“**Your time as a doctoral student** is the most important station in your scientific career. It will have a profound influence on your future research and life. The MDC and the campus Berlin-Buch offer a wonderfully rich research environment and a supportive Graduate School framework, and I advise you to take full advantage of the opportunities you find here. We have strong, interdisciplinary groups in which you can approach biological questions from multiple perspectives, cutting-edge technology platforms which you can combine in unique ways to answer them, and a mix of experimental and clinical groups working on fundamental questions with therapeutic applications. Our campus is home to around 50 biotech companies, the leading biotech cluster within the health region of Berlin, which are bringing the fruits of biomedical research to the marketplace. To prepare you for the future, we are continually expanding the scope of our doctoral programmes to encompass new themes. Ultimately, our research will contribute to shape the future of biomedicine and have great impact on society, and our students play a crucial role. I’m delighted to welcome you, and I’m looking forward to the contributions you will make to our work and our campus!”

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“**As you come to the end of your undergraduate studies** you will be faced with many options. If you choose to undertake a PhD you will gain invaluable skills – clear and rigorous scientific thinking, the ability to dig your way through and understand complex information, to generate knowledge, and the independence that comes with pursuing your own research project. This experience will set you apart and stay with you for the rest of your life. At the MDC we support the development of your research skills according to your personal interest. Our training programmes and supervision structure give you all the support you need without hampering your freedom to explore your own research. You will join a large international scientific community where you can tap into a wealth of knowledge, expertise and resources, forging professional and personal relationships that will see you through your career. We would be proud to accompany you on these important steps into the world of research science.”
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Who are we?

The Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC), a member of the Helmholtz Association, is a major biomedical research institute in Berlin.

www.mdc-berlin.de
The Helmholtz Association is the largest scientific organisation in Germany. An annual budget of more than €3.4 billion finances 18 research centres and 34,000 staff members. Its remit is to pursue long term research goals on behalf of the German state and society. The Helmholtz Association's 5000 graduate students conduct research in the key areas of energy, earth and environment, health, key technologies, structure of matter, aeronautics, space and transport.

The MDC is the leading German national research institute in the field of molecular medicine. This is a broad, cross-disciplinary area connecting fundamental discoveries in the laboratory with the field of medicine and aims to develop new strategies and therapies to improve human health. The translation of basic findings into more personalised medical practice and new bed-side technologies is a challenge that the institute has taken on. Founded 20 years ago, the MDC already has a strong international reputation. Its scientists – many of them leaders in their fields – publish on average one research paper per day. Since its foundation, the MDC has grown from 400 to more than 1500 employees, representing 55 nationalities. Our mission – to be at the forefront of fundamental biomedical research – is supported by the ongoing development of our infrastructure and facilities, including expansion of the Berlin Institute for Medical Systems Biology (BIMSB), development of modern facilities for translational medicine in the Experimental and Clinical Research Centre (ECRC), a unique Ultrahigh-Field MR Facility, and a newly-planned In Vivo Pathology Laboratory.

Located on the Berlin-Buch campus, the MDC is embedded in an environment of modern biomedical science, health and the leading biotechnology park in Berlin. The institute works closely with the campus neighbour, the Leibniz Institut für Molekulare Pharmakologie (FMP), sharing facilities and several joint research groups. We are well placed to tap into the wider scientific network of Berlin, a city renowned for its high density of scientific institutions. The MDC has established a range of institutional collaborations with all the major natural sciences institutes in Berlin, including the Max Planck Institutes, the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, the Freie Universität Berlin, and the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin.

We are committed to meet today's challenges in biology and medicine and realise that excellent science requires outstanding researchers. If you aspire to be one of them – welcome to the MDC!

“My graduate research at the MDC allowed me to develop an exciting project with outstanding support from my PhD adviser Thomas Sommer and our group. I was trained to use biochemistry, cell biology, and genetics in a complementary fashion, and combining these approaches now is a centerpiece of my own research group at Yale University.”

Prof. Dr. Thomas Biederer, PhD Alumnus, Yale University  www.biederer.yalemedicine.org
Molecular Medicine at the MDC
Science at the MDC spans four basic research areas and translational research – bringing the latest discoveries from bench to bed-side. The work of our 60 research groups ranges from structural biology, imaging, cell biology, developmental biology, animal models, clinical studies, biophysics, bioinformatics & computational biology to genome biology, covering the whole spectrum of molecular life sciences. Such a diverse portfolio fuels collaboration. This, combined with the integration of high-end technologies and the development of new methods by our technology platform facilities, means that our institute competes at a truly international level.

“I came from Colombia to do my PhD in neuroscience in the MolNeuro Research School at the MDC. I was attracted by the possibility of having access to advanced technology that we don’t have in my country. I’ve now been here for three years and I can say that I did find that technology and also helpful people to discuss it with.”

Yinth-Andrea Bernal-Sierra, PhD student, Columbia
Areas of special emphasis at the MDC

**Medical Systems Biology**

Systems biology has the potential to revolutionise medicine towards personalised treatments. Meeting this challenge requires a multidisciplinary approach integrating high-throughput technologies, mathematics, bioinformatics, molecular biology, biochemistry and engineering to derive predictive, quantitative models for biological systems. The Berlin Institute for Medical Systems Biology is a major program at the MDC. Several groups focus their research on understanding post-transcriptional regulation of the genome. Facilities residing within the BIMSB include deep sequencing, mass spectrometry for proteomics and metabolomics, bioinformatics and mathematical modelling.

**Translational Medical Research**

Long-standing collaborations between the MDC and Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin medical faculty help bridge the traditional gap between basic biomedical science and clinical research. The joint Experimental and Clinical Research Center (ECRC) includes both outpatient clinics and research facilities, supporting clinical studies and enabling close collaboration between basic and clinical scientists. A major facility at the ECRC is the Ultrahigh-Field Magnetic Resonance unit, equipped with world-class animal (9.4 Tesla) and whole-body (7.0 Tesla) MR scanners.

**Technologies on campus**

MDC Research Groups

Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases

Basic Cardiovascular Function

Neuromuscular and Cardiovascular Cell Biology
Michael Gotthardt

Angiogenesis and Cardiovascular Pathology
Ferdinand le Noble

Molecular Muscle Physiology
Ingo L. Morano

Anchored Signalling
Walther Rosenthal, Enno Klussmann

Developmental Biology and Pathophysiology of the Kidney
Kai M. Schmidt-Ott

Zebrafish Cardiovascular Developmental Genetics
Salim Seyfried

Molecular and Cellular Basis of Embryonic Development
Francesca M. Spagnoli

Molecular Cardiovascular Research
Thomas E. Willnow

Genetics and Pathophysiology of Cardiovascular Diseases

Cardiovascular Hormones
Michael Bader

Regenerative Medicine for Metabolic Diseases
Malgorzata Borowiak

Medical Genomics and Genetics of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases
Norbert Hübner

Mobile DNA
Zsuzsanna Izsák

Genetics of Allergic Disease
Young-Ae Lee

Hypertension, Genetics, Eicosanoids, and Cardiovascular Disease
Friedrich C. Luft

Experimental Ultrahigh-Field MR
Thoralf Niendorf

Electrochemical Signaling in Development and Disease
Daniela Panáková

Molecular Epidemiology
Tobias Pischon

microRNAs and Mechanisms of Metabolic Diseases
Matthew Poy

Cell Signalling and Mass Spectrometry
Matthias Selbach

Cardiovascular Molecular Genetics
Ludwig Thierfelder

Molecular Genetics of Metabolic and Reproductive Disorders
Mathias Treier

Mathematical Modelling of Cellular Systems
Jana Wolf

Cancer Research

Signalling Pathways, Cell and Tumor Biology

Computational Biology and Data Mining
Miguel Andrade

Signals Provided by Wnt/β-catenin and Met/Gab1/Shp2 in Development and Cancer
Walter Birchmeier

Cell Differentiation and Tumorigenesis
Achim Leutzh

Regulation of Cell Shape Dynamics by Rho GTPase Proteins
Oliver Rocks

Nuclear Signalling and Chromosomal Domains
Harald Saumweber

Signal Transduction in Tumor Cells
Claus Scheidereit

Surgical Oncology
Peter M. Schlag

Cancer Genetics and Cellular Stress Responses in Pathogenesis and Treatment of Lymphatic Malignancies
Clemens A. Schmitt

Stem Cell and Macrophage Biology
Michael Sieweke

Mechanisms of Protein Quality Control
Thomas Sommer

Structural and Functional Genomics

Structure and Mechanism of Membrane-Remodeling G proteins
Oliver Daumke

Macromolecular Structure and Interaction
Udo Heinemann

Tumor Immunology

Molecular Immunology and Gene Therapy
Thomas Blankenstein

Clinical and Molecular Oncology
Peter Daniel

Biology and Targeted Therapy of Lymphoma
Bernd Dörken

Experimental Pharmacology
Iduna Fichtner

Development and Immunopathogenesis
Martin Lipp

Molecular Immunotherapy
Antonio Pezzutto

Immune Regulation and Cancer
Klaus Rajewsky

Molecular Cell Biology and Gene Therapy
Wolfgang Uckert

Diseases of the Nervous System

Signalling Pathways and Mechanisms in the Nervous System

Developmental Biology/Signal Transduction
Carmen Birchmeier

Molecular Neurobiology of Cell-surface Channels and Receptors
Ines Ibanez-Tallon

Physiology and Pathology of Ion Transport
Thomas Jentsch

Molecular Physiology of Somatic Sensation
Gary R. Lewin

RNA Editing and Hyperexcitability Disorders
Jochen C. Meier

Neural Circuits and Behaviour
James Poulet

Neuronal Connectivity
Fritz G. Rathjen

Signaling and Transport Processes
Björn Christian Schroeder

Temperature Detection and Thermoregulation
Jan Siemens

Pathophysiological Mechanisms of Neurological and Psychiatric Disorders

Mathematical Cell Physiology
Martin Falcke

Cellular Neurosciences
Helmut Kettenmann

Proteomics and Molecular Mechanisms of Neurodegenerative Disorders
Erich Wanker

Berlin Institute of Medical Systems Biology (BIMSB)

Non-coding RNAs and mechanisms of cytoplasmic gene regulation
Marina Chekulaeva

Novel Sequencing Technology, Medical and Functional Genomics
Wei Chen

Bioinformatics in Quantitative Biology
Christoph Dieterich

Integrative Metabolomics and Proteomics Platform
Stefan Kempa

RNA Biology and Post-transcriptional Regulation
Markus Landthaler

Signalling Dynamics in Single Cells
Alexander Loewer

Computational Biology of Gene Regulation
Uwe Ohler

Epigenetic regulation and chromatin architecture
Ana Pombo

Biology (BIMSB)

Medical Systems Biology
Erich Wanker

Neurodegenerative Disorders
Molecular Mechanisms of Proteomics and Bioinformatics
Helmut Kettenmann

Cellular Neurosciences
Wolfgang Uckert

Mechanisms of Neurological Pathophysiological Mechanisms
Jan Siemens

Temperature Detection and Thermoregulation

Helmholtz Graduate School Molecular Cell Biology

The graduate school hosts 350 PhD students from 39 countries
The Helmholtz Graduate School “Molecular Cell Biology” is a collaboration between the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC) and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU), Freie Universität Berlin and Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin medical faculty. We offer, alongside outstanding research training, an interdisciplinary platform for structured PhD training to all doctoral students at the MDC. The graduate school currently supports 350 PhD students, one third of whom come from abroad.

The research diversity offered by the 60 groups working at the MDC covers the areas of cardiovascular research, metabolic research, cancer biology & immunology, developmental biology, medical systems biology, bioinformatics, structural biology and molecular neurobiology. The programme combines academic research, education and training from accomplished professors and researchers, access to high-end technology and collaborations, all within the campus. Research training is supplemented with teaching lectures in the main research areas, methods workshops, introductions to new technologies, soft-skills courses and opportunities for career development to foster the personal and scientific development of our students. To help our students keep track of the various activities and courses during their PhD, the Graduate School operates a Credit Point System for courses and conferences attended and participation in career development activities. This helps students to structure their training so that it meets individual needs and interest.

MDC International PhD Programme

“To improve the analysis of my data and my experimental plans, I applied to join the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory course “Eukaryotic Gene Expression”. The travel funds from our Graduate School together with funds from my lab covered all the course costs and gave me not only the opportunity to learn theoretical and practical aspects of new methods that I could apply in my PhD work, but also brought me up-to-date with the whole gene expression field. The discussions with other participants, instructors and guest lectures about the current problems and developments in this field were a priceless experience.”

Kivia Aparecida Pontes de Oliveira, PhD student, Brazil
What we offer

01 Welcome Center
Newly arrived PhD students are supported in their first steps in Berlin. We help you take care of everything from visas, work permits and residence requirements to getting oriented on campus.

02 Introductory Days
First year students participate in introductory sessions which give an overview of the MDC infrastructure, introduce the platform technologies and the facilities on campus, and provide useful tips for starting their PhD.

03 University Interface
MDC administrators at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin assist with all matters related to admission, enrolment, thesis submission and examination.

04 PhD Supervision
Our students present annually to thesis committees which provide advice on PhD projects and follow their progress, supporting both their scientific and personal development. Committees consist of the PhD project advisor and two additional faculty members.

05 Lectures & Seminars
With a range of research seminars, from invited and internal speakers, and dedicated teaching lectures on offer on the campus and at our partner universities downtown, our students can deepen their studies and stay well connected with the scientific community.

06 Methods Courses
These courses aim to introduce PhD students to new techniques and high-end technologies. Courses include Statistics, Bioinformatics, Introduction to Deep-Sequencing, Mass Spectrometry, etc.

07 PhD Symposia & Retreats
These annual student-organised interdisciplinary meetings are a forum for students to present and discuss their work with their peers and network with the campus community, building new collaborations and friendships.

08 Soft Skills Training
Summer School workshops are offered to strengthen soft skills such as oral presentation, project management or scientific writing. These courses also include German classes and IT courses.

09 Travel Support
Travel and Collaboration funds are available to all PhD students and include support for international conferences, external workshops and visits to other laboratories.

10 Career Development
We help our students to plan for the future with a series of career talks, funding advice, and workshops on CV-writing, applying for grants, and job applications.

11 Social Activities
Campus social events, such as the Student Club and beer hour, help to bring our community together. Our students find a lot of different ways to get involved, from joining the MDC running club to writing for the newsletter.

12 Alumni Network
Alumni stay connected with the MDC by plugging into the Nature Network hubs or keep abreast of the latest developments through the Freundeskreis (Friends of the MDC).
“The annual PhD committee meetings are a useful opportunity for us to take some time to reorganise and reanalyse our results. They help us to define where we are standing at the moment and where our project is heading. Unbiased comments and criticism from the committee members are always welcome and can provide some external insight, revealing new perspectives and/or possible flaws in our projects.”
Igor Pongrac, PhD Student, Croatia

“As a foreign student, I particularly appreciate the kind help from the Graduate School on visa extension and the generous offer of ‘Deutsch’ courses.”
Jiaxuan Chen, PhD student, China

“It was great to receive support from the Graduate Office for registration as a doctoral student at the Humboldt University: first we were given an overview of the whole enrolment and thesis submission/defence process, and then also got a brochure summarising in English all steps, contact details and documents required. For a foreigner understanding the German university regulations can be quite a daunting task, but we felt lucky to have such a comprehensive support and assistance!”
Valentina Mosienko, PhD Student, Belarus
Listen and Learn

Attending teaching lectures helps our students to get an overview of different subject areas and to get up to date with the state of the art in those fields. A packed programme of research seminars, featuring both local and international speakers, connects our students with the broader scientific community.

Teaching Lecture Series

Molecular Cell Biology
Molecular Pharmacology
BIMSB HU Ringvorlesung Medical Systems Biology
Molecular Neurobiology ‘MolNeuro’
Cardiovascular Disease Research ‘TransCard Lecture’

Research Seminars

Student Seminar in Systems Biology
Seminar in Haematopoiesis and Leukaemogenesis ‘Freshblood’
Developmental Biology Seminar Series
Seminar Series in Medical Systems Biology
Cardiovascular Research Student Seminar
Wollenberger Seminar in Cardiovascular & Metabolic Disease

Read

a few publication highlights from our current students:


Specialised Research Schools

By joining the Helmholtz Graduate School you have the option of applying to join one of our specialised research schools, the Research School for Molecular Neurobiology – MolNeuro, the Research School for Translational Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases – TransCard, the German-Israeli Research School Frontiers in Cell Signaling and Gene Regulation – SignGene, the MDC-NYU PhD Exchange Program in Medical Systems Biology and the International Research Training Group for Myology – MyoGrad.
MolNeuro

This is a PhD School for students involved in molecular analysis of neurobiological processes. Students admitted to this Research School are expected to pursue a research project to understand the molecular basis underlying normal function and dysfunction of the nervous system.

**Spokesperson:** Prof. Gary Lewin

**PhD Coordinator:** Dr. Jana Droese (jana.droese@mdc-berlin.de)

**www.mdc-berlin.de/molneuro**

**Curriculum highlights:**

- a two-year teaching lecture series covering basic and advanced concepts of Neurobiology, including a range of topics from neurophysiology, ion transport, and neuronal connectivity, to behavioural studies and neuroproteomics
- participation in the annual Berlin Brain Days Meeting – a forum for neuroscience PhD students across Berlin
- joint MolNeuro retreats with students from University College London
- MolNeuro Travel Grants for conferences, collaborations and workshops

“Being a student within the MolNeuro Research School, I had the opportunity to organize an international PhD conference. My assignments were various – from choosing the venue itself and decisions on the keynote speakers, to technical and organizational issues during the time of the conference. The result of our effort was exciting – 36 students together with the faculty members and five keynote speakers met in Split, Croatia in September 2010 at the MDC/UCL PhD Student Neuroscience Conference not only to discuss science and exchange experiences, but also to enjoy the perfect atmosphere of the Mediterranean. In the end, we were proud to see all the people coming together and actively participating at the Conference, all of which resulted from our ideas and hard work.”

*Damir Omerbasic, PhD student, Croatia*
TransCard

Students admitted to this Research School pursue a research project in cardiovascular and/or metabolic diseases, in basic or clinical research. TransCard aims to stimulate interactions between basic scientists and clinicians.

Curriculum highlights:

- two semesters of weekly core lectures divided into the basics of cardiovascular and metabolic research and clinical applications
- online resources including e-learning platform (archive of webcast lectures) for sharing information and documents as well as a student forum
- clinical visits: students observe how patients are treated in the hospital and experience themselves some of the techniques available to check their own cardiovascular system
- annual TransCard retreat
- TransCard Travel Grants for conferences, collaborations and workshops

Spokespersons: Prof. Michael Gotthardt & Dr. Salim Seyfried
PhD Coordinator: Dr. Sabine Löwer (transcard@mdc-berlin.de)

www.mdc-berlin.de/transcard

“From bench to bedside”, that’s what we experienced during a two-day clinical visit in the cardiology department of the Helios Clinic, Berlin. Meeting patients and getting an insight into a physician’s daily work showed quite plainly the necessity of our basic research to unravel disease causes and mechanisms to find new ways to diagnose and cure human diseases.”

Anna Christa, PhD student, Germany
SignGene

The German-Israeli Helmholtz Research School “Frontiers in Cell Signaling and Gene Regulation” (SignGene) is a cooperative endeavor between the MDC and leading Israeli universities – the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI) and the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, together with our German university partners, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and the Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin. The SignGene Faculty encompasses some of the world’s most distinguished scientists, including the Nobel-prize laureate Aaron Ciechanover (Chemistry 2004), Klaus Rajewsky (MDC) and Howard Cedar (HUJI).

Spokespersons: Prof. Claus Scheidereit (MDC), Prof. Yaakov Nahmias (HUJI), Prof. Amit Meller (Technion)

PhD Coordinator: Dr Sabine Löwer (sabine.loewer@mdc-berlin.de)

www.mdc-berlin.de/signgene

Curriculum highlights:

- SignGene PhD students carry out research within collaborative projects between laboratories in Germany and Israel.
- Prolonged exchange stays in the partner laboratory abroad form an essential part of the training.
- Joint international thesis committees, annual Summer School, PhD Retreat and Symposium, lecture series, practical courses, and mutual external laboratory sojourns in the two countries will extend the international training provided for the PhD students.

SignGene's mission is to establish a truly international PhD program of excellence, leveraging excellent expertise of its faculty and high reputation of participating institutions to provide a unique training of an excellent cadre of students. We offer an advanced, structured and integrated training and a supportive research environment for PhD students committed to pursue their studies with a strong focus on fundamental gene regulation and signal transduction processes relevant to human health. SignGene emphasizes a range of key topics, including the application of modern molecular biology and cell biology, proteomics, transcriptomics, bio-imaging, structure analysis as well as systems and quantitative biology, biophysics and bioengineering.
MDC-NYU PhD Exchange Program

PhD exchange program for research and education in the fields of systems biology, medical genomics, RNA biology and quantitative biology. Both institutions, the Berlin Institute for Medical Systems Biology at the MDC and the Center for Genomics and Systems Biology at New York University, offer complementary expertise in extensive “evo-devo” approaches, relevant animal model systems as well as high end technologies in genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics and metabolomics. Each PhD project is jointly supervised by a Principal Investigator from each of the two research institutions.

Spokespersons: Professors Nikolaus Rajewsky (MDC), Fabio Piano (NYU), PhD
Graduate Administrator: Jennifer Stewart (jennifer.stewart@mdc-berlin.de)

www.mdc-berlin.de/en/bimsb

Curriculum highlights:
• research training in top ranking labs in Berlin and New York
• students can spend up to fifty percent of their time in research labs at NYU and also attend special courses there
• access to and training in high-end technologies, such as deep sequencing, mass spectrometry, bioinformatics and imaging
• participation in interdisciplinary classes, student focused seminars and summer schools
• annual Berlin Summer Meeting in computational and experimental molecular biology

I began my Ph.D. project in 2009 with Markus Landthaler (Berlin) and Stephen Small (New York) as a MDC-NYU PhD exchange program student. Membership of both laboratories allows me to take advantage of both institutions’ exceptional scientific environment and infrastructure. My first paper, Baltz et al., Molecular Cell 2012, was made possible by collaborations with the diverse network of research groups located at the MDC and at New York University.

The opportunity to study in two labs with different biological backgrounds and research interest, and filled with colleagues from all over the world, has broadened my scientific and personal horizons alike. It is also worth noting that Berlin and New York rank amongst the most exciting cities in the world and offer, besides an increasing number of excellent research institutions, countless cultural and social opportunities.

Alexander Baltz, PhD Student, Germany
MyoGrad

International research training group for Myology offers training towards PhD or MD and covers the entire spectrum of muscle-related cell and molecular biology as well as clinical aspects of muscle diseases. Each doctoral student will be supervised by two academic advisers, one from Berlin and one from Paris and will obtain a joint doctoral degree from the FU, Berlin and the UPMC, Paris (cotutelle procedure).

Spokesperson (Berlin): Prof. Simone Spuler
Spokespersons (Paris): Prof. Thomas Voit & Prof. Helge Amthor
Graduate Administrator: Susanne Wissler (myograd@charite.de)

www.charite-buch.de/myograd

Curriculum highlights:
- students carry out their research in both Berlin and Paris – making international exchange and exposure to different environments an integral part of their scientific experience.
- annual "Muscle Science" Summer Schools in Berlin and Paris
- teaching face-to-face in seminars and journal clubs or online via the Myology “E-learning” platform
- association with the Dahlem Research School (DRS) of Freie Universität means that students benefit from the DRS softskill development classes

“For me, it was the chance to work in two world-class institutes in Berlin and Paris and to meet top international researchers that attracted me to the MyoGrad programme. That, combined with cutting edge research projects and a broad range of scientific and transferable skill courses, should give me a great start to my scientific career.”

Joscha Griger, PhD Student, Germany
Our Partner Universities

As the MDC is not entitled to award academic degrees, all PhD students must register with a university. To make this easier, the MDC graduate school has partnerships with Berlin universities allowing students to obtain degrees from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HUB), Freie Universität Berlin (FU) or Charité Universitätsmedizin. Most of our students opt for our partner universities in Berlin, but it is also possible to obtain the degree from any other university.

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

The Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HUB) has just celebrated its 200th anniversary, and is a proud „Alma mater“ to a total of 29 Nobel Prize winners and many other prominent personalities. There are about 30,000 students studying at the HUB, with almost a fifth of them coming from abroad. The HUB has been ranked as one of the best universities in the country in the major German university excellence competition. The MDC has a long-standing collaboration with the HUB Institute of Biology, with the Professors Andreas Herrmann, Richard Lucius, Harald Saumweber taking an active part in our International PhD Programme „Molecular Cell Biology“.

www.hu-berlin.de
www.biologie.hu-berlin.de

Freie Universität Berlin

The Freie Universität Berlin (FU) is the youngest of Berlin’s four universities and was established just over 60 years ago. It is therefore even more impressive that, despite its young age, it has already been selected to be the “International Network University” within the Excellence Initiative and by extension one of Germany’s top universities. Of its approximately 28,500 students, almost one fifth comes from abroad, and one quarter of its PhD students are international. We cooperate closely with the FUB Department of Biology, Chemistry and Pharmacy, especially in the field of molecular neurobiology, and Professors Volker Haucke, Stephan Sigrist and Constance Scharff are among our faculty.

www.fu-berlin.de
www.bcp.fu-berlin.de/en

Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin

The Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin is a joint medical faculty of the HUB and the FU, combining basic medical research with patient care in clinical centers and providing excellent training opportunities. The Charité is the largest university hospital in Europe with more than 100 clinics and institutes extending over four campuses.

The MDC enjoys a very close partnership with the Charité: there are joint clinical research groups and major institutional collaborations, such as the Experimental and Clinical Research Center (ECRC). Charité professors Annette Grüters, Axel Pries, Victor Tarabykin, Christian Rosenmund and Simone Spuler are among the faculty of our Research Schools.

www.charite.de
Life at the MDC

By joining the MDC you are not only taking advantage of its excellent scientific infrastructure and comprehensive support offered to all graduate students, but as important, – you will find many opportunities to become a member of our international community of young and enthusiastic researchers.

Arriving new in Berlin you can stay at one of the campus guesthouses before finding your own place to live in Berlin (rightly considered to be one of the most affordable European capitals!). Our leafy campus offers plenty of green outdoor space to relax. Amongst trees and open spaces you’ll find critically recognised modern architecture as well as numerous artworks and sculptures. Meet and make friends over a beer at the Friday after-work “beer hour” or at any of the parties and events organised by our community. Social events for newcomers and cultural outings downtown are organised by the Graduate office. There are a range of sports clubs and classes on offer including a running club, classes in kung fu and argentine tango, soccer, basketball, beach volleyball and fitness classes and more.
Berlin is a dynamic and vibrant city located in the heart of Europe. As the capital city of Germany with a population of 3.4 million people Berlin is Germany’s largest city. Exceedingly open and tolerant, the tremendous creative spirit drives both culture and science.

Frequent and radical changes through Berlin’s turbulent and noticeably present history have transformed the face of the city many times over. But despite this, the city has succeeded in becoming a thriving metropolis, extraordinary wealth of cultural opportunities – art, music, theatre, cinema – attract increasing numbers of visitors, making Berlin one of the post popular destinations in Europe. It boasts a lively scene with lots of pubs, clubs, restaurants and cafés. Densely urban areas co-exist with large green spaces, nature reserves, lakes and rivers all within the city boundaries, offering a truly metropolitan lifestyle in an unusually pleasant and relaxing atmosphere.

Living in Berlin

With a population of 3.5 million people

Berlin is home to 477,000 foreign nationals from abroad

and 134,000 university students

Berlin accommodates 4 universities, 3 opera houses and 2500 public parks and gardens
How to apply

Which degrees are recognised?
Applicants are required to hold or obtain a Masters degree, German Diploma or equivalent degree including a research project and written thesis.

Can I apply before I receive my degree?
It is not necessary that you hold your degree at the time of application. However, you have to have been awarded your degree by the time you start your PhD. All students are asked to start their research project within six months of the interviews.

Does the program have specific language requirements?
The program language is English throughout. Proficiency in English is therefore a must. For your application, an English test is recommended but not mandatory.

Where and when can I apply?
For the International PhD program applications are accepted only through the application web-portal. The portal is opened twice a year. Exact openings and application details are indicated at www.mdc-berlin.de/Application/

Which information has to be submitted for the application?
For your application you will submit information about your education, research skills and interests, a letter of motivation and contacts of two referees. In addition we recommend uploading available academic certificates and transcripts of English language tests.

What happens next?
The group leaders of the MDC will preview applications and short-listed candidates will be invited for interviews about five weeks after the application deadline. Interviews take place twice a year.

What is the interview in Berlin all about?
The interview and final evaluation in Berlin lasts for four days and includes a short presentation of your research project, a panel interview, lab presentations of recruiting group leaders and personal interviews with your groups of interest. Travel expenses and accommodation will be covered.

When do I know whether I have been accepted to the programme?
You will be notified within three days of the interview.

When do I start my PhD?
We ask all students to start within six months of the interview at the MDC. In principle you can start at any time. All PhD students at the MDC are enrolled in the Helmholtz Graduate School for Molecular Cell Biology and will participate in the annual introductory days in their first year at the MDC.

Can I expect some support arriving in Berlin?
The Graduate School and MDC Welcome-Center support all students on arriving in their first steps moving to Berlin including VISA and residency.

How am I paid?
PhD students receive a work contract according to the German public system including health and social insurance and pension scheme.

For more information please visit
www.mdc-berlin.de/application
or contact the graduate office at phmdmc@mdc-berlin.de

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