

Scholarship Department

Information sheet A 2 - 1

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES (PhD)

Valid from: September 2009

Please note that details of the application process are subject to change. Before submitting your application, we, therefore, recommend checking www.boell.de/scholarships for the latest version of this application.

- Requirements for your scholarship application
- Selection process: stages and criteria
- Deadlines
- Application documents to be submitted
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Requirements for your scholarship application

The Heinrich Böll Foundation awards scholarships to German and foreign doctoral students in keeping with the guidelines provided by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA).

Successful applicants are entitled to two years of scholarship funding plus an extension of up to two times one half year, if applicable.

A) The following requirements apply to German applicants, applicants from other EU countries and Bildungsinländer/innen¹ (funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research):

- **Approval:** applicants for a PhD-scholarship must have been accepted as a doctoral student by a state or state recognized institution of higher education in Germany. In justified cases, the scholarship may also be granted to applicants who have been accepted at a institute of higher education abroad.

B) The following requirements apply to students from outside the EU (funded by the Federal Foreign Office)²:

- **Approval:** applicants must hold a Master's degree or equivalent and must have been accepted as a doctoral student by a German institution of higher education.
- Research stays abroad for more than four weeks can only be financed with the Federal Foreign Office's special permission. Funding is primarily intended for research stays in Germany.

All applicants must have a **good command of the German language**. Please note that the selection workshop is generally in German. Interviews in English are only possible by way of exception.³

¹ Students with an immigrant background who generally grew up in Germany and gained their higher education entrance qualification there.

² Applicants from outside the EU must check www.boell.de/scholarships for up-to-date information on deadlines and further information on the application process.

³ Successful candidates with insufficient German language skills may be able to receive additional financial support for an intensive German language course.

Selection process: stages and criteria

Three stages are involved when the Heinrich Böll Foundation selects applicants for its doctoral scholarships:

1. Submission of your **written application documents**
2. **Specialist interview with a liaison lecturer**
3. **Selection workshop** with an individual interview and a group discussion

At each stage only a small group is chosen from all of the applicants. This group then proceeds to the next stage. You will receive a letter informing you about the decisions following each selection stage.

Stage 1: Submitting your written application

These are the key criteria for choosing written applications and admitting you to Stage 2:

- **Outstanding school or college/university achievements**
- **A convincing research project, innovative questions, realistic schedule, current state of your research**
- **Social involvement and/or assuming socio-political responsibilities**
- **Convincing reasons for your application to the Heinrich Böll Foundation**

Stage 2: Specialist interview with a liaison lecturer and additional documents

During this stage your application is complemented by a **report** from a liaison lecturer. The Heinrich Böll Foundation appoints a liaison lecturer, usually at the university you wish to attend. He or she then conducts an interview of about **one hour** with the applicant.

This discussion with the liaison lecturer concentrates mainly on the following topics:

- The topic of your research project, theoretical and methodical approaches, its relevance, an overview of your preparatory work, its relation to scientific learning/practice/politics, your proposed time schedule
- Your main areas of focus, research interests
- Your professional perspectives, aims and orientation
- Your socio-political activities

The liaison lecturer then writes a report on the interview providing information about the above topics.

Stage 3: Selection workshop

Based on the reports of the liaison lecturers' and the expert references and the quality of the exposés, invitations to the selection workshops will be sent to successful applicants. At this stage there are about twice as many applicants as the number of available scholarships.

The selection workshop is composed of a **structured individual interview** and a **group discussion**. During this workshop a key role is played by the assessment of your personal abilities as described in our 'Mission Statement: Promotion of young talent' (see www.boell.de/scholarships).

Please note: we are sorry, but if you took part in a selection workshop and have received a letter of rejection, we cannot consider a second application.

Deadlines

For the **current deadlines** please check our **homepage** www.boell.de/scholarships.

Deadlines for the next round of applications by German doctoral students, Bildungsinländer/innen⁴, applicants from other EU member states and applicants from countries outside the EU

⁴ Students with an immigrant background who generally grew up in Germany and gained their higher education entrance qualification there.

Written application	until 01 September
Specialist interview with liaison lecturer	generally until 01 November
Selection workshops	December/January*
Notification of successful scholarship award	January/February
Expected commencement of grant payments	latest until 01 April

* The exact date of each workshop will be announced in time.

Please understand that these application deadlines are **binding**, and we are unable to make any exceptions.

Application documents to be submitted

If you are interested in the Heinrich Böll Foundation's scholarship and funding programme, please send **three sets** of your written application (1 original and 2 copies) to the Scholarship Department of the Heinrich Böll Foundation. Your documents should all be written **in German**. (Where applicable, expert references may be written in English)

Your original application includes the following documents:

- 1. Application form**
- 2. Letter of motivation**
- 3. Curriculum Vitae in tabular form**
- 4. A copy of the degree certificate that has qualified you for your doctoral studies**
- 5. Personal reference from a third party on your socio-political involvement**
- 6. A synopsis of your research project**
- 7. A detailed description of your proposed research project - Exposé**
- 8. Two expert references on your research project, one should be from your first PhD supervisor**
- 9. Confirmation of your acceptance as a doctoral student by your department or faculty**
- 10. For foreign applicants: proof of German language skills**

Please ensure to keep all submitted application documents for later reference. In case of your acceptance to the second stage of the application process, you need to send an identical copy of all application documents (point 1-10) to the liaison lecturer.

Notes on your application documents:

1. Application form:

Please download the application form (application form) from the website of the Scholarship Department www.boell.de/scholarships, complete the details on your monitor and print it out after completion.

2. Letter of motivation (1 page) stating:

- The reasons for your application to the Heinrich Böll Foundation
- A description of why you wish to pursue your doctorate and the professional goal you envisage
- A description of your socio-political involvement and your basic motivation for this
- In the case of foreign students: please describe your connections in, or with, Germany so far

3. Curriculum Vitae in tabular form (1-2 pages) including details about:

- School education including final exam grades
- Degree courses and, if applicable vocational training, including final qualifications and grades
- Professional experience
- Type and length of stays abroad
- Language skills
- Prizes, awards, scholarships
- List of own publications
- Socio-political activities (your role, the duration)
- Other skills, interests etc.

4. A copy of the degree certificate that has qualified you for your doctoral studies

This should include an overview over your marks/grades, and, if necessary, must be translated into German or English by an accredited translator. Please do not submit any originals.

A certified copy of your school leaving certificate and your degree certificate must be handed in only in case of a successful application, before your scholarship starts.

5. Personal reference from a third party on your socio-political involvement (1 to 2 pages):

This reference should contain confirmation and a detailed description of your socio-political involvement. It should be written by a person of your own choice who knows you well and is able to give a good assessment of your level of commitment. This person may, but does not have to, belong to an institution. Certificates for practical experience and references from personal relatives are not suitable for this purpose.

Please inform the person providing your reference to include the following important items:

- A description of your socio-political involvement, especially the areas in which you have actively assumed responsibility and what exactly you have done or brought about so far.
- A personal assessment of your specific concerns and which particular causes you support.
- An assessment of your ability to reflect on political matters, and an appraisal of your personality.

The person providing your reference could send the reference also directly to the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation. Please ensure that the reference arrives in time, before the official deadline for applications (1 March/1 September). The Scholarship Department will copy the reference and add it to your application documents.

6. A synopsis of your research project (1 to 2 pages):

The synopsis should provide a concise and easily understandable description of the following aspects:

- The question addressed by the doctoral work and its scientific relevance; a description of the research project
- Your project's position within the theoretical context
- The methodical approach
- An outline of the proposed time schedule

The synopsis may not refer to your detailed exposé. It should be coherent and well comprehensible in itself.

7. A detailed description of your proposed research project – Exposé (max. 10 pages):

The exposé should be structured as follows:

- a detailed outline of your research project including research question, current status of research, theoretical background, methodological approach and a research plan, scientific and social relevance of your research, incl. a bibliography to your exposé: up to 8 pages
- Overview over the structure of your exposé: 1 page
- Preliminary research plan including a time schedule of the next 24 months, including a detailed description of your current state of research: 1 page

8. Two expert references (each 1 to 2 pages):

The two expert references on your doctoral project should be written by a college or university teacher (professor, adjunct professor or junior professor). One of them must be a supervisor to your doctorate.

Please inform the persons providing your expert reference to include the following aspects:

- An assessment of your scholarly qualifications
- An evaluation of the doctoral project described in the exposé, its relevance to scientific learning, its research aims, its methodical approach and its position within the theoretical context
- An assessment of the project's success prospects in relation to the proposed time schedule, including supporting arguments

- Constructive subject-related suggestions for the project, if necessary for further recommendation to the applicant
- An assessment of your analytical abilities, communication skills and perceptive faculties
- A general appraisal of your special academic and personal suitability
- An agreement to personally supervise the proposed doctoral thesis and a confirmation of your acceptance as a doctoral student at the university (stated by your supervisor)
- A description of the context, and since when, the reference provider came to know you.

9. Confirmation of your acceptance as a doctoral student by your department or faculty

Your acceptance as a doctoral student may be confirmed through the letter of acceptance by the respective dean or on the basis of your proof of registration as a doctoral student. In exceptional cases, if you have not yet been officially admitted by the time of your application, you may be allowed to present the confirmation at a later stage of the application process. In this case, please indicate in your application at what latest date we can expect the confirmation.

For universities which register doctoral students only at the time of submission of their doctorate, applicants are asked to provide a copy of the respective passage in the university's doctoral regulations and a confirmation of the academic supervisor that s/he has agreed to supervise the doctorate.

10. For foreign applicants: proof of German language skills

Please provide a certificate of the 'Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang (DSH)', or 'TestDaF', or Goethe Institute, or similar.

Important notes for applicants

... how to present your application documents:

- **Please adhere strictly to the above given guidelines on how to structure the application**
- Sort and number all demanded documentation. Use a new sheet for every point and leave your name on it. Do not summarize different points on one sheet.
- Please use a **12 pt font and 1.5 line spacing. Pages should be printed one-sided.**
- All your documents are legally binding. We therefore ask you to leave an original signature on all your documents. The **expert reference** by your proposed university or college supervisor must be the original version, and it must bear referent's **original signature**.
- Please submit **three sets** of your application documents (1 clearly marked original, 2 copies). Make sure that the original set of your application is prepared in such a way that we can easily photocopy it, if necessary.
- Please **do not enclose any original personal documents, certificates etc.**, only **copies**. Certified copies only have to be provided in case of a successful application, before the scholarship starts.
- Any required foreign degree certificates (except certificates in English) must only be presented through their certified German or English translation. Certified copies of your original degree certificates only have to be provided in case of a successful application, before the scholarship starts.
- When sending the three identical sets of documents, please **staple and punch** each set,. Do not place them in separate folders.
- Please submit only DIN-A-4 copies (no folded DIN-A-3 sheets)
- Please do not use sheet protectors.
- Please send your three sets of application documents together as **one single postal item and in printed form**. We regret we cannot accept applications or individual parts of the application via fax or E-mail. We cannot accept liability for applications which go missing in the post.
- We regret that we **cannot process incomplete application documents**. This also applies to the expert reference and the reference on the applicant's socio-political involvement, which both have to be provided until the overall deadline for the application process (01 March/01 September, according to post mark).

... Data protection:

- When you submit your application your details will be saved in an address management programme. The details of unsuccessful candidates will be deleted after six months. The details

of successful candidates will be transferred to a separate scholarship management programme.

... Rejection:

- No legal claim can be made for a scholarship.
- Regretfully, the number of applications is so large that we cannot give you individual reasons for rejections.
- Rejected application documents will be destroyed in keeping with data protection regulations.

We look forward to receiving your application. Please send it to the following **postal address**:

Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung e.V.
Studienwerk – Scholarship Department
Schumannstr. 8
10117 Berlin

Further information:

Bärbel Karger
Tel.: +49 (0)30 28534-400
E-mail: studienwerk@boell.de

Consulting hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.