SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMS

The GHI is committed to assisting historians at the very beginning of their careers. It runs a variety of programs for graduate students and awards approximately 40 doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships each year. One aim of both the graduate student programs and the fellowship program is to foster dialogue between junior and more senior scholars.

The GHI currently runs four programs for graduate students and recent PhDs. The longest running of these programs is the Summer Archival Seminar in Germany. Led by a GHI research fellow, the Summer Archival Seminar introduces doctoral students at American universities to the workings of German archives and gives them basic paleographic training. The Robert Bosch Foundation now generously funds a complementary program, the Bosch Foundation Archival Seminar for Young Historians, which brings together German and American doctoral students in the field of U.S. history and offers them a broad overview of research opportunities and resources in the United States. The Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar, a joint project with the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University, brings together equal numbers of German and American doctoral students in the field of German history with a similarly international group of senior scholar mentors. The TDS focuses on a different period each year, and alternates between Washington and a different host institution in Germany. Now organized in collaboration with the GHI London, the Medieval History Seminar follows the model of the TDS. Discussion of the seminar participants’ dissertation projects is led by the participants themselves, and the faculty mentors offer comments and advice once the participants have had their say.

The GHI awards short-term fellowships (one to six months) to German and American doctoral students as well as postdoctoral scholars in the fields of German history, the history of German-American relations, and the history of the role of Germany and the USA in international relations. Fellowships are also available to German doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars in the field of American history. The research projects must draw upon primary sources located in the United States.

In addition to the short-term fellowships for research in the GHI’s core subject areas, the GHI also awards fellowships lasting between
six months and a year to scholars working in the institute’s special research fields. During the directorship of Christof Mauch, for example, the GHI offered one-year postdoctoral fellowships in environmental history and established a new year-long fellowship in North American history. Director Hartmut Berghoff established a doctoral fellowship in international business history and postdoctoral fellowships in economic and social history and in the history of consumption.

The GHI has offered a variety of fellowships with other institutions and organizations over the years. From 1991 to 1997, for instance, it collaborated with the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies in offering the Volkswagen Postdoctoral Fellowship in the field of post-1945 German history. For several years in the early 2000s, the GHI offered doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships in memory of the historian Jürgen Heideking funded, respectively, by the Annette Kade Charitable Trust and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation. Since 2007, the GHI and the Philadelphia–based German Society of Pennsylvania have offered short-term fellowships to scholars interested in working in the society’s Joseph Horner Memorial Library, one of the nation’s most important repositories of source materials on German American history from the colonial era onward.

As the recipient of the Kade-Heideking fellowship in 2005, I was able to mine a broad array of sources in various US archives. I owe it to the generosity and support of the GHI that my dissertation and the book that came out of it, We Are the Revolutionists, saw the light of day.

Mischa Honeck, GHI Research Fellow

The GHI provides a stimulating environment to do research. The intellectual climate is outstanding. Above all, I cherish the fact that the GHI has provided me with the possibility to dedicate myself exclusively to research for a solid half year. It simply creates the necessary conditions to achieve more in research, which sometimes seems next to impossible during teaching cycles.

Frank Schipper, University of Leiden, Fellow in Social and Economic History, 2011–12