

# Deutschlandstipendium

## FAQs – Prospective and current students

- 1. I am enrolled or about to enroll in a Bachelor's or Master's program at TH Köln. Can I apply for a scholarship?**

Yes, all prospective and currently enrolled students in a Bachelor's or Master's program may apply for a scholarship if they have at least another two semesters of their standard program duration remaining.

- 2. I am or will be enrolled at a different German university. Can I still apply for a scholarship at TH Köln?**

Unfortunately not; only students enrolled at TH Köln may apply.

Our advice: Make sure to inquire about the Deutschlandstipendium at your university or obtain information from the website of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*).

- 3. I am required to submit a letter of motivation with my application. How do I obtain such a document?**

You are to write the letter of motivation yourself. It is to outline your motivation for achieving good academic results and as to how a scholarship can support you in doing so. You may also list your academic and professional goals and provide information on voluntary work or community service and on your personal circumstances.

- 4. What is a certificate of enrollment and how do I receive one? What can I do, if I have not received my certificate of enrollment yet?**

The certificate of enrollment is a document confirming your enrollment at TH Köln. You will receive your certificate after enrolling at our institution. If you have not received your certificate yet, please send us your Letter of Admission to TH Köln. As soon as you receive the enrollment certificate, you are required to submit it via mail or as pdf-attachment via email.

- 5. I would like to enroll at TH Köln in winter semester 2017/2018. Can I apply for a scholarship?**

Yes, you certainly may apply for a scholarship. However, you can only be granted a scholarship if you really are enrolled at TH Köln by the time the scholarship is scheduled to begin and if you meet all scholarship criteria.

- 6. I am enrolled in a part-time program. Can I also apply for a scholarship?**

Yes, you certainly may apply for a scholarship.

**7. I am a cross-registered student/auditing student. Can I apply for a scholarship?**

Unfortunately not; only regularly enrolled students at TH Köln may apply.

**8. Are scholarships awarded based on my income or that of my parents?**

No, scholarships are awarded irrespective of your or your parents' income. There will be no review of your income situation.

**9. Will the Deutschlandstipendium affect my BAföG?**

No, BAföG and the Deutschlandstipendium are two programs complementing one another. Students are allowed to utilize both grants without any deductions. However, if a student is awarded several scholarships with a total exceeding the monthly average of €300, the Deutschlandstipendium will be taken into account during the calculation of the BAföG rate. When taking into account the applicant's savings obtained from scholarships, the same rules apply as during the calculation of his/her financial assets. This means that the amount of €5,200 that is being exempt from deduction during BAföG calculation does not change when the BAföG recipient is granted the Deutschlandstipendium.

**10. Will my scholarship be subject to taxation?**

The German Act on Scholarship Programs (*Stipendienprogramm-Gesetz – StipG*) stipulates that funds received through a Deutschlandstipendium are normally not subject to taxation or social-security contributions.

**11. Does the Deutschlandstipendium have any impact on receiving child benefits?**

As of January 1, 2012, all received income and benefits – including the Deutschlandstipendium – do generally not affect the payment of child benefits. Pursuant to the German Act on Simplifying Taxation (*Steuervereinfachungsgesetz*) of 2011, the income situation of children of legal age will not be reviewed until the completion of a first degree or first-time training. For details, please refer to the document published by the German Federal Ministry of Finance (*Bundesministerium der Finanzen*) on section 32 (4) of the German Income Tax Act (*Einkommenssteuergesetz*) on December 7, 2011. Prior to January 1, 2012, the Deutschlandstipendium was accounted for in the calculation of child benefits but – absent additional income – did not exceed the income cap of €8,004.

**12. Does the Deutschlandstipendium affect the fees for statutory health insurance?**

The Deutschlandstipendium does not affect the fees for the statutory health insurance as long as the scholarship holder is covered by compulsory statutory health insurance which is usually limited to 14 program semesters and expires after attaining the age of 30. The situation may be different when the scholarship holder decides to subsequently take out voluntary health insurance, since it is required by German law that the minimum monthly premium for voluntarily insured persons is subject to increase. Thus, the premium is currently calculated based on an assessment basis of €875. If the insurant's income (including scholarships) that is subject to social-

security contributions exceeds the aforementioned assessment basis, the mandatory contributions have to be deducted.

**13. Am I allowed to receive German housing benefit (*Wohngeld*) while holding the Deutschlandstipendium?**

Yes, however, if you receive housing benefit, please be advised that 50% of the Deutschlandstipendium, as well as other scholarships, are to be included in the calculation of the annual income. If you have additional questions regarding scholarship and housing benefits, please contact your responsible housing benefit authority (*Wohngeldstelle*).

**14. Am I obliged to repay my sponsor in any way (e.g. by doing an internship or working for my sponsor's company after graduating?)**

No, it is entirely up to you whether you, for instance, would like to do an internship in your sponsor's company. You are by no means obliged to repay your sponsor in any way. Rejecting an internship or job offer will not result in any cuts in your funding or a denial of your scholarship.

**15. I will spend a semester abroad this coming winter semester. Can I still apply?**

Yes, you certainly can. Scholarships may also be granted and funded for semesters abroad. Your presence is, however, required during the personal interview.

**16. I am already receiving a scholarship from another institution. Am I required to state this fact in my application?**

Yes, it is required that you state if you are already receiving a scholarship from another institution. Please also include information on the amount of the scholarship. According to the German law, double funding coming from different support programs which sponsor talented and highly-achieving students and are financed by *Länder* funds and federal funds, is not allowed.

**17. I am a student from abroad. Can I still apply for the scholarship?**

Yes! Foreign students may also apply for the Deutschlandstipendium at TH Köln.

**18. What are TH Köln's priorities when awarding scholarships?**

With the Deutschlandstipendium, TH Köln would like to support particularly committed students, who – besides pursuing their academic and professional goals – are engaged in socially relevant activities and have proven that they are willing and able to make a sensible contribution to society beyond their personal interests. Moreover, students whose access to universities and education in general is particularly hindered due to personal or social circumstances are to be given prioritized consideration.

**19. What does the selection process look like?**

Scholarships are granted by means of a multi-tiered selection process:

**Step 1:**

All submitted applications will be reviewed in terms of completeness and as to whether the criteria have been met. Each applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt by email.

**Step 2:**

A panel of referees headed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs will evaluate all applications meeting the formal criteria in terms of motivation, voluntary work and potential social circumstances. It will subsequently pick the applicants who are to be invited to the selection interviews. Invitations to these interviews as well as rejections will be sent via email.

**Step 3:**

Successful applicants will be invited to a personal 30-minute selection interview. One component of this interview will be a short ten-minute presentation on a current socio-political topic. Applicants will be informed of the topic in their invitation.

**Evaluation criteria**

- The short presentation is to determine the applicants' capability of familiarizing themselves with a socio-political topic and of coming up with a conclusive argumentation and presentation. (Weighing: 1/3)

- The applicants' elaboration on their motivation for successfully completing their studies, on their particular qualification for being awarded a scholarship due to their contributions to society as well as on their future goals and perspectives will be considered. The evaluation will additionally factor in the applicants' description of why their personal circumstances impede their academic careers and how applicants intend to overcome these obstacles. (Weighing: 2/3)

The interviews are assessed by means of a catalogue of criteria. The panel of referees is to select those applicants who are considered most apt and show the most potential in compliance with above criteria.

**Step 4:**

The applicants are informed about the panel's decisions in writing.

Please note that you are not legally entitled to receive the Deutschlandstipendium.

**20. Does an internship semester affect the scholarship?**

If the internship semester is a mandatory part of your degree program and leads to longer standard program duration, the semester is included in the program schedule curriculum eligible for funding.