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Guidelines for the scholarship programme of the HYT Young Academy of the University of Siegen

Preamble

The Young Academy of the House of Young Talents (HYT) at the University of Siegen aims to provide financial and non-material support for outstanding students and doctoral researchers with excellent, promising Master's or doctoral projects by awarding scholarships in order to allow them the greatest possible freedom for their own academic activities. Funding is intended for excellent Bachelor's graduates who are starting or have recently started a Master's programme at the University of Siegen, as well as excellent Master's graduates who would like to start or have recently started a doctorate. The scholarships are awarded across faculties and subjects and are limited to a maximum duration of three years for doctoral researchers, and to the respective regular period of study for Master's students, up to a maximum of two years.

§ 1

Requirements for applicants and mentors

- (1) Bachelor's graduates of all subjects who are pursuing or intend to pursue a Master's degree at the University of Siegen can apply for a Master's scholarship. Graduates of a Master's programme or comparable degree programme in all subjects who are starting or wish to start a doctorate at the University of Siegen can apply for a doctoral scholarship.
- (2) A mentor must be named in the application for a scholarship. In the case of doctoral scholarships, this is the first supervisor of the doctoral project. In the case of Master's scholarships, the mentor should be a lecturer with a doctorate who works at the University of Siegen in a subject corresponding to the applicant's degree programme and who is authorised to supervise Master's theses in this subject. In the case of a Master's scholarship, a change of mentor is possible in accordance with the course of study; the HYT must be informed about such a change. In the case of a doctoral scholarship, the approval of the selection committee is required for a change of mentor. In any case, the signed declaration of commitment of the new mentor must be submitted in the event of a change of mentor.

§ 2

Application

- (1) Applications are possible on the basis of a corresponding call for applications, usually in June and December of each year.
- (2) The responsibility for the complete and timely submission lies with the applicant. Applications received late or incomplete will be rejected for formal reasons. Relevant is the date of receipt of the application. The documents required for the application can be found in the respective call for applications.

- (3) The application and further correspondence are to be sent to the HYT by e-mail only.

§ 3

Selection committee

- (1) A selection committee decides on the awarding of the scholarships and, if applicable, the additional family component. It consists of the Prorector for Research and Junior Academics, the Vice-Deans for Research and Junior Academics of the individual faculties, the head of the HYT and an external member.
- (2) In addition, the persons responsible for the affairs of the Young Academy in the HYT participate with the right to speak in the meetings of the selection committee and take minutes.
- (3) The external member in the selection committee is proposed by the Senate Commission for Research and Junior Academics and appointed by the rectorate. The person to be appointed must be active in the support of junior academics and must not be a member of the University of Siegen.
- (4) To ensure that all faculties are always represented at the meetings of the selection committee, the vice-deans of the faculties should appoint a substitute from the dean's office of the respective faculty if they are prevented from attending. The head of the HYT may appoint another person from the HYT as a substitute. A substitute may also be appointed for the external member, whereby the substitute must also meet the requirements of § 3 Para. 3 Sentence 2. If it is not possible to appoint a substitute, a written statement on the applications may be submitted in exceptional cases.
- (5) The central equal opportunities officer must be given the opportunity to participate in the selection procedure in good time. She has the right to participate in the meetings of the selection committee with the right to speak and to submit motions and must be invited and informed in the same way as a member.
- (6) When a severely disabled person applies, the applicant may request that the representative for severely disabled persons be involved in the selection procedure. In this case, the representative for severely disabled persons has the right to participate in the meetings of the selection committee with the right to speak and to submit motions.
- (7) In the event that a member of the selection committee or his or her substitute is at the same time the proposed mentor of an applicant, or if there are other reasons for a conflict of interest, the member in question is not allowed to take part in the discussion of the application in question at the meeting of the selection committee and must leave the room. In a comparative review of all applications, the member may be present but is not allowed to comment on the application(s) discussed in his or her absence. The member is not allowed to participate in a vote on the application.

§ 4

Selection process and selection criteria

- (1) For the doctoral scholarships, after a pre-selection by the selection committee, the shortlisted applicants are invited for a short presentation of the doctoral project to the selection committee.
- (2) In the case of Master's scholarships, a final decision is generally made on the basis of the application documents submitted; a presentation to the selection committee only takes place in exceptional cases.
- (3) The excellence of the applicant is decisive for the selection.

- (4) If possible, at least one of the advertised Master's and doctoral scholarships shall be awarded to an applicant with a foreign higher education entrance qualification.

§ 5 Scope of the funding

- (1) The amount of the scholarship is
- EUR 400 per month for a maximum of two years for Master's students and
 - EUR 1,500 per month for a maximum of three years for doctoral researchers.

For doctoral projects that will not have been completed by the end of the funding period, the supervising professor should ensure any necessary further or final funding from chair or third-party funds; a corresponding plan for further or final funding must already be submitted with the application. In the case of Master's scholarships, the scholarship can only be approved for one year if the applicant is already in the third semester of the Master's programme when the scholarship begins.

- (2) The third funding year for doctoral researchers is initially only approved with reservations. 18 months after the start of the funding, the scholarship recipient must submit a reviewable progress report, in which the current status of the doctoral project is presented and the milestones that have been reached and those that are still outstanding are discussed. At the same time, the mentor must submit an assessment of the status of the doctoral project and the prospects for completing the doctorate. On the basis of these documents, the selection committee decides whether the third funding year will be finally approved.
- (3) Within the scope of the doctoral scholarships, an additional family allowance can be granted to the scholarship holders upon request. The family allowance amounts to EUR 100 per month for each minor child living in the same household, up to a maximum of EUR 300 per month. The HYT must be informed of the number of children at the time of application, birth or inclusion in the household; a retroactive consideration is not possible.
- (4) In addition to the basic funding according to § 5 No. (1), the HYT Young Academy maintains a fund for material grants for the scholarship recipients to cover the costs of
- research trips,
 - participation in meetings and conferences,
 - research-related acquisitions or
 - invitations of external guests, e.g., for talks.

The reimbursable costs for the above-mentioned activities are limited to EUR 750 (Master's students) or EUR 1,500 (doctoral researchers) per person per funding year—depending on the duration of the scholarship also on a proportionate basis—and can only be approved and reimbursed up to this maximum limit against appropriate proof. Purchases exceeding EUR 100 and travel must always be approved in advance by HYT. The HYT reserves the right to refuse reimbursement of purchases or services that fall within the scope of general living costs. Unused material funds from one funding year can be carried over to the next funding year if this is announced in writing for an appropriate purpose (e.g. trip abroad) before the end of the funding year in question.

- (5) Non-material support: The HYT Young Academy offers regular study-supporting events for the funded Master's students and doctoral researchers, which are led in interdisciplinary groups by mentors and other persons organised by the HYT. Participation in the events is generally obligatory for the scholarship recipients.

§ 6

Exclusion from funding; gainful employment

- (1) Funding will not be granted if the applicant has already completed a Master's or comparable degree programme or a doctorate or has already received or is receiving other funding from public or private institutions for the same project (double funding). If the applicant receives further regular funding or takes up gainful employment beyond the limits specified below, the scholarship ends when this funding or gainful employment begins. In the event of a termination of studies or a change of degree programme or university, the scholarship ends at the end of the month in which the termination or change takes place.
- (2) An extension or re-awarding of the scholarship is excluded.
- (3) Gainful employment in addition to the scholarship is generally possible. Master's students are permitted to work up to a maximum of 19 hours per week; any additional work during the lecture-free period must at least be compensated for by less working hours during the lecture period. The HYT must be notified in advance of any additional working hours; there is no legal entitlement to approval. In addition to the scholarship, doctoral students are permitted to work at the University of Siegen for the respective mentor as a research assistant in a qualification position or as "wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft" (WHK) with a maximum of half of the regular working hours; a combination of such an employment with another one is not permitted. Employment that is not relevant to the subject (scientific or non-scientific) is permissible up to a maximum of 5 hours per week only. In any case, the HYT must be notified immediately of the commencement or termination of employment or an internship, even unpaid, during the scholarship period.
- (4) The scholarship recipient is not obliged to provide a specific service in return or to work as an employee in connection with the scholarship. The scholarship does not constitute an employment relationship. It is not subject to social security contributions, as it does not constitute remuneration according to § 14 SGB IV. The scholarship is tax-free under the conditions of § 3 No. 44 EStG.
- (5) Consequently, the awarding of the scholarship does not entail the assumption of contributions for health or accident insurance. The same applies to private liability insurance. The scholarship recipient must take out such insurances at his or her own expense.
- (6) The scholarship may be suspended upon application due to personal or study-related circumstances. The duration of the suspension must be appropriate to the occasion. It is appended to the total funding period. Such an application must be submitted to the HYT in advance with justification and time planning; there is no legal claim to approval.
- (7) Upon request, the scholarship may be suspended for the period of maternity leave and appended to the total funding period pursuant to § 6 No. 6. In the case of parental leave, the scholarship may be suspended for up to one year upon application pursuant to § 6 No. 6 and appended to the total funding period.

§ 7

Reporting and notification obligations

- (1) Upon receiving the funding, the scholarship recipient commits to informing HYT immediately and without being asked about all changes relevant to the funding.
- (2) Every semester (deadlines 31 March and 30 September), a progress report on the studies or the doctorate (informal one-page report), countersigned by the mentor, as well as a current certificate of enrolment must be submitted to the HYT.
- (3) The HYT must be notified immediately of the commencement or termination of any gainful employment or an internship, including unpaid internships, during the scholarship period.
- (4) If during a Master's scholarship, the scholarship recipient is also receiving financial support under the Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz (BAföG), the responsible BAföG office must be informed about the scholarship.
- (5) The scholarship recipient must report the completion of the studies or doctoral project directly to the HYT, even after the scholarship has ended, and submit a copy of the certificate.
- (6) In accordance with the notification regulations, the university is obliged to notify the relevant tax authorities of the payment of the scholarship.

§ 8

Revocation

- (1) The scholarship is granted until revoked. It can be revoked and, if necessary, a claim for repayment can be made if it turns out,
 - that the information in the application documents is incorrect,
 - that the funds have not been used for the intended purpose,
 - that the funds for granting a scholarship no longer exist or are lacking,
 - that the scholarship recipient does not fulfil his or her reporting or notification obligations, or
 - if it becomes apparent that the scholarship recipient is not making the necessary or reasonable efforts to achieve the funding purpose.

§ 9

Association

- (1) Doctoral researchers at the University of Siegen who have been awarded a comparable scholarship that is geared towards scientific excellence and that will continue for at least one year may apply for association with the HYT Young Academy for the remaining duration of their scholarship. This will enable them to benefit from the non-material support of the HYT Young Academy. The application for association must include:
 - Letter of motivation
 - The duration of the scholarship
 - Name of the supervisor of the person to be associated

- Declaration of commitment by the person to be associated to personally and actively participate in the study-supporting events of the HYT Young Academy and to immediately notify the HYT Young Academy in writing of the receipt of other funding, the termination of studies or the change of study programme or university
 - Declaration of commitment by the supervisor to organise an event for scholarship recipients on an interdisciplinary topic of their own choice once in each funding year in coordination with the HYT
- (2) The application must be signed by the person to be associated and the supervisor. The following documents must be enclosed with the application:
- Letter of approval of the scholarship
 - Certificate of enrolment of the person to be associated
- (3) The association does not give rise to any entitlement to a scholarship or to other funds.
- (4) The selection committee decides on the application for association.

*Approved by
the rectorate of the University of Siegen
on 28 April 2022*