseldorf can be easily reached, and the Netherlands and Belgium offer day-trip destinations.

Application:

We kindly ask you to apply in the form of one single PDF-file (max. 20 MB) which must be submitted electronically to international.fellowship@uni-due.de

Due to IT safety regulations, we cannot accept applications via links to external platforms.

- The application deadline is **28 February 2026, 2026, 24:00 (midnight, CET)**.
- The application must be formulated in English and must contain a CV, a list of publications, a PhD certificate, and a proposal sketching your KWI project (up to max. 5.000 characters).
- We will not consider applications that are incomplete, submitted after the deadline, sent in multiple files, or include project proposals that exceed the specified length.
- The fellows will be selected by a committee assembling members of the KWI governing board and the institute's director.
- Further information about the application process can be found in the [FAQs](#)

For further questions, please contact international.fellowship@uni-due.de