

Call: Thyssen@KWI Fellowship

Fellowship for the duration of 6 months from 1 October 2026 until 31 March 2027.

The Thyssen@KWI Fellowship addresses excellent researchers from the humanities, cultural studies, and the social sciences. It is most generously funded by the

Fritz Thyssen Foundation: <https://www.fritz-thyssen-stiftung.de/en/>

International researchers are invited to apply as well as scholars of German nationality, provided they demonstrate outstanding international work experience and contacts. We invite applications from research fellows who have completed their PhD and have already gained several years of post-doctoral research expertise (**R3 level**). Project proposals should address [KWI's research agenda](#). The KWI (Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut) in Essen provides fellows with modern infrastructure, office space, technical support, and offers a library service, event and research management as well as any administrative and communicative support.

The Thyssen@Fellow will receive a fellowship contract (not a full-employment contract) and a monthly allowance of 4.000 € (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.

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. KWI'S current research fields are: Constellations of Historical Impact, Visual Literacy, Aesthetic Practices, Dialogues Between the Cultural and Social Sciences, and Science Studies. 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.

Expectations:

- Candidates must hold a completed PhD in the humanities, cultural studies, the social sciences, or closely related fields and demonstrate an established research profile. They should also have approximately five or more years of postdoctoral experience (R3 level). Applicants are expected to work on a research project that is distinct from their PhD research.
- Applications are open to international researchers. German scholars may apply if they have substantial international research experience during or after their PhD, including extended research stays or collaborations abroad, and relevant professional contacts.

- Candidates will have a strong scientific track record (including publications in respected international journals or other comparable publications; participation in and organization of international conferences). We welcome applications from candidates with a proven record of third-party funding and/or with experience in science communication and/or public humanities.
- The fellowship should be dedicated to research linked to one or more of KWI's focus areas and consistent with its interdisciplinary agenda. Various project formats are possible: You might devote your time in Essen to finishing a book or a special issue, 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 Thyssen@KWI Fellow to be present at the institute at least 3 days a week. The fellow will be expected to participate in entry and exit interviews.
- The Thyssen@KWI Fellow is 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.
- The Thyssen@KWI Fellow 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.
- The Thyssen@KWI Fellow is 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 and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation.
- 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 2026). 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. Fellows might also profit from cross-border programmes and initiatives engendered by the close proximity of Belgium and the Netherlands to North Rhine-Westphalia. 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 the Ruhr metropolitan area, spearheaded by Essen, was honoured as “European Capital of Culture”. After the transformation of traditional industries, great effort has gone into making the Ruhr area greener again. By now, this region in the West of Germany has developed into a cultural hub with manifold outdoor possibilities. The cities of Cologne and Duesseldorf can be reached easily, 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 with the **subject line:** “**Thyssen@KWI-Fellowship**”.

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

- The application must be written in English and must contain a CV, a list of publications, PhD certificate, and proposal sketching your KWI project (up to max. 5,000 characters for the proposal).
- The application deadline is 11 Mai 2026 **(23:59 CET)**. We will not consider applications that are incomplete or submitted after this date.
- Fellows will be selected by a committee consisting of external reviewers, the institute’s director and the Fritz Thyssen foundation.
- Further information about the application process can be found in the [FAQs](#)

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