

Preparing your stay: visa application

EU countries, European Economic Area and Switzerland

If you come from an EU Member State, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, you generally do not need an entry visa. Your valid identity card is sufficient. If you plan to stay in Germany longer than 90 days or to work here, please obtain a document from your landlord in Leipzig ([↗Wohnungsgeberbestätigung](#)) and use this to register at a *Bürgerbüro* (Resident Services Office) in Leipzig.

Non-EU countries that do not require an entry visa, such as Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, the UK and the US

Nationals of these countries do not require an entry visa. They do, however, require a residence permit for stays of more than 90 days or if they will be working in Germany. You can apply for this after entering Germany. More information is available from the [↗Federal Foreign Office](#) (*Auswärtiges Amt*). The Federal Foreign Office has compiled a [↗list](#) of states whose nationals require an entry visa and states whose nationals may travel to Germany without an entry visa.

Nationals of all other non-EU countries

Research visa

As a visiting scholar or a new international staff member (employees, including international doctoral researchers with a work contract), you will need a visa to enter the country and stay in Germany for work and research purposes for more than 90 days. The [↗Visa Navigator](#) provided by the German Federal Foreign Office gives you advice on which visa is suitable for you. If you come to Leipzig for a research stay at a scientific institution and will be signing an employment contract, we still advise you not to apply for a “work visa” like a Blue Card but for a “research visa” (section 18d), as the latter can be issued very quickly (select “research” instead of “work” when using the [↗Visa Navigator](#)).

A research visa does not require approval from the Foreigners' Authority in Leipzig (**if you have not yet lived in Germany for more than three months**) which speeds up the process, and you are legally entitled to one if you have a [↗hosting agreement](#) from your host institution. Like a work visa, it includes a work permit for your work at the host institution. Please note that, when you later apply for your residence permit in Leipzig, you can choose between a residence permit for research and an [↗EU Blue Card](#), if you fulfil the requirements for the latter.

The research visa (section 18d) can also be issued if you have a scholarship or private funds of approximately 1600 euros per month (examined on a case-by-case basis and depending on your cost of living).

You will require a [↗hosting agreement](#) as mentioned above to apply for a research visa. This is a contract concluded between you and your host institution.

Mobility within the EU

Please also note the rules for mobile researchers in the EU within the meaning of [↗REST Directive 2016/801/EU](#).

[↗Long-term mobility with EU Blue Card](#): If you have already held an EU Blue Card in another EU country for a minimum of twelve months, long-term residence in Germany is possible without a visa. After entering Germany, you must apply to the Foreigners' Authority for a German EU Blue Card.

Your stay in Germany will last longer than 90 days and you are not entitled to apply for a research visa

If you require a visa to stay longer (longer than 90 days), then you will need to apply for another type of visa (work, study) at the German mission in your country of residence before you enter Germany. The German mission in your home country is then responsible for obtaining the consent of the Foreigners' Authority (*Ausländerbehörde*) at your future place of residence in Germany.

It may take eight to twelve weeks for a visa to be issued. If your family members are accompanying you, we recommend submitting your applications all at the same time, even if your family will be arriving later.

- The visa application form for a long-term stay (longer than 90 days) is available from the German mission in your country of residence. Please enquire there for more information. You may also complete the [application form](#) provided by the Federal Foreign Office and hand that in at the German mission in country of residence.
- Under Regulation (EU) 265/2010, if you hold a national visa (Type D visa) and a valid travel document you can move freely within the Schengen Area for up to 90 days within a 180-day period.
- You can apply for a national visa (Type D visa) for a stay of up to twelve months, in which case it may no longer be necessary to apply for a residence permit in Germany. The duration of your research must not exceed the period of your residence permit. If your project is extended, however, you can apply for an extended residence permit in Germany.

To apply for a national visa (Type D visa) for research you will need the following documents:

- Passport (valid for the duration of the stay)
- Proof of the intended research activity ([hosting agreement](#))
- Proof that you have sufficient financial resources to support yourself, unless this is apparent from the aforementioned documents (scholarship confirmation, employment contract or letter of intent with the relevant host institution, indicating the total amount of your prospective financial resources)
- Proof of health insurance
- Information about where you will live in Germany (if already available)
- For family members: marriage and birth certificates with [legalisation or apostille](#)
- Application form (available from the German mission in your country of residence).

Depending on the German mission, further documents may be required. Please check with the German mission in your country of residence to find out which documents you will need for your visa application.

The national visa (Type D visa) is usually issued for a period of three (up to a maximum of twelve) months. Based on the duration of your visa, please apply for a residence permit at the local Foreigners' Authority in Leipzig before your visa expires.

Your stay in Germany will not last longer than 90 days

A Schengen or tourist visa entitles you to stay for no longer than three months and cannot be extended. For this reason, under no circumstances should you travel to Germany on a Schengen or tourist visa for a longer research stay. The same applies to your family members.

If your research stay in Germany will **not exceed** 90 days within a 180-day period, then in most cases a **Schengen visa** (Type C) is sufficient to enter and stay in the country.

- One of the requirements for obtaining a Schengen visa is that you prove your ability to **support yourself financially** for the duration of your stay in Germany.
- In principle, **travel health insurance** with a minimum coverage of 30,000 euros (figure subject to change) is required for any country in the Schengen Area.
- When applying for a Schengen visa, make sure you specify **“scientific work”** or **“research”** as the **main purpose of your journey**.
- A Schengen visa entitles you to **travel freely throughout the Schengen Area**, which is made up of all the signatory countries to the Schengen Agreement.

The addresses of German missions abroad and information about entry requirements are available from the [↗Federal Foreign Office](#).

A Schengen visa cannot be extended beyond a three-month period or converted for a different purpose. You must depart after three months at the latest.

Legal notice and disclaimer

This flyer has been compiled as part of the joint project [↗“Willkommen in Leipzig/Welcome to Leipzig”](#). Dr Annemone Fabricius, Linda Kaule ([↗Welcome Centre](#), Leipzig University International Centre)

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