

Hilde Domin Programme 2025/2026

OVERVIEW

1

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) administers the scholarship programme “Hilde Domin Programme” with funds from the Federal Foreign Office (AA). The programme serves to support students and doctoral candidates from across the globe, who are at risk of being formally or *de facto* denied educational or other rights in their country of origin, and to provide these students and doctoral candidates with an opportunity to begin or complete a study or research degree at a higher education institution in Germany.

Students and doctoral candidates funded under the programme will receive a scholarship for a degree course of personal choice and according to individual qualifications. The scholarship is sufficient to cover the necessary costs incurred during their study or research stay.

The long-term goal of the scholarship programme is to enable students and doctoral candidates to complete their higher education studies/ respective research project in a secure environment, to be able to contribute towards meaningful political, economic as well as social development in their countries of origin (respectively in Germany or third countries) upon completion of their studies in Germany.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

2

The aim of the scholarship programme is to enable students and doctoral candidates at risk in their countries of origin to complete their studies or doctorate in a secure environment at a higher education institution in Germany.

WHO CAN BE NOMINATED?

3

Students, aiming for a master’s degree, and doctoral candidates worldwide¹ who are at risk of being formally or *de facto* denied educational rights in their country of origin, due to their ethnic, sexual, gender or religious identity and/or their political or civic engagement. In the sense of the scholarship programme political, civic and similar engagement encompasses either the participation in groups or individual actions based on liberal and democratic principles aspiring to contribute to a positive social change in communities.

The DAAD welcomes nominations of women and marginalised groups in particular.

¹ Except for the following countries: EU/[EEA](#)/[EFTA](#) countries as well as Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and the United Kingdom.

WHAT IS FUNDED?

4

Funding is available for applicants with the aim of obtaining a master's or PhD degree. Students and doctoral candidates from all disciplines can be nominated, except for human medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and law.

The beneficiaries of the scholarship programme will further be qualified through participation in interdisciplinary trainings.

FUNDING DURATION

5

Generally, the duration of funding for a

- master's degree is as a rule, 24 months.
- doctoral degree is up to 48 months (12 months at first, with annual extensions of 12 months up to 48 months in total).

Important to note: A second master's or doctoral degree will not be funded.

SCHOLARSHIP VALUE

6

Funding for a scholarship encompasses:

- a monthly scholarship payment of currently 992 EUR for master students or 1,300 EUR for doctoral candidates
- health, accident, and personal liability insurance
- a travel allowance based on your country of origin or present residence
- if applicable, participation in a preparatory German language course (of two, four or six months) – according to the previously acquired and required language skills for the intended course of study or doctoral project
- additional financial benefits

NOMINATION PROCEDURE

7

Potential candidates cannot themselves apply for participation in the Hilde Domin Programme but are nominated by the management (presidiums/rectorates) of an institution or organisation which is a legal entity domiciled in Germany and which carries out an activity in the field of science, research and teaching and/or the protection of human rights, the promotion of peace and democracy or the rule of law.

All nominations shall formally be made by respective nominating institutions and organisations, who are requested to fill in the nomination form [online](#) (currently only available in German). Nominations submitted through other channels (e.g. via email, post or fax) cannot be considered or accepted.

Important to note:

- Multiple nominations do not bear any advantages. One nomination per candidate is sufficient.
- As part of the nomination, a completed questionnaire on the nominee's risk situation must be submitted. The completed and signed document is submitted as a PDF document via the online nomination form by the nominating institution. If this document is not submitted as part of the nomination, the nomination will be excluded from the further procedure. The questionnaire on the risk situation, including guidelines, can be found attached to the email or received upon request: info.hildedomin@daad.de.

The following applies to universities:

- It is strongly recommended that nominating universities should, if possible, offer candidates the opportunity to study at their own institution.
- If higher education institutions are unable to accept candidates themselves, a recommendation for an adequate course of study at an institution should be submitted.

The following applies to other nominating institutions:

- The institution must support the nominated candidate in finding a suitable degree programme.

SELECTION CRITERIA

8

After an initial plausibility check, suitable candidates will be contacted by the DAAD and invited to apply via the DAAD's application portal. During the selection process, both the individual risk situation will be checked, and the academic performance will be assessed.

The final selection round of candidates is carried out by independent selection committees appointed by the DAAD.

WHAT REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET?

9

Potential candidates cannot apply independently for the scholarship, but instead must be nominated. In addition, candidates:

- must prove or credibly demonstrate a threat to personal well-being or safety (for example by physical violence, imprisonment, denial of civil and education rights etc.) to the nominating institution
- be in possession of educational certificates that allow access to a higher education institution and guarantee the completion of an intended course of study or research project according to the [anabin](#) database
- may not be already residing in Germany or the European Union at the time of nomination

Important to note: Nominations for the fields of visual arts, performing arts, design, visual communication, music, film, and architecture can be submitted only by accredited higher education institutions and require a letter by that institution confirming the academic ability of the candidate in the foreseen discipline and that the institution is willing to enrol the candidates in case of the award of a scholarship.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

10

Language skills must be proven for the chosen language of study, i.e. English for English-taught degree programmes and German for German-taught degree programmes. The following certificates, for example, can be submitted as proof of English language proficiency: Cambridge English, Cambridge Business, IELTS, ISE, TOEFL iBT, TOEFL Essentials, TOEIC and PTE Academic. Please note that a specific test, usually IELTS or TOEFL, may be required for application to the universities. If no IELTS or TOEFL certificate is submitted with the application, a scholarship can only be issued on the condition that an appropriate certificate is submitted promptly. As a rule, the following certificates can be considered as proof of German language skills: TestDaF, DSH, German Language Diploma of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (DSD), Goethe-Zertifikat, Austrian Language Diploma and telc Deutsch. The language skills will be checked during the personal interview.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

11

Eligible candidates must upload the following documents in the DAAD application portal:

- Online application form
- Valid passport of the applicant as well as for accompanying spouses and underage children (one-year validity at the date of application)
- Complete Curriculum Vitae (CV) (max. 3 pages)
- Letter of motivation (1 to 2 pages) that describes the academic, career and personal motives for embarking on a master's degree programme or a PhD at a German institution of higher education
- Language certificates or proof of their English or German language proficiency (equivalent to level B2 of the [CEFR](#)), generally no older than two years at the point of application
- School-leaving certificates
- If applicable, proof of the status of the current studies or earned degree
- If available, proof of admission or statement of academic abilities² to a study course/degree programme at a German higher education institution or a letter of confirmation by the doctoral supervisor in Germany

² Candidates in the academic fields of fine arts, performing arts, design, visual communication, music, film and architecture are required to submit a letter by the hosting higher education institution confirming the academic ability of the candidate in the foreseen discipline.

* Earlier funding is possible in exceptional cases if all necessary requirements are fulfilled and upon recommendation of the selection committee.

- Other documents, as indicated in the scholarship database, depending on their current academic status (master or doctoral student)

Important to note: All candidates have to upload German or English translations of documents submitted in the national language. The DAAD reserves the right to request certified copies of the documents, if necessary.

NOMINATION DEADLINE

12

Nominations of suitable candidates by the nominating institutions and organisations can be submitted [online](#) at any time. Access to the DAAD online portal is open to formally eligible candidates during the application period.

The following time periods and deadlines apply for nominations and applications for the upcoming academic semesters:

Planned start of studies in winter semester 2026/27*

- Nominations: until 15th September 2025
- Application period: 17th September until 15th October 2025

If no application is received within the application period, respective candidates would have to be nominated again before the next nomination deadline.

Applications submitted through other channels or via other authorities cannot be considered. Incomplete applications will also not be considered or accepted. Applicants are responsible for the completeness of their applications.

Important to note: Applying for a visa and preparing for travel departure is the responsibility of the scholarship holder. As the scholarship provider, the DAAD will provide a basis for this via the funding documents. The arrangement of appointments at the foreign embassies, acceleration of procedures, booking of flights and provision of logistical services as well as security services are fundamentally outside the DAAD's mandate and sphere of influence. A systematic special treatment of scholarship holders of the Hilde Domin Programme can therefore not be guaranteed.

SUBMISSION OF NOMINATION

13

Nominations for eligible candidates may be submitted at any time [online](#) by nominating institutions and organisations.

ADDITIONAL RE- MARKS

14

Candidates are eligible:

- who are of legal age (as a rule at least 18 years old) at time of nomination
- who have a recognised bachelor's degree (or comparable) with the aim of studying a master's degree until the start of the scholarship
- who have a recognised master's degree (or comparable) with the aim of pursuing a doctorate until the start of the scholarship
- whose last matriculation at the foreign higher education institution and acquisition of the last university degree for an intended master's degree programme or an intended doctorate was generally no longer than six years ago at the point of application
- who are at risk of being formally or *de facto* denied educational rights in their country of origin, due to their ethnic, sexual, gender or religious identity and/or their political or civic engagement.

CONTACT AND CONSULTATION

15

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service
Referat ST35 Special Projects and Programmes for at-risk students and researchers
Kennedyallee 50
53175 Bonn

Contact Persons for Programme-Related Matters

Nina Knops
E-Mail: info.hildedomin@daad.de

Arua Husaini-Siam
E-Mail: info.hildedomin@daad.de

Contact Persons Administrative Matters

Maya Helget
E-Mail: info.hildedomin@daad.de

Vera Palagina
E-Mail: info.hildedomin@daad.de

Deborah Wißkirchen
E-Mail: info.hildedomin@daad.de

Hilde Domin Programme Website
Please click [here](#).

SUPPORTED BY

17



Auswärtiges Amt