

Information for prospective PhD candidates at the Dept. of Southeast Asian Studies, Goethe-University of Frankfurt

1. The Dept. of Southeast Asian Studies of the Goethe-University Frankfurt (short: University of Frankfurt or Frankfurt University) offers the possibility to obtain a PhD in “Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asia”. Our areas of expertise are especially languages, literatures, media, cultures, modern and contemporary history of insular Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia and the Malay World.
2. Since the University of Frankfurt is a leading research university, the PhD program in Southeast Asian Studies is BY RESEARCH ONLY. No mixed mode, no PhD courses. That means, if you are accepted, you can start doing your research immediately.
3. The consequence is that we can only accept strong young researchers from Southeast Asian Studies or similar programs who a) have a background of both BA and MA from a RESEARCH UNIVERSITY, b) have in hand a good, research-based Master thesis, and c) submit an interesting, innovative proposal for the PhD thesis.
4. Please note that the following language criteria have to be met: Indonesian or Malay (Niveau C1) and English (Niveau C1). A knowledge of German is of advantage for the bureaucratic procedures.
5. In the moment, you have the choice between two possible supervisors: Prof. Dr. Arndt Graf (media, politics, rhetoric, literature of Indonesia and the Malay world), or Prof. Dr. Bernd Nothofer (linguistics of Indonesia and the Malay World). Please contact your possible supervisor directly, by submitting a) your CV, b) your Master thesis (in PDF), and c) the proposal of your PhD project.
6. Once you have found a possible supervisor, he/she will issue a Letter of Acceptance by the Supervisor. With this letter, you can apply for funding at any institution of your liking. The University of Frankfurt does not charge you any tuition fees, but you have to come up with your funding for your living expenses (including insurance and travel expenses).
7. Once you have found your source of funding, you should apply officially at the Faculty Council for PhD Theses of the Faculty of Languages and Cultures of the University of

Frankfurt. For more information: <https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/60652397/Promotion>. Please note that that Committee will ask other institutions and agencies to check your BA and MA diplomas whether they are comparable with those issued by the University of Frankfurt. This can take up to 8-10 weeks. Then your application is examined by the Committee. If it is accepted, they will issue the official Letter of Acceptance.

8. With this Letter of Acceptance, you should apply for a visa, through the German Embassy at your home country. Please note that this might take another three months. In order to get a visa, you should also provide proof of a comprehensive health insurance. Please note that mandatory health insurance in Germany is often more comprehensive than that in other EU countries.
9. Book your ticket and come to Frankfurt! In order to find a place to live, you might want to check also the neighboring cities, especially the adjacent city of Offenbach. Here, living costs are often lower than in Frankfurt.
10. The process of writing your PhD thesis in Frankfurt: We can offer a stimulating atmosphere of a lively program of Southeast Asian Studies, with many interesting visitors, fellows, and guests. The interest in Indonesia and the Malay World in Frankfurt is rather high. For instance, more than 50 students started in the Winter Term 2019/2020 in the first semester! With about 13 professors and lecturers, we have specialists in many aspects of Southeast Asian Studies. Another big advantage is the presence of many diplomats (Consuls, Consul-Generals etc.) of the ASEAN countries in Frankfurt, including a network of Southeast Asians living here.
11. The library of Southeast Asian Studies in Frankfurt is currently the most comprehensive among all comparable German university departments. The holdings on Malaysia are more than 15,000, on Indonesia more than 35,000 volumes. Of particular interest might also be our collection of journals – currently we have more than 1,500 journal titles in our library. For more specialized questions: Leiden is just 4-5 hours away.
12. Can I write in English?: Yes, but you have to apply for it at the mentioned Promotionsausschuss. Supervision is also available in Bahasa Indonesia / Bahasa Malaysia.
13. How about mainland Southeast Asia? Due to restricted funding, in the moment we cannot offer Master or PhD supervision for PhD theses dealing with the countries of mainland Southeast Asia (such as Thailand or Vietnam). Depending on your topic, we would recommend other professors at other universities, including in Hamburg, Berlin (Humboldt), and Passau.