

SPONSORSHIP GUIDELINES

of the Studienfonds OWL Foundation

for granting the

Deutschlandstipendium

to German and foreign college students

GOALS

Fostering students. Strengthening OWL.

The state colleges in Ostwestfalen-Lippe (OWL), North Rhine-Westphalia, with a cumulative total of over 50,000 students, established Studienfonds OWL, the only cooperative initiative of its kind in Germany, in order to

- help ensure that every capable person who desires to study is able to, regardless of their social background or financial situation;
- give private individuals and companies the possibility to become socially involved and aid students in their personal and career development;
- attract particularly talented students to OWL; and
- strengthen OWL as an economic and college region.

The Studienfonds OWL Foundation sponsors both German and foreign students alike.

The Deutschlandstipendium



Goals

The German federal government began a national scholarship program, which included the creation of the Deutschlandstipendium ("Germany scholarship"). With this program, the federal government—more specifically, the executive Federal Ministry for Education and Research—strives to help talented, high performance students to fulfill their greatest potential, strengthen the bonds between the region's colleges and local social and economic partners, and encourage business, foundations, associations, and private citizens to invest in the education of talented students—and thus in the future of Germany. The scholarship program targets current and entering college students whose academic and personal development indicate great promise for their studies and career.

Stipendienprogramm-Gesetz (StipG, "Scholarship Program Law")

As a basis for the Germany-wide scholarship program, the German federal government passed the Scholarship Program Law. This law can be found and read on the Studienfonds OWL website (www.studienfonds-owl.de) or on the Federal Ministry for Education and Research's website on the Deutschlandstipendium (www.deutschlandstipendium.de). Colleges are bound to the law and the ordinances and guidelines derived from it if they participate in the program.

Scholarship amount

Each scholarship of €150.00 per month raised by the colleges from private donors is matched by the federal government with another €150.00 per month, so that recipients effectively receive a scholarship of €300.00 per month (or €3,600 per year) for up to two semesters within the standard length of college study.

Deutschlandstipendium = Studienfonds scholarship

The five colleges that participate in Studienfonds OWL have agreed to grant the federal government's Deutschlandstipendium through their common establishment, the Studienfonds OWL Foundation. This means that the entire application, selection, and awarding process for scholarships subsidized by the federal government takes

place in Studienfonds OWL. On behalf of the five colleges in Ostwestfalen-Lippe, the Studienfonds OWL Foundation created its own guidelines based on the federal government's specifications.

Each of the performance-based scholarships granted each year by the Studienfonds OWL Foundation are thereby a Deutschlandstipendium.

Note

The federal government provides the public subsidies exclusively for the sponsorship of college students that demonstrate academic performance, social involvement, and development worthy of sponsorship (see III. Selection criteria). Consequently, Studienfonds OWL provides federal funds only in the context of performance-based sponsorship.

Besides performance-based scholarships, Studienfonds OWL has been granting the need-based Social Scholarship since 2006 for students facing financial or personal hardship, in which case the academic performance of the applicants is not of high priority. These scholarships have an entirely separate selection process and total to €1,000 per year. For more information, see the Sponsorship Guidelines for the Social Scholarship on the Studienfonds OWL website.

I. Application requirements

1. Scholarships can only be granted to students who send in an application.
2. German and foreign students may apply.
3. The scholarship can only be granted to college students who are lawfully enrolled at one of the following five colleges, or to high-school students or anyone else planning to begin their studies at one of the following five colleges in the coming Winter semester:
 - **University Bielefeld**
 - **University Paderborn**
 - **Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences**
 - **University of Applied Sciences Ostwestfalen-Lippe**
 - **Hochschule für Musik Detmold**
4. It is possible in some cases to receive another scholarship at the same time as the Deutschlandstipendium. It is not possible, however, when students receive financial support or a performance- or talent-based scholarship that is financed using public funds. This regulation does not apply for non-performance-based Erasmus scholarships and 'textbook money' scholarships up to €30,00 per month. Privately financed sponsorship and scholarships may be combined without problem with the Deutschlandstipendium.

When applying, applicants must inform us whether they are receiving financial support or another scholarship. Scholarship recipients are legally bound to inform us of any changes regarding this matter before and while receiving the Deutschlandstipendium. The Federal Ministry for Education and Research conducts random surveys to avoid students receiving more than one federally financed scholarship. Studienfonds OWL and its five participating colleges are obligated to provide the necessary data for these surveys (see § 4 StipG).

II. Breadth of sponsorship

Scholarship amount

The scholarship generally amounts to €300 per month (€3,600 per year).

Approval and length of scholarship

The scholarship can be granted beginning in the first semester of college. Applicants are notified of the decision of approval by post. The scholarship is generally granted for two semesters, providing that both of these semesters are within the standard length of study. Subsequently, applicants can apply to extend the scholarship. The maximum possible length for the scholarship is the standard length of study in the relevant course of studies.

Applicants are neither legally entitled to receiving the scholarship nor to receiving an extension of the sponsorship.

The scholarship is also paid during months when classes are not in session and during stays abroad that are relevant to the course of studies.

The scholarship is granted regardless of income.

Leave of absence

Scholarships are not paid during a student's leave of absence from studies. When the student provides notice after his/her leave of absence that he/she is continuing his/her studies, the approved time frame for the student's scholarship is adjusted accordingly (cf. § 7 Abs. 2 StipG). If the leave of absence is due to a stay abroad relevant to the recipient student's course of studies as a part of an Erasmus scholarship, the Deutschlandstipendium will continue to be paid during the approved period.

Termination

According to § 8 StipG, the scholarship ends at the end of the month in which the scholarship student:

1. completes the final exam in his/her course of studies,
2. discontinues his/her studies,
3. changes his/her course of studies, or
4. is expelled from college.

The termination takes effect with the first of any of these conditions.

If a scholarship student switches to an equivalent course of studies at a college outside Ostwestfalen-Lippe that also participates in the Deutschlandstipendium program, Studienfonds OWL will continue to pay the scholarship for equivalent of one semester at a college in OWL to ease the transition to the new college.

Gathering statistical data

The Studienfonds OWL Foundation would like to inform you that the colleges are bound by law to send statistical data of all scholarship student as well as the private funders to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research every calendar year (cf. § 13 StipG). The Studienfonds OWL Foundation is responsible for sending the data.

Cultivating ideals

The Studienfonds OWL Foundation fosters its scholarship students not only financially, but also cultivates their ethics and ideals. For this, the Studienfonds OWL along with its funders run an Ideals Cultivation Program, in which scholarship students can regularly enjoy opportunities and events such as:

- contact to businesses in OWL

- workshops, seminars, talks
- tours of companies
- internship positions
- help in matching a student with projects and theses
- evenings by the fire with interesting personalities
- mentoring
- academic exchange
- cultural events
- meetings among scholarship students

Studienfonds OWL does its best to enliven the relationships between funders and students. In this way, students receive much more than the scholarship itself; they accumulate relationships for their careers, experiences, additional knowledge, and soft skills. In doing so, the personal and career development of the scholarship students is central.

Regular and active participation in the Ideals Cultivation Program is desired of the scholarship students.

III. Selection criteria

Selection criteria

The selection criteria of the Studienfonds OWL Foundation are based on the official selection criteria of the *Stipendienprogramm-Gesetzes der Bundesregierung* (StipV, Engl. Federal Scholarship Program Law, cf. § 2 StipV). This means that applicants are assessed based on:

1. For those just beginning their college studies, on
 - a) The average grade for admission to their college, with particular attention to the individual grades relevant to the chosen course of studies or
 - b) The special qualification that enables the student to study at the given college,
2. For current college students, on the academic performance thus far at college, in particular the ECTS points earned or the results of the *Zwischenprüfung* (interim exam). For Master's students, also the final grade of their previous college degree.

In the overall assessment of an applicant's potential, the following criteria are also considered:

1. Remarkable successes, distinctions, and prizes, previous jobs and internships,
2. Extracurricular or interdisciplinary involvement, volunteer work, social or political involvement, or participation in religious entities, associations, or clubs,
3. Noteworthy personal or familial circumstances such as sicknesses or impairments, caring for one's own children, in particular as a single parent, or caring for care-dependent family members, working in a family-run business, working during one's studies, family background, or a migrant background.

Regular performance checks

The Studienfonds OWL Foundation checks once a year during the approved scholarship period whether the academic performance of the scholarship student can justify a continuation of the scholarship; however, the scholarship can only be extended if the scholarship recipient sends in new scholarship application to the Studienfonds OWL Foundation to extend his/her scholarship.

Requirements to extend sponsorship:

- Studienfonds OWL and the five participating colleges have enough donation funds to continue sponsorship, and
- The scholarship student continues to fulfill the requirements for the scholarship (see selection criteria).

IV. Application and selection process

Applying before college

High school students, vocational trainees, and others interested in beginning their studies at a college in the near future can apply. The scholarship is paid only after the student has submitted to Studienfonds OWL his current enrollment certification.

Applying online

The Studienfonds OWL Foundation accepts only online applications. The application form can be found during the application period on the Foundation's webpage, www.studienfonds-owl.de. It must be filled out, the necessary documents uploaded (see Section V. Application documents), and sent off together. In addition, the *Teilnahmeerklärung* (participation form) must be signed and sent by post to Studienfonds OWL.

Only applications that were uploaded in full and on time are considered. Word file formats are not accepted; for converting Word files into PDF format, see the Open Source notes under Section V.

Application deadline

The application deadline can vary from year to year. Generally, the application beginning and end dates are in the Spring each year. The current application dates can be found on the Studienfonds OWL website. Decisions about approvals and rejections are usually around August of the same year.

Selection process

Studienfonds OWL gathers the applications and checks to see if they fulfill the formal criteria. Next, all applications, sorted by applicants' colleges, are forwarded to the selection committees for assessment and evaluation. The selection committees are elected by each college's headmaster/president, or the faculty senate, and is composed of that college's professors and college students.

The committees examine the applications sent to them and recommend the applicants they consider most qualified to the foundation board. Based on the recommendations, the board finally decides which students it will grant scholarships to. The applicants are then notified in writing of the results.

Application interviews do not take place.

Presenting the scholarship

The scholarships are presented in a formal ceremony in the first few weeks of the Winter semester.

The scholarships are approved from October 1 to September 30 of the following year. This regulation holds even for students at Colleges of Applied Science where the semester generally begins and ends earlier.

V. Application documents

The following application documents are to be uploaded as part of the online application:

After you have filled out the online application form, your application documents should be uploaded in the following structure. Please make sure to label the files with your family name (e.g., 'Lebenslauf_Smith') so that all documents can be associated easily with the proper applicant. Please avoid diacritical marks (e.g., é, à, ö, ç) and other non-English characters (e.g., ß) in the file names, as it can create problems in the upload process.

1st file: *Motivation_YourLastName.pdf*

- Signed personal statement with name and postal address

2nd file: *Lebenslauf_YourLastName.pdf*

- Signed résumé

3rd file: *Studium_YourLastName.pdf*

- High school diploma
- College diploma (if applicable)
- Complete grade transcript of college studies thus far
- Enrollment certificate (for college applicants, only if already available; otherwise, it can be handed in as soon as it is available)

4th file: *Nachweise_YourLastName.pdf*

- Testimonials and certifications of internships and student jobs
- Written confirmation of volunteer work, social involvement, special abilities, distinctions, prizes, stays abroad, etc.

5th file (optional): *Sonstiges_YourLastName.pdf*

- References to noteworthy social, familial, or personal background, e.g., that have to do with family history or a migrant background

6th file (optional): *Foto_YourLastName.pdf*

- Current photo

Please note:

1. Only **complete** application that had been submitted **on time** will be considered. Please do not send any documents after the application end date without explicit request, since we will not be able to consider them.
2. **All documents MUST be in PDF format;** all other file types cannot be opened and therefore cannot be considered. All documents must be submitted in digital form and only using the online form (paper documents will not be accepted). All documents must be submitted in the structure detailed under 'Application documents.' (Please note, programs that can merge multiple PDFs into a single file can be found if you do an internet search for 'pdf merge freeware').

3. Please follow the steps and technical instructions described in the *Bewerbungsvereinbarung* (Application Agreement), which you can find on the starting page of the application server.
4. In addition, you must send the signed *Teilnahmeerklärung* (participation form), the *Kenntnisnahme der Förderrichtlinien* (Agreement to Sponsorship Guidelines), and the *Zusatzfragen der Bewerbungsvereinbarung* (Additional Questions about the Application Agreement) by post to the Studienfonds OWL Foundation.
5. Please do not write to faculty members or secretaries regarding the Deutschlandstipendium. Teacher recommendations are neither needed nor desired for the application and will not be considered in the selection process.