



University of  
St Andrews



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE  
FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

## St Andrews–Max Planck PhD Studentship in Population, Health and Data Science

We invite applications from qualified and highly motivated students for a **3.5-year St Andrews–Max Planck PhD studentship in Population, Health and Data Science**. The PhD studentship is funded by the University of St Andrews and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR). The PhD student will be working on a project on **fertility dynamics and patterns in high-income countries**. The project will investigate recent fertility trends in high-income countries and how fertility dynamics are related to changes in individuals' other life domains (e.g. partnerships, education, employment, housing) and to changes in their socio-economic context. The project will involve analysis of individual-level data from high-income countries (including the UK). The project will be part of the International Max Planck Research School for Population, Health and Data Science (IMPRS-PHDS) ([link](#)), the Centre for Population Change & Connecting Generations ([link](#)), and the ERC-funded project "Untangling biologic and social causes of low fertility in modern societies" ([BIOSFER; link](#)). The studentship is available from **October 2025** or as soon as possible thereafter.

In the first 21 months, the successful applicant will be working in the [Laboratory of Fertility and Well-Being](#) at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock, Germany, one of the leading centres for demographic research in the world. They will have the opportunity to apply for a place in the IMPRS-PHDS programme.

For the remainder of the studentship, they will be working at the University of St Andrews. They will become a member of the [Population and Health Research Group](#) at the School of Geography and Sustainable Development (SGSD), which combines expertise in advanced techniques of demographic, longitudinal and spatial analysis. The student is expected to use the opportunity of preparing a PhD thesis as a collection of research articles according to the PGR regulations of the University of St Andrews.

During the period in Germany, the PhD student will be paid according to the MPIDR rules and regulations. This includes: 1) A contract currently amounting to a gross salary of about €39,047 per year, including a Christmas bonus (*Weihnachtsgeld*); and 2) Financial support for travel, research training, and data acquisition. During the period in the UK, the St Andrews–Max Planck PhD studentship will cover: 1) A maintenance grant of £20,780 per year (in the 2025/26 academic year, subject to increase annually, with the increase amount confirmed in due course); 2) A research training support grant (RTSG) of £750 per year; and 3) Full tuition fee waiver.

The position offers an excellent opportunity for a highly motivated PhD student to join an international team of researchers applying advanced quantitative methods and statistical modelling to a cutting-edge population topic. Students with an excellent master's degree (distinction or merit in the UK) or the equivalent national qualification in any area of social sciences including statistics and applied mathematics who are interested in this opportunity must submit their application **by Wednesday 11 June 2025**. Please see the advice on the [Entry requirements for postgraduate research programmes](#). Please apply to the programme "PhD Geography (Science)" on the [How to apply for research study at St Andrews webpage](#). Please include a personal statement outlining your interest in applying advanced quantitative methods to studying populations. Please also upload an academic writing sample (normally a chapter of a Masters dissertation) to your online application. Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed in the second half of June. The University of St Andrews and the Max Planck Society strive for equal opportunities. Applications of any background are welcome.

For informal inquiries, please contact Dr. Sarah Christison ([sfc3@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:sfc3@st-andrews.ac.uk)), Henrik-Alexander Schubert ([schubert@demogr.mpg.de](mailto:schubert@demogr.mpg.de)), Prof. Mikko Myrskylä ([office-myrskylä@demogr.mpg.de](mailto:office-myrskylä@demogr.mpg.de)) and Prof. Hill Kulu ([Hill.Kulu@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:Hill.Kulu@st-andrews.ac.uk)). For informal enquires about the application process please contact Helen Olaez at: [gdpgradadmin@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:gdpgradadmin@st-andrews.ac.uk). Please include 'St Andrews–Max Planck PhD studentship' in the subject line of your email.