

PRINT VERSION

Project "SHK positions for first-generation female academics" of the Faculty of Arts

Objectives of the project

The decision to pursue a master's degree or doctorate—and thus embark on an academic career—is significantly influenced by the educational background of the student's family. Female students who are the first in their family to attend university often face structural disadvantages. They often lack academic role models, family support, and access to professional networks.

Early affiliation with a university professor or an institute can significantly lower the threshold to the academic world. It allows for deeper insight into university structures and facilitates connection to the academic community. In addition, study-related employment provides important financial support to secure a livelihood within the legal funding limits.

This project can make a significant contribution to inspiring first-generation female students to pursue academic careers at an early stage and familiarizing them with the associated requirements. Direct contact with qualified mentors not only promotes confidence in their studies, but also allows talented students to be identified early on for possible doctoral programs and given targeted support.

* The concept was modified according to the [model of the University of Cologne](#).

Support framework

Each year, three student assistant positions across the Faculty can be filled by a first-generation female academic, working a maximum of 9 hours per week (BAfög maximum) for a period of 12 months.

Half of the funding is provided by the **Faculty** and the other half by **appointment or institute funds**. The student assistant position must be a **first job**. It is not possible to postpone or extend funding from faculty funds.

The **student assistant is hired** by the Chair or Institute. The necessary documents must be submitted to the Human Resources Department.

Application

Applications must be submitted **jointly as a tandem** by a professor (preferably with a FirstGen background themselves) AND a FirstGen student.

The **application from the professor** must include:

- a **brief statement** on your motivation for participating, with reference to the project's objectives (and, if applicable, information about the applicant's non-academic background or educational advancement within the family),

- A **brief job description** for the student assistant (SHK),
- A signed [commitment](#) to support the student assistant (upon request, an English version of this document can be provided),
- consent to interim feedback and final evaluation of the project.

The **student's application** must include:

- a **letter of motivation** with statements on non-academic background or educational advancement within the family, as well as expectations and objectives for participation in the project,
- statements about her academic progress to date (including any vocational training, periods of childcare, etc.), the planned duration of her studies, and her current career goals,
- a **personal data sheet**,
- a current **transcript of records**,
- consent to interim feedback and final evaluation of the project.

Sample applications can be provided upon request.

Funding decision

A selection committee will decide on the proportional funding (50%) of the student assistant based on the application documents.

Applications from teaching units or degree programs in which women are underrepresented at the undergraduate and doctoral levels are particularly welcome.

Furthermore, it will be considered positively if the application already includes the **prospect of continued employment** after the funding period has expired.

There is no entitlement to funding or employment.

After the funding period ends

At the end of the funding period, both tandem partners will be asked to provide feedback on their experiences with the project.

The student is expected to submit a short report on their experiences.

The supervisor will receive an evaluation form with specific questions about the success of the project, an assessment of the student's academic potential, and statements on possible continued employment.

Submission deadline

Applications must be **jointly submitted by both tandem partners** by **December 20, 2025**, by email or internal mail to the **Equality Department** (see below) in the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Arts. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Advice and Contact

Dr. Martina Pottek, Administrative Specialist for Equality, Dean's Office of the Faculty of Arts, University of Bonn

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