INFO FOR ALL JUNIOR FELLOWS IN TIMES OF CORONA

Dear all,

This time is challenging us all. To make the best of the current situation, communication is key. We need to stay in contact on a regular basis. Please also stay in contact with each other, support colleagues and keep us informed about your situation and issues so that we can in turn support you. The following information attempts to give you an update on questions frequently raised. Please be aware that rules and regulations can change on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, please regularly consult the latest information provided by the university.

1) Staying in touch

The BIGSAS team will continue to work in the home office for most of the time. However, you will always reach us via email. We are obliged to reduce public traffic in our offices as far as possible. If personal attendance is nevertheless necessary, it should only take place by prior appointment to avoid crowds of people. Many of your questions will need to be tackled on a case-by-case basis. With this in mind, please do not hesitate to consult us at any time. You can contact the following staff:

- Your supervisors and the Dean and Vice-Dean of BIGSAS;
- the BIGSAS admin office with Anette Volk and Sabine Wagner;
- the BIGSAS Coordinator, Michelle Heese;
- the Coordinator for EC & EO, Dr Christine Scherer;
- the Director of the Gender & Diversity Office, Dr Christine Vogt-William.

The BIGSAS and EC & EO team is reachable via email and phone as usual. The best way is an email or a phone call to +49-921-55-5110 (Michelle Heese); 55-5100 (Christine Scherer); 55-4791 (Christine Vogt-William) or 55-5101 (admin team).
2) Visiting the GSP building, the BIGSAS office and other University premises

When entering the GSP building or any other University premise, wearing an FFP2 facemask is mandatory. Entry is only permitted under the 2G rule. You have to be fully vaccinated or have officially recovered from Covid-19 to be allowed inside. Please carry corresponding proof with you. Please inform yourself regularly about the current entry restrictions at the website of the University and in the University Handbook for Dealing with the Coronavirus Pandemic.

3) Defences

Defences can be conducted in presence, subject to mandatory compliance with the relevant hygiene measures and distance rules. Practical experience however tells that conducting defences digitally is, for the time being, often the better solution. Ultimately, it is up to the doctoral candidate to decide whether she/he wants her/his defence to be held as a digital or a face-to-face event. Communication, again, is key here. Please consult your supervisor and ask her/him to contact and consult with the Chair of your doctoral examination committee who is responsible for the defence procedure. Please keep BIGSAS always updated, too.

Regarding the attendance of external examiners in face-to-face defences:

In justified cases, the doctoral examination committee may authorise external examiners to participate in the defence. Not least for international examiners, the current travel restrictions often make personal attendance not worthwhile. External members of the committee are therefore encouraged to participate via video conference. Please contact the BIGSAS administration office for a guideline.

4) Visiting the Bayreuth Town Hall/City Administration

If you want to register yourself in Bayreuth, need a registration card, a police clearance certificate or are in need of other documents and services, you may find that you have to consult the Bayreuth town halls. Please use the online service portal (“Bürgerservice”) whenever possible. If your personal presence is required, please note that you need to make an appointment to enter the town hall. You can schedule an appointment here.
Please note: For public traffic, the **3G rule applies in the town halls of Bayreuth**. Access is only granted to those who have been fully vaccinated, have recovered or have tested negative.

5) **Visa**

**In case your visa expires, please note the following:** In cases where neither immigration nor emigration is possible, the local authority (“Ausländeramt”) accepts within the usual deadlines (starting four weeks before the date of expiry) an email from you as Junior Fellows of BIGSAS in which you indicate your situation and apply for an extension. This message needs to be copied to BIGSAS and BIGSAS Coordinator Michelle Heese or the Coordinator for EC & EO, Dr Christine Scherer, so that we can follow up on each individual case and support you.

6) **Travel/Fieldwork**

Fieldwork travel is possible. However, please observe the regularly updated travel and safety instructions of the Federal Foreign Office [here](#). At the moment, a declaration of urgency, written by the supervisor in German language, has to be submitted alongside the application documents. The declaration contains an explanation regarding the indispensability of the field work trip in the scheduled period of time and that the trip cannot be replaced by other measures, such as digital/electronic tools or meetings. Please download a template [HERE](#) (DOCX).

7) **Library**

The University Library is open to the public. The central library and all sub-libraries are accessible again for the collection of ordered media and return, and the workstations and PCs are accessible, too. As in the rest of the university, certain rules apply (FFP2 face mask, 2G access rule etc.). Please inform yourself about current regulations and services [here](#).

8) **Wellbeing and Health**

These days of social distancing are not easy for anyone of us. However, we are aware that our institution and all members are in a specific situation. Immediate personal exchange, socialising and mobility stand at the centre of academia and our doctoral culture and some of us are currently not only isolated from friends and colleagues, but also from family abroad.
We emphasise that we are there to support you with clear and regular communication, swift feedback to your requests and possible joint virtual meetings. In cases where our support is not enough, we can refer you to experts. The following persons of the university’s office for psychologic consulting within the university might be helpful and can always be approached confidentially (German/English):

**Mental Health:**

**Dipl. Psych. Barbara Grüninger-Frost**

+49 (0) 921-5559-52; barbara.grueninger-frost@studentenwerk-oberfranken.de

**Dipl. Psych. Florian Hammon**

+49 (0) 921-5559-12; florian.hammon@studentenwerk-oberfranken.de

**M. Sc. Psych. Verena Gödrich**

+49 (0) 921-5559-16; verena.goedrich@studentenwerk-oberfranken.de

You can also get help around the clock from:

- the **Upper Franconia Crisis Service** (”Krisendienst Oberfranken“); +49 (0) 800-655-3000

- the **Telephone Counselling Service** (”Krisentelefon“); +49 (0) 800-111-0111 or +49 (0) 0800 -111-0222

**Medical Aid:**

**On-call medical service** (”Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst“): 116-117

**Emergencies**

Dial **112** for life-threatening injuries or health conditions