



Visa for research stay

(Section 18d Residence Act)

Last update: December 2025

Researchers are third-country nationals who

1. have a doctoral degree or a suitable university degree that allows access to doctorate program and
2. have been selected by a research institute and are allowed in the national territory of a member state
3. in order to engage in research for which such a qualification is normally required.

Note: This includes doctorate students unless they are enrolled at a German university to complete a full-time study program leading to a doctoral degree as their primary activity.

Applications can be submitted in person, with prior [appointment](#) and the following application documents:

- Personally signed **passport** (original with one copy of the passport data page), with at least two completely empty pages and sufficient validity
- Valid **Swiss residence** permit for Switzerland or Liechtenstein with one copy
- **Application form** fully completed and signed including declaration to section 54 residence Act: [application form](#)
- One passport sized [photo](#) – no older than three months, according to biometric standards
- Signed **hosting agreement** or employment contract and cost assumption agreement with one copy
- Original **German university degree** or **recognized foreign university** degree with one copy
- Detailed **curriculum vitae** in German or English language with one copy
- Postage expenses of 7 Swiss Francs

Please prepare the originals with **one set** of copies of all the indicated documents. Original documents will be return to you while a copy per set will be required. Missing documentation delays the procedure and can result in your application being rejected.

The German Embassy Bern reserve the right to ask for additional documents at any time during the processing of your application.

In this visa category, most applications are typically processed within 2 weeks. *In the visa process, the interest in entering the country must be carefully weighed against the security interests of the Federal Republic of Germany. For visa applications for study and research stays and similar employment, special attention must be paid to ensuring that the knowledge acquired in Germany cannot be misused for purposes that could impair or threaten the peaceful coexistence of nations and/or public order, security, or health in Germany. This may, in individual cases, lead to a longer processing time for the visa application. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to apply for the visa early.*



Botschaft
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Bern

The visa will be valid for max. 12 month and allows you to start your research. You can travel in the entire Schengen area for 90 days per half year.

Please note: Although the information in this information sheet has been prepared with utmost care, we cannot accept any responsibility for inaccuracies contained herein.