

I. Objective of the Scholarship

The SBW Berlin Scholarship supports young people from abroad who come from financially disadvantaged family backgrounds and use the skills they acquired during their studies in Germany to boost long-term non-profit projects, preferably in their home countries.

We award our scholarships for bachelor's and master's programs at a university or special university of applied sciences in Berlin and Potsdam based on the student's academic qualifications, personal aptitude, and social needs. In general, all scientific and artistic disciplines can be funded.

In special cases the scholarship may support a vocational training in Berlin or Potsdam.

Important requirements of the SBW Berlin scholarship are the SBW Berlin scholarship recipients' intention to return to their home countries and pursue their professional goals for at least 18 months after the end of the funding period/study program and to continue to participate in regular check-ins with the SBW Berlin team regarding their professional development (project and career). Thus, from the beginning of the scholarship, SBW Berlin supports all scholarship recipients to realize their professional goals in their home countries. This is done through networking with other organizations, through SBW Berlin's assistance with targeted job searches in the scholarship recipients' home countries and with the preparation of job materials thereafter. In addition, all developed social non-profit projects should show strong connections with the scholarship recipients' home countries.

Studies or vocational trainings in the applicant's home country or in other German federal states cannot be funded.

Further funding after the end of the regular study/professional training period is unattainable.

II. Who can apply?

- Foreign nationals, whose home countries appear to have a particular need for development assistance¹
- Homeless foreigners
- Recognized refugees²
- Holders of a settlement permit
- Holders of an EU long-term residence permit
- Students from EU and EEA countries who have already worked in Germany in an activity related to their studies, before taking up their studies
- Students from EU/EEA countries with permanent right of residence as defined by the Freedom of Movement Act (Freizügigkeitsgesetz EU)

Students whose studies in Germany are already being funded by another scholarship are not eligible to apply.

¹ We believe that this applies particularly to many countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America due to their current economic and/or social situation.

² See also the SBW Scholarship for refugees.

An exception to this rule is assistance under the Federal Education Assistance Act (BAFöG). In this case, the amount of the scholarship is adjusted according to the BAFöG allowance.

III. Application requirements

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- between 18 and 30 years old
- professional or volunteer experience in the non-profit sector
- strong intention to work in their country of origin for at least 18 months after graduation³
- able to prove a relatively low net income⁴
- no first-degree family members who reside permanently in Germany
- able to prove that they have not stayed in Germany for more than 18 months before the application
- average grades corresponding to a German grade point average of at least 2.0
- application before the start of their university education or fully enrolled in the first, second or max. third semester at a state-recognized university (in Germany or abroad) or application for a master's degree shortly before or after obtaining a bachelor's degree

Applicants who do not meet all the requirements stated above cannot be considered.

IV. Deadlines and application documents

The application deadlines end on December 31 and June 30 of each year.

Application documents can only be submitted between November 15th to December 31st and May 15th to June 30th of each year.

The final decision whether a scholarship (starting the following semester) will be granted can be expected at the beginning of February respectively and the beginning of August of each year.

Only complete applications can be considered. Applicants must submit at least the following documents:

- application form (fillable PDF or online form)
- letter of motivation (one or two pages long)⁵
- current curriculum vitae⁶
- information about the net household income⁷

³ In addition to the examination whether the selection criteria that are specific under VI. are met, we will evaluate whether the applicant can be expected to return to their home country for at least 18 months after their stay in Germany has ended. **This does not apply** to refugees or holders of a residence permit in accordance with §§ 22, 23 para 1 or 2, §§ 23a, 25 para 1 or 2 of the Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz), who cannot return to their home countries for the reasons stated in those paragraphs.

⁴ The total household income of the applicants does not exceed the average income which has been officially stated for their home country. The income of all household members and all sources of income of the family (e.g., from employment, business activities, property, child benefit or pensions) will be considered.

⁵ In the letter of motivation, any previous volunteer commitment, future professional goals, and a project idea should be explained in detail. For more detailed information on the letter please review the application form.

⁶ The CV is already included in our application form and does not have to be submitted as a separate document.

⁷ This information is also already included on the application form and does not have to be submitted as a separate document. Please submit appropriate evidence such as pay slips, pension notices, and/or bank statements.

- copy of the last school or university certificate that shows the grade point average and a grade overview
- copy of the highest academic degree (high school diploma or university certificate) that shows the grade point average and a grade overview

If available, copies of the following documents should also be included:

- qualification for university entrance
- admission to the university in Berlin or Potsdam where you intend to study (or are already studying)
- internationally recognized language certificate for the language in which your studies will be taught⁸
- all previous work, training, apprenticeship and internship certificates and references
- all already obtained university certificates and records of achievements (graded and ungraded)

We recommend all applicants to submit the following additional documents, which are not mandatory:

- one or two letters of recommendation from professors, schoolteachers, employers, etc.
- evidence of the net household income⁹

The application and all enclosed certificates and supporting documents must be submitted in German or English. If the original document was issued in another language, we also ask for a translation into German or English.

Non-certified copies and translations are sufficient for the application.

If the applicant successfully passes the selection process, certified copies of some of those documents will be required during the verification process.

V. Selection criteria

The following criteria are decisive for the selection of future scholarship recipients:

In need of assistance are all applicants who meet the requirements of § 1 BAföG (German Federal Education Assistance Act). The individual amount of funding will depend on the personal circumstances of each applicant.

Applicants whose household income does not exceed the average income officially stated for their country of origin are also deemed in need of assistance. The income of all household members and all sources of income of the family will be considered (e.g., wages, income from entrepreneurial activities, property income, child benefit or pensions).

Eligible are all applicants whose intellectual abilities, as substantiated by the application documents and during the interview, justify the expectation that the applicant will easily meet the performance requirements of the funded studies and degree.

⁸ If an official language certificate is not included in the application documents, the certificate must be submitted by the verification process latest.

⁹ If the application only included information on the net household income, proof of evidence must be submitted during the verification process.

Worthy of assistance are all applicants whose personality and social commitment suggest that they will achieve the goals of this scholarship during and after their studies.

In addition, the applicant's personal non-profit project will also be evaluated. Our rating will be based on the following criteria:

- Importance/Relevance of the project for the home country and SBW Berlin
- Documentation (structure, completeness, clarity of the project description)
- Feasibility of the goals
- Feasibility of the project's time schedule
- Cooperation with a partner organisation in the home country (desirable)

We will decide individually, if additional financial resources for the implementation of a proposed non-profit project will be granted.

VI. Selection process

During the first phase of the selection process, the curriculum vitae, the letter of motivation and the grades of the applicants will be considered.

During the second phase of the selection process, a personal interview or video conference will be conducted with each candidate who has been deemed suitable after all documents have been carefully reviewed. The proposed social non-profit project might also be discussed during the interview or video conference.

Applicants also need to submit a project description that provides a detailed overview of the proposed project's social significance, project's objectives, individual work steps, estimates on any costs and expenditure of time, ideas on financing the project and a detailed time schedule.

Only after reviewing these project descriptions, the final selection will be made.

VII. Verification Process

If they have not already been submitted, the following documents will be required after the selection in the so-called verification process:

- copy of your passport with a current passport photograph
- copy of your student visa
- evidence of the net household income
- evaluation report from Uni-Assist or other evidence of the grade conversion into the German grading system
- copy of your university entrance qualification
- admission to a university in Berlin or Potsdam where you intend to study (or are already studying) or confirmation of enrollment, if already issued
- copy of your latest school or university certificate with a grade overview if another certificate has been issued since the application
- certified copies of all university certificates and performance records that you have obtained

Rules and criteria for the SBW Berlin Scholarship

so far (graded and ungraded)¹⁰

- certified copies of your study-specific work, training, and internship certificates
- legalization of your highest academic qualification (university-entrance diploma from school or university diploma like the Bachelor certificate) if this certificate is from a foreign institution
- copy of an internationally recognized language certificate for the language in which your studies will be taught

SBW Berlin may cover the costs for the required certification and legalization of the documents in special circumstances.

During the verification process, SBW Berlin and the candidate agree upon the final details of how to conduct and oversee the non-profit project which becomes binding. The project description then becomes part of the scholarship contract.

VIII. Scholarship benefits

For the duration of the scholarship (max. funding period equals the regular period of study), SBW Berlin covers the necessary living expenses of the scholarship recipients. The scholarship includes:

- a room in our shared student flats in Berlin
- cost-of-living allowance
- tuition fees¹¹
- possibly also a travel allowance for your journey to Berlin before the start of your studies and for the journey home after you have completed your studies¹²

First payments can only be made after the scholarship recipient moved into the student flat. Part-time jobs are generally not approved by SBW Berlin.

IX. Amount of the assistance

All scholarship recipients receive a monthly living allowance of 450 Euro.

Applicants who receive benefits in accordance with the Federal Education Assistance Act (BAFöG) will only receive allowances that do not count as income under the terms of § 21 para 3 Nr. 2 of BAFöG. These applicants usually only receive a flat rate (book allowance) of 100 Euro maximum a month because the cash value of the accommodation that SBW Berlin provides must be considered.

X. Duration of our assistance

Our assistance will be provided for a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 48 months, depending on the standard duration of studies in the discipline you have chosen. We grant assistance for specific periods of time, usually for the following semester. Further funding after the regular study period has ended is unattainable.

¹⁰ Candidates who apply for a scholarship to pursue a master's degree must also provide certified copies of all university certificates and performance records from their bachelor's program.

¹¹ If the tuition fees exceed the national average, a deductible can be expected.

¹² The budget for trips within Europe is max. 500 Euro and for travel outside of Europe max. 1,000 Euro.

We have a total of 20 scholarships available. Each semester, we can award as many scholarships as there are vacancies.

SBW Berlin can terminate its assistance if a scholarship recipient fails one required course or postpones two exams. The failure to meet the target agreements set for the scholarship recipient's non-profit project or changes concerning the scholarship recipient's intended return to his/her home country are other reasons for the termination of the scholarship.

XI. Return to the home country and repayment obligation

The SBW Berlin scholarship program requires that the scholarship recipients limit their stay according to the duration of their studies. SBW Berlin grants this scholarship in the form of a loan, which is repayable after the end of the funding period. There is no obligation to repay the loan if they return to their home country after completing their studies.

XII. Final provisions

Scholarship recipients must inform SBW Berlin immediately if their circumstances change, that were relevant for the funding decision.

They are also obliged to inform SBW Berlin immediately about their graduation and submit a copy of their diploma.

In addition, they must submit copies of all the university certificates and performance records (graded and ungraded) which they obtain during their studies after each semester.

Further rights and obligations of the scholarship holders are listed in the scholarship contracts and may differ slightly from one another.