



Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development  
in Transition Economies

## *The German Research System and how to study in Germany*

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1. The German Research System
2. Preconditions for a study or research stay in Germany
3. Ways to get a German doctoral degree
4. Financial Support Instruments
5. Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions – Funding Support from the EU

# 1. The German research system –

## 1.1 Universities

- Duality of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and non-university research institutes
- In Germany, there are over 400 universities and universities of applied sciences – public and private ones
- Universities combine research and higher education with a focus on excellence science and the right to award doctoral degrees (with concentration on basic research)
- Universities of applied science concentrate more on the training of BA and MA students in a strong cooperation with the local and regional economy. However, more and more universities of applied science also engage in applied research.

# 1. The German research system –

## 1.2 Non-university research institutions

- Beside the HEI-sector, the German research system is characterised by 4 big national research organisations:
  - Max-Planck-Society
  - Helmholtz-Association
  - Leibniz-Gemeinschaft
  - Fraunhofer-Society
- Furthermore, there exist
  - a number of Academies of Sciences,
  - national and regional research institutions of the federal ministries and ministries of the „Bundesländer“,
  - private research institutions and
  - research-intensive enterprises.

# (a) Max-Planck-Society for the Advancement of Science

- The Max Planck Society is Germany's most successful research organization – with 18 Nobel laureates since 1948.
- 83 institutes are engaged in basic research in the natural, bio- and social sciences as well as humanities.
- ca. 17.000 employees, ca. 6.000 researchers.
- Primarily financed by federal and sub-federal public funds (ca. 1.6 Mrd. Euro/year – ca. 80-90% of the overall budget).
- Additional funds by external funding institutions.
- Head Office: Munich

# (b) Helmholtz-Association of German Research Centres

- The Helmholtz Association is dedicated to pursuing the long-term research goals of state and society, and to maintaining and improving the livelihoods of the population
- Its work is divided into six strategic research fields: Energy; Earth and Environment; Health; Key Technologies; Matter; and Aeronautics, Space and Transport.
- The Helmholtz Association brings together 18 scientific-technical and biological-medical research centres.
- With more than 38,000 employees and an annual budget of more than €4 billion, (70% core budget) the Helmholtz Association is Germany's largest scientific organisation.
- Head Offices in Berlin and Bonn

## (c) The Leibniz Association

- The Leibniz Association connects 88 independent research institutions that range in focus from the natural, engineering and environmental sciences via economics, spatial and social sciences to the humanities.
- The institutes of the Leibniz Association conduct knowledge-driven and applied basic research, maintain scientific infrastructure and provide research-based services.
- Knowledge transfer is addressed to policy-makers, academia, business and the public.
- Ca. 17.500 employees, among them 8.800 researchers.
- Overall budget: 1.5 Billion Euro (ca. 70-80% core budget, up to 30% external funding)
- Head Office: Berlin

# (d) Fraunhofer-Society for the Applied Sciences

- Fraunhofer is Europe's largest application-oriented research organization.
- The research efforts are geared entirely to people's needs: health, security, communication, energy and the environment..
- 66 institute und research centres with ca. 24.000 employees (mainly in the sector of engineering and technologies)
- More than 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research revenue of 1.8 billion Euro is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. Approx. 30% is financed by public funds.
- Head Office: Munich



## 2. Preconditions for a study or research stay in Germany (I)

- Very good to excellent exams / diploma
- Official recognition of the exams / diploma by the universities
  - For PhD:
    - a diploma which is similar or equal to a „Master“ or „Magister“, „Diplom“ or „Staatsexamen“
    - Depending on doctoral rules and regulations of the relevant faculty
  - For BA/Master students:
    - University entrance qualification (recognized by the German institutions)
    - Previous university studies
- Application and Registration at the university (immatrikulation/enrollment)
  - For BA / Master students
    - International Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt) at the universities or
    - Centralised application tool „uni-assit“ (<http://www.uni-assit.de/>)
  - For doctoral students:
    - Approval by a senior researcher/professor („Doctor-father/mother“)
    - Acknowledged by the faculty or PhD committee

## 2. Preconditions for a study or research stay in Germany (II)

- Relevant language knowledge
  - For BA/MA students – German, possibly English
  - For doctoral students – German and/or English
- Funding of your research stay needs to be assured.
- To get a longer-termed visa for Germany you need to show that you have at least 8.000 Euro/ year at your disposal
- Both, for visa and for the enrollment at a HEI you need a Health Insurance
- PhD thesis can be either prepared solely at a HEI or in cooperation between a non-university research institute, and/or a company and a HEI.

### 3. Ways to get a German doctoral degree?

- **Individual programme** between a doctoral student and a professor
- **Structural programmes** – Graduate schools
  - Similar to US or British PhD programmes
  - Doctoral courses and interdisciplinary curricula incl. soft skills development
  - Currently about 700 programmes all over Germany – at universities and non-university research institutes
  - Often English as working language
- **Helpful Links:**
  - [www.daad.de/research-explorer](http://www.daad.de/research-explorer); [www.phdgermany.de](http://www.phdgermany.de);
  - <http://www.research-in-germany.org/en/jobs-and-careers/info-for-phd-students/Find-Your-PhD-Position/structured-programmes.html>

# 4. Financial Support Instruments

## (a) National Programmes (I)

- **Financial Support for what?**
  - No or limited study fees / tuition fee at public institutions
  - Administrative cost for application/registration
  - Living cost and accomodation
- **Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)**
  - Support of doctoral studies in Germany – up to 3 years
  - Support of short-term research stays in Germany – up to 12 months
  - 1.000 €/month + health insurance, travel cost, language courses, family allowances
  - Application via DAAD
  - <https://www.daad.de/deutschland/stipendium/de/>

# 4. Financial Support Instruments

## (a) National Programmes (II)

- **Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)**
  - Support of graduate schools – up to 3 year
  - 1.468 €/month study grant or 65% research position Stelle (ca. 2.400 € gross salary/month minus taxes and social insurances) + travel cost, family allowances
  - Application via individual graduate schools
  - [http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/programme/koordinierte\\_programme/graduierntenkollegs/gefoerderte\\_projekte/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/programme/koordinierte_programme/graduierntenkollegs/gefoerderte_projekte/index.html)
  - [http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/programme/koordinierte\\_programme/graduierntenkollegs/grako\\_faq/grako\\_faq\\_promovieren\\_de/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/programme/koordinierte_programme/graduierntenkollegs/grako_faq/grako_faq_promovieren_de/index.html)

## 4. Financial Support Instruments

### (b) Public Foundations for academic support – „Begabtenförderungswerke“

- Financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- They reflect the plurality of the German society:
  - Religious or
  - Political – oriented towards specific political parties / spectrums or
  - Entrepreneurial or
  - Linked to trade unions or
  - Independent from any political or religious spectrum.
- Both, financial and non-material support – via seminars, workshops, summer schools, network activities etc..
- Therefore, good German language knowledge (at least B2) is required.
- Political or societal engagement according to the foundation's principals is expected.
- Helpful Link: <http://www.stipendiumplus.de/startseite.html>

## 4. Financial Support Instruments

### (b) Public Foundations for academic support – „Begabtenförderungswerke“(II)

- Precondition: Admission to doctoral programme at a German university.
- Application possible in the starting phase of the doctoral studies (in the first 12-15 months)
- Funding period: 24 months + up to 12 months prolongation.
- Funding amount similar in each of the foundations: ca. 1.000 Euro / month + flat rate for material cost + family allowance (all together approx. up to 1.500 Euro)
- **Please, be aware of the following:**
  - Upper age limits in some of the foundations (usually 30 years)
  - Not all foundations can support foreign doctoral students from outside EU or Switzerland.

# 4. Förderinstitutionen in Deutschland

## (b) Begabtenförderungswerke (III)

- Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation - <http://www.kas.de> (CDU-oriented)
- Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation – <http://www.fes.de> (SPD-oriented)
- Heinrich-Boell-Foundation – [www.boell.de](http://www.boell.de) (Green-oriented)
- Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation – [www.rosalux.de](http://www.rosalux.de) (Leftist-oriented)
- Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit - <https://www.freiheit.org> (Liberal-oriented)
- Hanns Seidel Stiftung - <http://www.hss.de> (CSU-oriented)
- Hans-Böckler-Stiftung - <http://www.boeckler.de> (trade-union-oriented)
- Stiftung der Deutschen Wirtschaft - Studienförderwerk Klaus Murmann - <https://www.sdw.org> (entrepreneurially oriented)
- Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes - <http://www.studienstiftung.de> (politically and religiously neutral)
- Evangelisches Studienwerk Villigst - <http://www.evstudienwerk.de> (related to Protestant Church)
- Bischöfliche Studienförderung Cusanuswerk - <http://www.cusanuswerk.de> (related to Catholic Church)
- Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Studienwerk - <http://www.eles-studienwerk.de> (related to Jewish community)
- Avicenna-Studienwerk - <http://www.avicenna-studienwerk.de> (related to Muslim community)
- Katholischer Akademischer Ausländerdienst - <http://www.kaad.de> (related to Catholic Church)



# 5. Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions – Funding support from the EU

- Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions EU – General Informationen - <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/marie-sk%C5%82odowska-curie-actions>
- Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions EU – Programme Sites MSCA- <http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/>
- Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions EU – Programme Site ITN - [http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/itn/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/itn/index_en.htm)
- Offered MSCA PhD positions: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/apply-now/jobs-for-you/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/apply-now/jobs-for-you/index_en.htm)  
<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/index>
- MSCA programmes for post-docs – Individual Fellowships: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/if/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/if/index_en.htm)
- National Contact Point in Germany: <http://www.nks-msc.de/>

# Thank you very much and Good Luck!

**For further questions:**

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