

Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 10111 Berlin-Mitte

Grant Guidelines

(November 20, 2018)

1. Aim

The Study Foundation of the House of Representatives is a grant programme for young researchers from the United States of America, Great Britain, France, and the successor states of the Soviet Union, who want either to work on Berlin along with German as well as German-international issues or to use research facilities in Berlin.

The Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives shall contribute to the further development of a generation of young scholars from the aforementioned states whose research issues deal with Berlin or Germany. Moreover, the young researchers shall use their stay in Berlin in order to make themselves familiar with the political and social system in Berlin and Germany, and build lasting relationships between themselves and with the Berlin House of Representatives. Thus, the Foundation seeks to awaken or strengthen long-term interest in and understanding of Germany in the aforementioned states.

2. Target Group

The grants of the Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives shall be awarded to young university graduates and students with at least a Bachelor's degree (or an equivalent) in all fields, in particular the humanities and social sciences, whose research or study projects deal with Berlin or require access to Berlin research facilities. The funds shall be used to advance academic education at all state and state-recognized universities and academic research institutions in Berlin.

3. Application Requirements

Applicants for a grant of the Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives must belong to the elite of young academics in their country, i. e. they must have above-average qualifications.

The grants shall be awarded according to academic performance.

The maximum age for applicants is 35 years. Students should have obtained a first academic degree (Bachelor) by the age of 25.

Applicants who have been out of academic work for a long period after graduation in their home country shall not be considered.

Applicants should submit a detailed study or research proposal. In addition, they must submit a letter of invitation of a university teacher or scholar of a Berlin research institution. Applicants should include the letter of invitation with their application. The presentation of an invitation letter is not mandatory for predoctoral students, but they are strongly encouraged to obtain and submit an invitation letter.

4. Award amount

The award amount varies according to the level of education. The monthly grant rate amounts to

- 1.100 € for graduate and doctoral students
- 1.630 € for postdoctoral researchers.

The monthly grant rate includes the rent for an apartment in the International Studies Centre Berlin (330 €). Housing benefit for other types of accommodation is not included. In addition, a fixed travel allowance is paid in order to travel to Berlin and back (a lump sum of 200 € within Europe; and a lump sum of 600 € outside Europe).

Additional funding is possible in justified cases.

The amount of the grant will be finally determined by the Study Foundation in the funding letter.

Grant holders shall pay their health, accident, and nursing care insurance themselves.

Other grants shall not be held simultaneously with the grant of the Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives. Grant holders shall not engage in outside employment. Exceptions may be granted by the Foundation.

As a rule, the grant will be paid for the months from October to July, and only as long as the grant holder resides in Berlin for the duration of the grant. If the grant holder has to be absent from the place of study for more than one week for professional or personal reasons, the Study Foundation must be informed four weeks before the journey in case of professional reasons, and immediately after knowing the reason in case of personal reasons. The Foundation must be informed about the reasons, destination, and duration of the sojourn in both cases, and will decide whether the grant will be paid during a leave of absence or not.

5. Selection Criteria

- Academic achievements, results of examinations, special expertise
- Academic quality and feasibility of the project
- Recommendation letters of professors/experts in the relevant field of study
- Invitation letter of a Berlin university teacher or scholar
- Civic engagement
- Appropriate German language skills.

6. Application Documents

Applicants should include the following documents with their application form:

- Curriculum vitae with a recent photo on the cover page
- A detailed and precise description of the study plan and research proposal as well as a description of previous study and research activities particularly relevant to the application
- A motivation letter: Applicants should explain what contribution they hope to make to society in the future, and how the research proposal in the framework of the grant application will help them to make that contribution.
- Proof of existing contacts with university members or research institutions in Berlin (letter of invitation)
- Two recommendation letters from professors in the relevant field of study providing information about the academic qualifications of the applicant.

In addition, copies of the following certificates and transcripts:

- University transcripts with all annual examinations (including course grades)
- Diplomas or university certificates with final grades.

All transcripts should include an explanation of the grading system. Applicants from the successor states of the Soviet Union should submit a German or English translation of their certificates and transcripts.

The application documents must be complete in order to be accepted. Incomplete applications shall not be considered by the Study Foundation of the House of Representatives. They will result in the exclusion of the application.

7. Application Submission Date

The grant programme shall be announced in an appropriate manner in the United States, Great Britain, France, and the successor states of the Soviet Union.

Application forms should be requested from the Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives and should be sent by the applicant to the Study Foundation.

The application deadline is December 15 each year. The date of receipt of the documents in Berlin is decisive.

8. Awarding of the Grant

The Executive Committee of the Foundation finally decides on the awarding of the grants.

9. Duration of the Grant

The grants are valid for one academic year, and they are not extendable. They begin on October 1, and end on July 31 of the following year. Grant holders should provide convincing evidence of academic and research performance and commitment in the first half of the academic year, which are the preconditions for the continuation of grant payments in the second half of the academic year. For this purpose, grant holders have to submit a letter of approval of their temporary supervisor, attend mandatory events of the programme, and present the temporary results of their research work in a convincing manner.

The grant must be started on October 1. If this date is not met, the grant may lapse. A later start date can be fixed in justified exceptional cases.

10. Reports; Performance-based Increase of the Grant Amount

Grant holders must present an evaluation of their Berlin supervisor after six months and submit a final report of their study or research results one month before the end of the grant programme at the latest. The final reports will be published in the Yearbook of the Foundation, if necessary in a shortened version. The last grant instalment for the month of July will be paid only after the submission of the final report and the questionnaire for the evaluation of the colloquium of the Study Foundation.

11. Consequences of a Violation of the Terms and Conditions of the Grant

The grant may be revoked, and the grant holders may be required to reimburse all or part of the payments already made, if they do not meet the above conditions or if their academic performance is unsatisfactory. The same applies if a grant holder is legally convicted of a criminal offence.

12. Obligation to Return

Upon acceptance of the grant, the grant holder is obliged to return to his or her home country after the end of the grant.

13. Alumni Funding

Former grant holders (alumni) may get funding again if they are invited by the Foundation, or if they successfully apply themselves. They should distinguish themselves by particular performance, and should want to work in Berlin in accordance with the purpose of the Foundation (e. g. by giving lectures, attending congresses, pursuing advanced studies or research projects).

The Executive Committee of the Foundation will review the applicant's performance on the basis of the report according to point 10 of the guidelines and other sources (e. g. academic publications and degrees, professional positions). Moreover, the Executive Committee can consult members of the Advisory Board of the Foundation or other confidants.

The Executive Committee will make a discretionary decision on the alumni allowance, the kind and amount of the grant according to individual requirements. The Executive Committee may reimburse in particular travel and/or daily subsistence expenses. The alumni's financial capability must be taken into consideration. The total amount of the alumni grant shall not exceed the amount of a grant for a full academic year according to point 4 and 9 of the guidelines.

Enclosure

Grant Guidelines of the Study Foundation of the Berlin House of Representatives (June 8, 2017)

Grant holders have to attend the following events during their stay in Berlin:

- a visit to the *Bundesrat* including the temporary attendance of a plenary session
- a visit to the *Bundestag* including the temporary attendance of a plenary session
- at least one visit to a plenary session of the Berlin House of Representatives
- regular attendance of the fortnightly colloquium (*jour fixe*) during the lecture period of the winter and summer semester
- attendance of the evaluation seminar at the end of the winter semester, and the final seminar at the end of the summer semester (grant holders have to present the research results that they have obtained in the respective semester to the members of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board of the Study Foundation in these seminars)
- attendance of the welcome & farewell events in the Berlin House of Representatives