



One or two Start-up Grants of the Doctoral Program in Literary Studies (32,000 Swiss francs each)

The Doctoral Program in Literary Studies of the University of Basel calls for applications for one or two one-year start-up grants of CHF 32,000 (beginning October 1, 2026). The grant is designed to support promising junior researchers in developing a PhD project to apply for follow-up funding.

The Doctoral Program in Literary Studies

The international, interphilological Doctoral Program in Literary Studies at the University of Basel offers doctoral students excellent conditions for writing their dissertations in literary studies and closely related fields. Selected seminars, regular doctoral colloquia, as well as retreats and study days provide numerous opportunities to exchange ideas with other doctoral students, receive feedback on the work in progress, and acquire the skills necessary for an academic career. The Doctoral Program also supports its members with contributions to conferences, research trips, and archival travel and financial support for their own events.

The Doctoral Program is part of the Department of Languages and Literatures, which unites the following philologies: Anglophone Literary and Cultural Studies, German Studies, French Studies, Ibero-Romance Studies, Italian Studies, Nordic Studies, Slavic Studies, and Eastern European Studies. The Doctoral Program's research foci include literary and cultural theory, the history of literary forms, arts and media, forms of knowledge, and cultural practice. Currently, the Doctoral Program has a membership about 45 doctoral students, half of which with an international background.

The Start-Up Grant

The one-year start-up grant (application deadline: April 12, 2026; start date: October 1, 2026) is intended to contribute to living expenses during the elaboration phase of a dissertation project in literary studies. The aim of the start-up grant is to prepare and submit a competitive application for follow-up funding or for project employment to the appropriate institutions within six months, in order to then seamlessly continue the dissertation within the framework of third-party funding. The start-up grant of CHF 32,000 will be paid in two half-yearly tranches of CHF 16,000 each (with evaluation).

Your Profile

You have an outstanding MA degree (or equivalent) in one of the philologies represented at the Department of Languages and Literatures or in a related field. You have already thought in depth about a dissertation project that will make a significant contribution to your field, and you want to become an active member of the Doctoral Program in Literary Studies.



For application and admission to doctoral studies, an MA grade of at least 5.0 in the Swiss system, rounded to one tenth, is required. For other grading systems, please refer to the “Frequently Asked Questions” on the start-up grant page of our website dpl.dslw.unibas.ch. The official degree certificate must be submitted by June 9, 2026.

We ask you to contact possible supervisors and conduct orientation interviews before applying. Eligible supervisors are the Professors (Prof. Dr.) of the Department of Languages and Literatures at the University of Basel. You must be able to present a confirmation of supervision no later than the interview. Furthermore, we ask you to carefully read our [website](#).

Application

The following documents should be sent in electronic form (collected in one PDF) to the coordinator of the Doctoral Program in Literary Studies (dok-lit@unibas.ch), by April 12, 2026:

1. letter of motivation
2. curriculum vitae (with list of publications, if applicable)
3. outline of the dissertation project (max. 5 pages plus bibliography)
4. degree certificate with final grade (MA degree or equivalent; if the certificate is not yet available, include a declaration that it will be submitted by June 9, 2026)
5. one or two text samples (including MA thesis or equivalent, in total no more than 30 pages)
6. letter of reference

The application can be submitted in English, German, French, or Italian. Applications from people who already have a doctoral degree or who are at an advanced stage of their doctoral studies will not be considered. Start-up grantees must enroll as doctoral students at the University of Basel and automatically become members of the Doctoral Program in Literary Studies.

Schedule

Application deadline: April 12, 2026.

Interviews: until May 13, 2026.

Final decision: By mid-June 2026.

For further information, please contact the coordinator of the Doctoral Program at dok-lit@unibas.ch.