



PhD Opportunity in Biomedical Ethics

The Institute for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Basel (IBMB), Switzerland (<http://ibmb.unibas.ch/>), is dedicated to research and teaching of biomedical ethics at the Medical and Science Faculties. We are currently looking for dynamic and independent graduate students (Master's degree) or medical doctors who are interested in carrying out their PhD work in biomedical ethics. The projects for which we have funding focus on ethical issues related to:

1. **“Digitalization in Healthcare”** as part of Swiss National Science's National Research Program 77 “Digital Transformation”. Project title: SmARt homES, Older adUlts, and caRegivers: Facilitating social aCceptance and negotiating rEsponsibilities [**RESOURCE**]

Project Information: Our society faces a situation where it is difficult to address the needs of the continuously growing elderly population. Smart home health technology could help decrease costs of maintaining older people while securing their safety both at home and in institutions. Many social and ethical issues arise with the use of such technology, including autonomy, privacy, data safety, and access. The RESOURCE project will critically evaluate the knowledge, willingness, and concerns associated with the use of smart home health technology in the care of older persons, particularly, the ethical and social concerns. It will offer a fundamental reflection to distinguish between ethically and socially acceptable technologies and those that are not. (further information at: <https://ibmb.unibas.ch/en/vieux-alt/resource-project/>)

Position Available starting: July 2021 or later

Length of PhD Program: 3 years (full-time)

2. **“Family Building at Advanced Parental Age: An Interdisciplinary Approach”** as part of an SNSF-FWO-funded project. The project is a collaboration with the Bioethics Institute at the University of Ghent (Belgium). The candidate will closely collaborate with a post-doc and two researchers and a (co-)supervisor who works at the University of Ghent.

Project Information: Families with parents of Advanced Parental Age (APA) are becoming more and more common; a trend that has raised serious concerns for several reasons. APA is typically advised against as it is assumed that older parents will not be able to fulfil their parental duties. Key principles, such as the principle of reproductive autonomy and the welfare of the child will need to be balanced against other values and must be understood in a setting of normative ideas.

The overall goal of the project is to create a strong and coherent normative framework about responsible family building at an advanced age: >40 years old for at least one of the parents. This normative framework, that is empirically informed, will help to design recommendations for clinical practice and policy making. To examine how age is used as a factor in decisions and moral reasoning about reproduction in two contexts: natural conception and reproductive medicine. The study will examine what defines a ‘good’ parent, which characteristics describe such a ‘good’ parent; and what are the minimal standards for parental competence. Special attention will be given to questions of justice and the presence of double moral standards in restrictions on women's and men's possibilities to procreate at an older age.

Position Available starting: July or August 2021

Length of PhD Program: 3-4 years (full-time)

3. **“Open-track project”:** The applicant can choose his or her doctoral thesis topic.

Position Available starting: Spring 2022 (position may begin earlier in late 2021 based on agreement)

Length of PhD Program: 3 years (full-time)

PhD Salary: In accordance with SNSF doctoral salary guideline

Qualifications:

- Master’s degree in philosophy, psychology, bioethics, (computer) science, medicine, and other related fields.
- Excellent language skills in English and German.
- Ability to speak and understand French is highly desirable.
- Willingness to contribute towards an empirical project.
- Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research design.
- Outstanding Master’s and Bachelor’s academic grades.
- Enthusiasm, responsibility and interest in an academic career.

We offer:

- Enrolment in a Swiss Bologna accredited PhD Program in Bioethics, Health Policy and Legal medicine.
- Student will complete empirical methods courses as part of the PhD Program in order to successfully conduct their PhD Project.
- Student will have the opportunity to engage in a cutting-edge topic of ethics and digitalization.
- Student will also have the possibility to contribute to the academic life at the IBMB, including contributions to teaching, as well as collaboration in other research projects and academic publications in peer reviewed journals.

Environment: The University of Basel is the oldest Swiss university with a long tradition in ethics and the humanities. It has a long-standing reputation in outstanding research and teaching. Doctoral candidates at the University come from many international countries providing a vibrant and rich community. More information about the University is available at <https://www.unibas.ch/en/University/About-University.html>. The city of Basel is a global centre for biomedical research with major academic institutions and research departments of leading life science companies. Basel is a multicultural city and ranks among the best in terms of quality of life.

Applications: Applications must be submitted in English and should include in a single PDF file: (1) A detailed CV, including an overview of study results (grades), the title of your master thesis, contact information of (at least) two (academic) referees, and a PDF-file of the master thesis; (2) A motivation letter (maximum two pages, double-spaced, font 12), specifying your interests in the topic and PhD at Basel.

Applications for the first project should be sent via email directly to PD Dr. Tenzin Wangmo (tenzin.wangmo@unibas.ch), with email subject “PhD positions RESOURCE”, by April 30th 2021. Applications for the second project should be sent to Dr. Eva de Clercq (eva.declercq@unibas.ch) with email subject “SNSF-FWO-funded project” by April 30th 2021. The deadline for the Open-track is 30.6.2021 and application for this position should go to Prof. Bernice Elger (b.elger@unibas.ch).