



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



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Doctorate



Cologne Graduate School of Ageing Research

University of Cologne • Köln



Overview

Degree	Dr rer nat and Dr nat med
In cooperation with	University Hospital Cologne, Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing, Max Planck Institute for Metabolism Research, CECAD Cluster of Excellence
Teaching language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">English
Languages	The programme is completely conducted in English.
Programme duration	8 semesters
Beginning	Winter semester
Application deadline	The CGA offers a PhD training programme (application deadline: autumn) and a Master's fellowship programme (application deadline: 15 July).
Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Combined Master's degree / PhD programme	No
Joint degree / double degree programme	No

Description/content

Our aim is to train a new generation of biomedical scientists who can take on the diverse challenges of making fundamental scientific discoveries in the basic biology of ageing and translating them into improvements in health and life for people as they grow older. In order to do this, we need to improve our understanding of the underlying mechanisms that promote healthy ageing and identify interventions and potential drug targets.

Our research areas include:

- DNA Damage & Repair
- Genetics & Epigenetics
- Immunology & Inflammation
- Membrane & Lipid Biology

- Metabolism & Nutrient Sensing
- Mitochondrial Biology
- Neuroscience & Neurodegeneration
- Protein Homeostasis
- RNA Metabolism
- Stem Cells & Tissue Regeneration
- Systems Biology & Bioinformatics
- Tumour Biology

The Cologne Graduate School of Ageing Research (CGA) offers a comprehensive PhD training in the highly interdisciplinary field of ageing. The programme provides excellent research conditions with intensive supervision and state-of-the-art facilities in an international environment. The curriculum is complemented by individual career-development mentoring, scientific and professional skills courses, lecture series, journal clubs, and scientific retreats.

During an on-site recruitment week, candidates can visit up to five laboratories of their choice. Up to 12 candidates will be selected for the three-year programme that starts on an individual basis between 1 July and 1 October. In October, the Welcome Days for all new CGA PhD candidates take place.

Stories of our students with interesting insights about their live in Cologne can be found here: <https://www.ageing-grad-school.de/about-us/cga-stories>.

For students holding a BSc degree, the CGA offers a [Master's fellowship programme](#) as well. Master's fellows receive hands-on training in ageing research, have regular meetings with mentors of the CGA faculty, and participate in various CGA events already at an early stage in their careers!

Course Details

Course organisation	<p>A general lecture series and corresponding journal club sessions provide students with an overview of all topics covering our research areas, the latest state-of-the-art techniques, and novel research results. In addition, students will have the opportunity to attend various training modules varying from lab methodologies and techniques to soft skills. These courses provide profound knowledge in presentation, scientific writing, and project management skills required for a successful scientific career. A thesis committee consisting of experienced researchers offers systematic guidance to each student. Annual reports guarantee an optimal supervision of the progress of the projects. Scientific retreats, international meetings, exchange programmes, and journal clubs will complete the programme by giving students the opportunity to interact intensively with various researchers and the international research community.</p> <p>» PDF Download</p>
A Diploma supplement will be issued	Yes
International elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International guest lecturers • Language training provided • Training in intercultural skills • Study trips • Courses are led with foreign partners
Integrated internships	Additional internships are not required, but some PhD students take advantage of the opportunity to spend a research period abroad.
Special promotion / funding of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFG (e.g. Research Training Groups) • IMPRS

Course-specific, integrated German language courses	Yes
Course-specific, integrated English language courses	No

Costs / Funding

Tuition fees per semester in EUR	None
Semester contribution	The semester contribution amounts to approx. 318 EUR per semester. The fee includes a semester ticket that covers public transport in the entire federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia.
Costs of living	Approx. 832 EUR per month (https://portal.uni-koeln.de/ar/international/study-in-cologne/costs-financing)
Funding opportunities within the university	Yes
Description of the above-mentioned funding opportunities within the university	All PhD students receive a work contract with social benefits (including health insurance) and 30 days of vacation for a period of three years. Payment is based either on the German public salary scheme, level TVL-E13, at 65% (monthly gross salary approx. 2,700 EUR in the first year) if terms and conditions under collective bargaining law are fulfilled, or on the equivalently remunerated PhD support contract of the Max Planck Society ("Promotionsfördervertrag", sui generis). If the PhD project is not completed within three years, the respective PI will finance the student until the end of the PhD project under the same conditions.

Requirements / Registration

Academic admission requirements	<p>Applicants for the PhD programme must have completed an advanced academic degree (MSc or equivalent) in fields such as biology, biochemistry, biophysics, bioinformatics, bioengineering, pharmacology, neuroscience, translational medicine, or a related area. Furthermore, they must have gained sufficient research experience during their studies.</p> <p>Your application will also be accepted if your Master's degree has not yet been awarded by the time of application. However, it must be awarded before the start of your individual PhD projects between July and October of the respective year.</p> <p>Students holding a Bachelor's degree with outstanding grades and exceptional scientific qualification are encouraged to apply to our Master fellowship programme (https://www.ageing-grad-school.de/master/master-programme-overview/)!</p>
Language requirements	To be considered for admission, applicants are expected to have excellent English skills.
Application deadline	The CGA offers a PhD training programme (application deadline: autumn) and a Master's fellowship programme (application deadline: 15 July).

Submit application to

<https://www.ageing-grad-school.de/phd/applications>

Services

Possibility of finding part-time employment

Due to the intense nature of the programme, students cannot be employed elsewhere.

Accommodation

Accommodation is available through the student union ("[Kölner Studierendenwerk](#)") or on the private housing market. Rent for a single room in a students' hall of residence is approx. 200 to 350 EUR. Rent for a single room on the private housing market is approx. 500 EUR.

Structured research and supervision

Yes

Research training / discussion

Yes

Career advisory service

PhD students benefit from our unique three-module career development programme, and they have access to career counselling and an alumni mentoring programme.

Support for international students and doctoral candidates

- Buddy programme
- Accompanying programme
- Specialist counselling
- Cultural and linguistic preparation
- Visa matters
- Welcome event
- Tutors
- Support with registration procedures

General services and support for international students and doctoral candidates

- Academic guidance from the [thesis advisory committee](#)
- Structured [curriculum](#) with a wide range of courses, lectures and seminars
- Unique career development module
- Annual [travel grant](#) for conferences
- Annual PhD and postdoc retreat
- Alumni mentoring programme
- Coaching and mediation services
- [Mental Health First Aider Programme](#)

Supervisor-student ratio

One main and two co-supervisors as thesis advisory committee per PhD student



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Stephanie de Alcantara Fernandes

Doctoral candidate

As an international student from Brazil, the CGA coordination supported me in every way. Academically and personally, their assistance was essential in all matters, including support with organising my visa and accommodation, so my PhD programme could start as smoothly as possible. This allowed me to be fully dedicate myself to my studies.



CECAD image film

The Cologne Cluster of Excellence in Cellular Stress Responses in Ageing-Associated Diseases provides a dynamic environment for research into the ageing process itself and related diseases. Scientists from all over the world tackle the common basis of diseases like cancer, neurodegenerative diseases or type two diabetes.

» more:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKE_FcWOuFk

University of Cologne



The Cologne Graduate School of Ageing Research (CGA) in Germany is a joint venture of the [University of Cologne Excellence Cluster on Stress Responses in Ageing-Associated Diseases \(CECAD\)](#), the University Hospital Cologne, the [Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing](#) and the [Max Planck Institute for Metabolism Research](#)

With more than 50,000 students and six faculties, the [University of Cologne](#) is not only one of the largest universities in Germany but also a modern university in the heart of Europe. Academic excellence, internationality, and widely varied curricula create a vibrant and inspiring environment for students, scientists, and scholars. Since its distinction within the scope of the German Excellence Initiative 2012, the University of Cologne has belonged to a small group of elite universities in Germany for seven years.

Cologne has emerged as a leading global research cluster with a stellar constellation of institutes and scientists dedicated to ageing research in Life Sciences.



University location

With a population of over one million people, Cologne is the fourth-largest city in Germany and the largest city in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Located in the heart of Europe on an ancient trade route – the river Rhine – Cologne has been an important trade location since the Middle Ages. Cologne has a booming economic sector that includes commerce, trades, banks, and international corporations. It is one of Europe's most important media hubs and is home to a variety of television and radio broadcasters. Furthermore, Cologne offers many museums, art exhibitions, cinemas, theatres, cultural events, international-level concerts, and, of course, the Cologne Carnival, which is the city's "fifth season".

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📘 <https://www.facebook.com/colognegraduateschoolofageingresearch>

🐦 https://twitter.com/CGA_age

🌐 <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8312077>

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Disclaimer

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