

Call for applications: PhD scholarships in Germany

The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation awards PhD scholarships to applicants from West Africa to pursue doctoral studies at a university in Germany.

The RLS is a German institution for political education, a forum for critical thinking and political alternatives, and a research centre for progressive social development. Through its regional office in Dakar, it works with West African civil society organisations, NGOs and universities on the following topics:

- Peace and security
- Economy, labour and social justice
- Climate justice
- Feminism
- Migration

Anyone who has been admitted to a PhD programme at a public or government-recognised university in Germany may apply, regardless of their field of study or the topic of their dissertation. Here you will find information on how to obtain this admission:

Admission to a PhD programme at a German university generally requires an above-average Master degree (or equivalent). The minimum grade required is often 2.5 on the German grading scale. For this purpose, your final grade will be converted to its equivalent on the German grading scale. Before you can apply, you must find a university professor who is willing to supervise your doctoral project as your supervisor. You must identify a potential supervisor yourself and submit a research proposal (exposé) to her/him. If you do not yet have the necessary contacts at a German university, we recommend asking the academic staff at your own university for relevant contacts. These may have been established through academic collaboration or participation in conferences. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) can also provide assistance. It is represented at some universities in West Africa either through an office or a lecturer and is usually found in the Department of German Studies.

Guidance on drafting the research proposal and further information on the application process can be found in the [applicant's handbook](#).

In addition to admission to the doctoral programme, the following are required:

- An excellent academic degree;
- Social commitment to social causes in accordance with the values of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation;
- As a rule, applicants should provide proof of German language proficiency at B1 level. Alternatively, English language at B1 level or native-speaker proficiency may suffice;

- Applicants should, where possible, acquire or improve their German language skills before leaving their home country. We can fund the relevant courses, e.g. at the Goethe-Institut. This also applies if the dissertation is written in English or French;
- You must reside in Germany for the duration of the funding;
- The maximum funding period is three years;
- Applicants who have already received a scholarship or doctoral funding from another institution may only continue to receive funding from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation if this previous funding lasted for less than 1.5 years. Any previous funding is counted towards the total duration, meaning it is deducted from the maximum funding period of three years. No scholarships are awarded for the completion of a doctorate;
- Private stays abroad in the applicant's country of origin or in third countries are not eligible for funding;
- Dual funding with other public funds (e.g. simultaneous receipt of other scholarships from public funds or receipt of unemployment benefit and a scholarship) is excluded; different scholarships are offset against one another.

Applications are accepted exclusively via the [application portal](#). It is open from 20 August until 1 October 2026, 23:59 Central European Summer Time. The documents required for an application are listed here again in German and English :

“Contact: koenig@rosalux.org. However, due to limited staff resources, we probably won't be able to respond to all inquiries.”