

Fifth Meeting of the doctoral committee

Doctoral Center Social, Health and Economic Sciences

May 17, 2024

Regulation

„Unbiasedness of reviewers“

The doctoral committee decides:

In order to ensure the unbiasedness of reviewers for doctoral theses, the doctoral committee checks potential reviewers for their bias.

When potential reviewers are approached, they are asked to check their own bias and sign a declaration of unbiasedness.

Bias criteria:

According to Guideline 16 of the DFG Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice (2019), reviewers should disclose all facts that may give rise to concerns of bias; the bias may extend to the reviewed research project or the person.

In case of facts that could lead to exclusion from the review on an individual case decision, the doctoral committee decides on the basis of the disclosed facts.

The following criteria, based on the DFG guidelines on questions of bias (DFG form 10.201 - 4/10), lead to **exclusion from the review process**:

1. first-degree relationship, marriage, civil partnership, cohabitation,
2. current or planned close scientific cooperation,
3. official dependency or supervisory relationship (e.g. teacher-student relationship including the postdoc phase) up to six years after the end of the relationship,
4. the affiliation or imminent change to the same university department or to the same non-university research institute leads to exclusion.

The following criteria, based on the DFG guidelines on questions of bias (DFG form 10.201 - 4/10), lead to an **individual case decision**:

5. family relationships that do not fall under no. 1, other personal ties or conflicts,
6. economic interests of persons listed under no. 5,
7. affiliation or imminent transfer to the same university or non-university research institution will lead to a case-by-case decision,
8. scientific cooperation within the last three years before the time of appointment as a reviewer, e.g. joint publications,*
9. preparation of a proposal or implementation of a project with a closely related research topic (competition),
10. participation in ongoing appointment procedures or those completed within the last 12 months as an applicant or internal member of the appointment committee,

11. participation in mutual peer reviews within the last 12 months.

* Explanation of the Doctoral Committee on no. 8: Joint publications that are doctoral-related are particularly problematic. Joint publications that are e.g. not directly related to the doctorate and have a long list of authors are not problematic. All joint publications from the last three years should be disclosed so that they can be reviewed. It is permitted to exchange professional information with potential reviewers, e.g. at colloquia and conferences.