



# Frequently Asked Questions

## *What is Opportunities for Excellence and what are its major goals?*

“Opportunities for Excellence: The Fellowship Werner Siemens-Foundation” is a new and unique fellowship program. Founded in 2007 and coordinated by the Biozentrum of the University of Basel, its aim is to promote highly qualified students by giving them the opportunity to carry out a PhD project in the Biozentrum. The fellowship program is international and interdisciplinary in nature. Furthermore the program is geared at advancing Life Sciences in Basel and at strengthening the international cooperation of the private and the public sector in a university environment. The fellowships Werner Siemens-Foundation represent a strong statement towards selection and excellence at the University of Basel.

## *What is unique about Opportunities for Excellence?*

- The PhD Program seeks to enhance the international spirit and interaction at the Biozentrum.
- After rotating through different research laboratories of the Biozentrum, the Werner Siemens-Foundation fellows choose the research group best suited to the conduct their research projects.
- Fellowships of the Werner Siemens-Foundation are awarded for periods of up to three years.
- Fellows are awarded a personal annual bursary for meetings, journals, or utilities.

## *When did Opportunities for Excellence start?*

The program started early 2007. The first fellows started their PhD in the Biozentrum in fall 2007.

## *Who finances Opportunities for Excellence?*

Opportunities for Excellence is financed by a generous contribution of the Swiss Werner Siemens-Foundation (WSF), Zug.

## *Who is responsible for Opportunities for Excellence?*

Opportunities for Excellence is financed by the Swiss Werner Siemens-Foundation and administered as a fund. Responsible for the scientific and operational aspects of the program is Prof. Dr. Urs Jenal. In his role as head of the international PhD program he is supported by a PhD committee with representation of all focal areas and core programs of the Biozentrum.

## *How many fellowships will be granted in all?*

Depending on the personal quality and scientific abilities of the candidates, up to 10 fellowships can be awarded every year.

## *Who can apply for a fellowship?*

Opportunities for Excellence is open to all young scientists in the area of Life Sciences with a Master degree or equivalent. Candidates are expected to provide evidence for outstanding educational performance and talent and a vested interest in Life Sciences research.

## *Are only Swiss nationals eligible to apply?*

No, Opportunities for Excellence is an international program open to qualified students from all over the planet. Interactions between different cultural and scientific traditions are strongly encouraged.



---

Werner Siemens-Foundation

Biozentrum, University of Basel

*What are the formal requirements for an application?*

A Master degree or a degree that would formally qualify the candidates to enter a PhD in Molecular Biology or an equivalent program in their home country (MSc., Diploma, DEA etc.) is required to start the PhD. A finished Master is not a requirement for the application and students are encouraged to sign up for the program during the course of their Master Thesis.

*When is the deadline for applications?*

Applications can be posted between February 2<sup>nd</sup> and June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

*How are candidates for the program selected?*

Incoming applications are screened by the PhD Committee and by the group leaders of the Biozentrum. Short-listed applicants are invited for interviews at the Biozentrum end of August.

*Must the fellows be focused on a particular research area?*

No, the choice of a particular area of interest lies exclusively with the fellows. However, when posting their applications, candidates must state their specific research interests.

*Who supervises fellows during their PhD?*

During their PhD, fellows are supervised by the leader of the research group that they chose for their project, and by a PhD advisory Committee (PaC), that each fellow selects together with his/her advisor.

*Where can I find more information on the Fellowship program?*

Visit our website at <http://www.biozentrum.unibas.ch/phd/>