



## Guidelines for a SICSS Membership Extension (Doctoral Program)

The graduate school SICSS aims at a timely completion of doctoral projects. If the submission within three years is not possible, an extension for SICSS membership is required.

The doctoral researcher shall apply for a membership extension at the SICSS Office in due time, if possible 3 months before the membership ends. The time span between the last regular Advisory Panel Meeting and the end of the membership should not exceed six months.

The application must include:

1. a **letter of justification**, confirmed by the principal advisor
2. a detailed **timetable** for the completion of the thesis, confirmed by the principal advisor,
3. a **letter of endorsement**, written and signed by the Advisory Panel Chair,
4. a list of **content of the thesis** in its present state, if possible **copies of available chapters** or respective **manuscripts**.

Membership extensions are permissible if the timely completion of the doctorate is rendered impossible by causes outside of the control of the doctoral researcher. This has to be clearly documented. Compelling reasons include, but are not limited to, unforeseen and increased technical problems, unforeseen changes based on novel scientific findings, or a fundamental change in the research environment. The membership extension must include a schedule giving the anticipated date of submission.

In order to promote a positive work-life-balance, doctoral researchers with family responsibilities (child care or care of first-grade relatives such as parents and children) may apply for a membership extension only with a **letter of justification**. The letter shall state name and age of dependents, the allocation of responsibilities and the desired length of extension.

Extensions are usually approved until the anticipated date of submission. If the date of submission remains vague or hardly predictable, the approval may be issued in intervals of six months. The thesis shall be submitted during the approved extension period, latest three months after that. If the submission cannot be realized in this time frame, a further application for extension is necessary. If the last panel meeting dates back more than six months, it is mandatory to hold another advisory panel meeting, that evaluates the state of the thesis and the possibility for further extensions.

The SICSS Head decides upon membership extensions. SICSS reserves the right to exclude the University of Hamburg is unaffected by this decision.

Please send complete applications in electronic form (pdf) to:  
Dr Berit Hachfeld, SICSS Office (berit.hachfeld@uni-hamburg.de).

Hamburg, May 4, 2026