



## For International Visitors – Finding the Right Visa

### **Tourists – Interns – Short-term-Students – Doctoral Students – Visiting Scholars – Non-EU Visitors from Countries without a Visa Requirement**

International visitors coming to the University of Heidelberg for several months must often figure out ahead of time what type of visa they need to obtain from their German embassy or consulate. If you are planning a longer-term stay in Germany (longer than 3 months), you must expect a waiting period of several weeks for your visa to be processed by the embassy. The various types of visas can differ greatly as to the application procedures and entry and work regulations. Therefore the host institute or project leader should use the following information as a guideline when writing the letter of invitation.

**Visitors from EU- and the European Economic Area countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway as well as visitors from Switzerland do not require official permission or visa to enter Germany.**

#### ▶ **Tourist visa / Schengen visa (C-visa): For visit or business purpose (Maximum stay of 90 days within 6 months)**

The following documents must usually be submitted with the visa application:

- a letter of invitation
- proof of the necessary financial resources to cover living costs while in Germany
- proof of health insurance for the whole period of stay
- if applicable, further documents depending on the requirements of the German diplomatic mission in your home country

#### Important note:

- this visa is valid for a limited stay of maximum 90 days in a period of 6 months in Germany or the Schengen states
- this visa cannot be extended and the purpose of the stay cannot be changed, e.g. into a stay for scientific or academic work at Heidelberg University

#### ▶ **Visa for an internship**

The Federal Employment Agency and the German Embassy define interns also to be:

- students who are registered at a university in their home country OR
- doctoral students who are carrying out their doctoral training in their home country

AND who come to Germany for several months for research purposes or to carry out practical training in connection with their studies or doctoral training.

In addition to the normal visa application process, the internship must be registered with the Federal Employment Agency, in accordance with §15 Nr.5 BeschV, and the host institute must submit extensive documentation to the **ZAV (Zentrale Auslands- und Fachvermittlung der Arbeitsagentur)**. Important facts are available in the brochure [Studienfachbezogenen Praktika für ausländische Studierende](#)

<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/web/content/DE/BuergerinnenUndBuerger/ArbeitundBeruf/ArbeitsJobsuche/ArbeitsinDeutschland/Arbeitsmarktzulassung/Detail/index.htm?dfContentId=L6019022DSTBAI520435> (only in German).

Therefore, it is generally better to apply for a visa for study purposes and to register at the University of Heidelberg as a short-term student (see information on short-term student status).

► **Visa for study purposes with short-term student status**

Students can register with short-term status at the University of Heidelberg in order to carry out a concrete exchange program or as a “free mover”. Additionally, it is possible to register as a short-term student in preparation for doctoral training to be carried out Heidelberg University or at a university in the student’s home country.

More details available: [http://www.graduateacademy.uni-heidelberg.de/index\\_en.html](http://www.graduateacademy.uni-heidelberg.de/index_en.html)

► **Visa for doctoral training**

To apply for a visa you will need to submit:

- a letter of invitation/acceptance from a doctoral supervisor **OR**
- if you plan to enroll at Heidelberg University, the letter of acceptance from the international Office of the University. Application for admission must be made in advance.
- application form for a visa (available at the German foreign mission in your home country),
- letter of admission to the University (Zulassungsbescheid) (or a document stating that you will receive your letter of admission soon)
- proof of health insurance,
- proof of financial resources for the duration of the stay,
- if applicable, further documents, depending on the requirements of the German foreign mission in your home country.

More details available: [http://www.graduateacademy.uni-heidelberg.de/index\\_en.html](http://www.graduateacademy.uni-heidelberg.de/index_en.html)

► **Visa for visiting scholars (for stays longer than 90 days)**

To apply for a national visa (D-visa) you will need to submit:

- a hosting agreement for a researcher visa/residence permit (§20 immigration act) with Heidelberg University and proof of financial resources.

For information and support to receive a hosting agreement please contact the Welcome Centre.

► **Visitors from countries outside the EU without a visa requirement**

Visitors from countries outside the EU that are not subject to a visa requirement can enter and stay in Germany for 90 days in a period of six months without a visa. They only need a valid passport. (See overview of visa requirements/exemptions for entry into the Federal Republic of Germany [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/StaatenlisteVisumpflicht\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/StaatenlisteVisumpflicht_node.html))

For stays longer than 90 days or employment a national visa (D-visa) is required! In such cases, visitors should contact the embassy prior to coming to Germany.

Citizens from Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand and USA can enter Germany without a visa. They can apply for a residence permit after their arrival in Germany at a local Foreigners’ Registration Office. However, this type of travel is not recommended for visitors coming to sign a working contract immediately after their arrival. The HR department will require a working visa or residence permit before issuing the working contract.