

international graduate school north-south

on global change, innovation, and sustainable development

**Summer School 2025 in Bern,
Switzerland, 9–16 June 2025**



“Chästeilet” (divide cheese) in Justistal, photo by Samuel

Towards Common Futures: Collaboration and Collective Creativity

Focus, goals, and target groups

The 2025 Summer School of the International Graduate School (IGS) North-South will focus on the process of commoning. Commoning is about sharing resources and the collective processes and relationships that help build, maintain, and transform these resources. This year’s programme aims to provide conceptual, methodological, and empirical insights into the challenges posed by power dynamics and ambiguities in communal efforts. Our focus will be on exploring the potential of research communication and practice-based methods through interactive exercises.

The goal of the Summer School is to provide an intercultural, inter- and transdisciplinary learning and exchange platform for PhD students from different countries around the world and from different academic disciplines, all of whom are involved in interdisciplinary research on transformation towards sustainable development.

Our main target group is advanced graduate students from the global South and North who wish to exchange and collaborate on the topic of sustainable development and global change. Please note that the number of participants is limited.

Place

Bern, Switzerland

Time

9–16 June 2025 (travelling dates: 8/9 and 17 June)

Organizers

- Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern
- Institute of Geography and mLAB, University of Bern
- Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern
- swisspeace, University of Basel

Lecturers / Organizers

Prof. Dr. Thomas Breu, Samuel Brülisauer, Tamara da Silva, Prof. Dr. Tobias Haller, Thi Thi Han, Dr. Metka Herzog, Léa Lamotte, Anu Lannen, Dr. Sarah-Lan Mathez, Marion Peter, Prof. Dr. Susan Thieme, Dr. Eda Elif Tibet, Dr. Lilian Trechsel, Luca Tschiderer, Samira Wittenwiller

Overall course programme

The course will last 8 days and consist of a mix of lectures, exercises, coaching, interdisciplinary group work, and fieldwork. The programme includes the following blocks:

- **Methodological and skill-building seminars and exercises** that introduce the participants to new, creative communication tools and deepen soft skills in research communication.
- **Case studies** focusing on the topic of the Summer School. Groups will carry out a one-day field study incorporating transdisciplinary approaches and work together to analyse their findings. Based on the needs and preferences of the stakeholders they meet during the field day, they will co-create outputs (e.g. blog, post, podcast, policy brief) to capture and communicate their insights. Local resource persons and experts will prepare and guide this process.
- **Conceptual seminars** providing insights into the topic of commons and commoning with a focus on the respective field sites.
- **Knowledge sharing sessions** providing mutual and peer-learning opportunities.

Application process

To apply for the IGS North-South Summer School, you must fulfil the following criteria:

- You are a PhD candidate and wish to apply an inter- and transdisciplinary approach in development research.
- Your English is fluent.

Please note that if the number of applicants exceeds the maximum number of participants, priority will be given to students involved in a research project in the area; and to students who are affiliated with one of our Swiss partner institutions.



IGS North-South Summer School 2024 in Pakse, Laos.
Photo by Lilian Trechsel

To apply, please fill in the official online application form on our [website](#) and upload the following documents (in English) as PDF files:

- Curriculum vitae
- A personal letter of interest (maximum 300 words). Please explain why you would like to participate in the IGS North-South Summer School.

Submission deadline: **16 March 2025**.

Students who are affiliated with an institution or programme that is linked with the IGS North-South (University of Basel: swisspeace and Swiss TPH, University of Bern, and University of Lausanne) may also apply for financial support. Limited funds are available to support participation of students and senior researchers from the global South; the selection criteria are the same for all groups.

A limited number of places are also available for self-payers; the course fee amounts to CHF 4,000, and includes local transport for field trips, accommodation, and full board for the duration of the programme, but does not include travel costs to the venue.

Upon sending your application, you will receive a confirmation email containing further information about the timetable.