Molecular Biology

The international Master’s/PhD Molecular Biology Program and International Max Planck Research School (IMPRS) is part of the Göttingen Graduate School for Neurosciences, Biophysics, and Molecular Biosciences (www.ggnb.uni-goettingen.de). It is offered by the Göttingen Center for Molecular Biosciences (GZMB) at the University of Göttingen, and is conducted jointly by the participating university departments and research groups, the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, the Max Planck Institute for Experimental Medicine, and the German Primate Center (DPZ). All courses are taught in English. Scholarships are available.

Key Features

- from BSc to PhD in 4 years
- from BSc to MSc in 1.5 years
- intensive course program throughout first year
- cutting-edge research projects
- requirements: BSc or equivalent in biosciences, chemistry, medicine, or related fields

From BSc to PhD in 4 years

Successful applicants holding a Bachelor’s degree (or equivalent) participate in a multidisciplinary, research-oriented program. All students participate in a first year of intensive courses.

- PhD degree: good or excellent results after one year qualify for direct admission to a three-year PhD project in one of the participating research groups without being required to complete a Master’s thesis.
- MSc degree: alternatively, students may conclude the program with a six-month Master’s thesis project, leading to a Master of Science (MSc) degree.

Intensive Course Program

Throughout the first year, current topics in molecular biology are taught by internationally renowned scientists in a comprehensive lecture series. Lecture topics are discussed in tutorials. During methods courses students learn fundamental techniques applied in current research and meet members of participating research groups. Subsequently, students carry out three independent research projects (lab rotations) of two months each in participating laboratories. Results of these projects are presented and discussed during seminars. Special emphasis during the first year is put on individual advice and intensive training in small groups.

Cutting-edge Research Projects

At each level of education (lab rotations, Master’s thesis projects, PhD projects), excellent research opportunities are provided by state-of-the-art laboratories in more than 60 departments and independent research groups.

- PhD projects: the three-year PhD period emphasizes independent research of the students. PhD students select three faculty members as their advisory committee which monitors progress and advises students in their doctoral projects. Laboratory work is accompanied by seminars, advanced methods courses, training in scientific writing and oral presentation skills, elective courses, and participation in international conferences or workshops.
- Master’s thesis projects: the six-month projects comprise original and independent research, accompanied by training in scientific writing and oral presentation skills.

Disciplines

Courses and research projects include current topics in molecular biology, cell biology, biochemistry, developmental biology, structural biology, microbiology, genetics, physiology, molecular pharmacology, neurobiology, biophysics, bioinformatics, biotechnology and immunology.

www.gpmolbio.uni-goettingen.de
Comprehensive Services and Guidance

A three-week orientation prior to the program provides assistance and advice for managing day to day life (including arrangements for bank account, health insurance, residence permit, housing). Intensive German language courses are offered at different levels to facilitate the start in Göttingen. Additional language courses, social events, and cultural activities accompany the program.

Applying

Applicants must hold a Bachelor’s degree (or equivalent) in biosciences, chemistry, medicine, or related fields. Applications are considered even if the degree will not be obtained before summer/fall in the year of enrollment. A strong command of the English language is required. An online application tool is available on the Internet (www.gpmolbio.uni-goettingen.de). The application period opens on September 15th of each year. Applications need to be submitted to the Molecular Biology Office by January 15th of the year of enrollment.

Selection of Candidates

Applications are reviewed by an admissions committee of faculty members. Candidates are selected based on their academic qualification, referees’ evaluations, subject test scores, and personal interviews. Decisions on admission are made within approximately eight weeks after the application deadline.

Location

The Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, founded in 1737, has some 27,000 students which substantially influence life in a town of approximately 130,000 citizens. More than 40 Nobel Prize laureates have lived, studied, researched, and taught in Göttingen, which is a center of biological research. In 1998, the Göttingen Center for Molecular Biosciences (GZMB) was founded as an interfaculty institution with a major focus on life sciences. In addition, Göttingen houses five Max Planck Institutes, two of them participating in the MSc/PhD Molecular Biology Program. The friendly and cosmopolitan city of Göttingen with a well-preserved historical center offers a wide spectrum of cultural and sports facilities. It is set amid a rolling mountain landscape with ample opportunity to outdoor activities and excursions to national parks or picturesque towns nearby.

Expenses, Financial Aid, Scholarships

Tuition fees are, to a large extent, covered by the German government, with the exception of a nominal fee of approximately 180 to 250 Euros per semester, depending on the type of scholarship a student receives. Living costs (including accommodation in a student dormitory and health insurance) range from 750 to 800 Euros per month for a single person.

The program supports every student with an IMPRS stipend of 800 Euros/month throughout the first year unless he or she receives a full scholarship from other sources (e.g., government, home university, DAAD, companies, etc.). For the subsequent three years, PhD students receive funding (approximately 1,300-1,500 Euros per month) from one of a variety of sources, including individual fellowships, research grants, corporate and foundation funds, or university and departmental funds.

Contact / Further Information

Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
Molecular Biology Office
Justus-von-Liebig-Weg 11
37077 Göttingen · Germany

Phone: +49-551-39 12110 / 12111
Fax: +49-551-39 33811
e-mail: gpmolbio@gwdg.de
www.gpmolbio.uni-goettingen.de