FAQs on Graduate Funding from the German States ("Landesgraduiertenförderung")

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1. Funding and Date of Funding

1. For how long can I receive funding?
The maximum duration of funding is three years. The scholarship will be granted for twelve months. The Central Awarding Committee will make a decision concerning an extension for additional twelve months upon application.

1.2 How much is the funding?
The basic scholarship covers a monthly payment of 1,468 euros. This amount includes a fixed rate fee for costs of material and travel expenses.

1.3 When does the funding period begin at the earliest?
The funding period has to begin on January 1. The deadline for application submission is at the beginning of October every year (for the exact date please look at the current call for applications).

1.4 Can I determine the start date of the funding period?
No. The start date may not be changed at a later point in time. Funding starts on January 1 every year. Application decisions will usually be made in mid-November. Please note that overlapping funding is not permitted and that you should therefore remember to cancel any funding you have been receiving in good time.

1.5 Can the funding period be suspended?
In exceptional cases, yes. The terms and conditions and requirements must, however, be checked in individual cases.
2. Deadlines For Applications

2.1 When do I have to submit my application documents?
Please submit your complete application documents at the beginning of October (for the exact date please look at the current call for applications).

2.2 When do I have to submit my application for a continued scholarship?
Applications for continued scholarships have to be submitted at the beginning of October every year. The same deadline applies as for applications for the first year of funding (for the exact date please look at the current call for applications).
Exception: If the funding has been paused, please submit your application six weeks before the scholarship period ends, at the latest.

3. General Questions About Applications

3.1 What do I need to include with my application form?
(1) The scholarship application form
(2) A short description of your work project, your work plan including your time schedule, which should be a maximum of five pages long.
(3) The expert opinion of the supervisor of your research project (full/associate/assistant professor) (signed original). This should include:
   - a reliable answer to the question as to how you intend to finance your doctoral research in the case that your doctoral research period exceeds the funding period.
   - a statement to what percentage of the best students of his or her year the applicant belongs.
(4) Document "Guideline for assessment LGF" of the supervisor (does not replace the expert opinion) (signed original)
(5) The expert opinion of a second full/associate/assistant professor (signed original).
(6) Legally certified copies of your degree certificates (certificates from the preliminary and main study periods and/or Bachelor and Master certificates). Non-German degree certificates have to be submitted in an English, German or French certified translation.
(7) A letter of confirmation from the KIT department (“Fakultät”) stating that you have been accepted as a doctoral researcher
(8) CV (in table form), in particular listing information concerning your course of study up to now
(9) If applicable, a complete list of scientific publications and conference contributions (including an indication if first author or peer-reviewed)
(10) A declaration in accordance with § 5 subsections 2 and 3 of the LGFG relating to § 4 of the Statute of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) for the implementation of the Law on Graduate Funding from the German States (LGFG)

Only if you have applied for a family allowance:
(11) Written confirmation from the Residents' Registration Office ("Einwohnermeldeamt") stating that your child lives in your household

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The documents (reference letter etc.) should address the “Central Awarding Committee (LGF)”. The paper version of your application has to be submitted to KHYS (Dorit Dietel-Kronwald) without staples and the digital version has to be in the order as indicated in the checklist.

3.2 Do I have to submit my "Acceptance as a Doctoral Researcher at the Faculty" or is the written letter of acceptance of supervision from my academic supervisor sufficient? 
The written letter of acceptance of supervision from your academic supervisor is not sufficient. You must submit your "Acceptance as a Doctoral Researcher at the Faculty".

3.3 May my work plan including my time schedule exceed 5 pages? 
No. Please keep to the specified guidelines.

3.4 Is there an age limit? 
No.

3.5 Do I need to be enrolled at the KIT in order to be granted a scholarship? 
No, you do not need to be enrolled in order to apply for a scholarship. You do, however, need Acceptance as a Doctoral Researcher at a KIT Faculty. Registration with KHYS is also obligatory for the acceptance of your application.

3.6 Can I apply for a Graduate Funding from the German States scholarship despite the fact that I have already reached an advanced stage of my doctoral research project? 
The KIT considers Graduate Funding from the German States to be a start-up funding. Candidates at an advanced stage of their doctoral research project generally have less chance of success.

3.7 How likely is it that I will be granted a scholarship? 
This question cannot be answered in advance because it depends on the number and quality of applications.

3.8 Where can I have copies of my certificates legally certified? 
Certificates from the KIT can be legally certified at the Students' Office. Other certificates and documents need to be certified at the responsible public authorities (for example at the registry office).

3.9 The certificates have to be legally certified. How about other certificates of languages courses or internships? 
You can hand in other certificates, but you do not have to legally certify them.

3.10 Do I have to add an application photo to my CV? 
There are no advantages or disadvantages for you, if you hand in an application photo.

3.11 How to submit the letters of recommendation in digital form? 
In case you received sealed letters of recommendation please forward them directly to us. We will complete your digital application.
3.12 Are doctoral researchers from “Campus Alpin” (IMK-IFU) allowed to apply?
Yes, they are. But they need as any other applicant the acceptance as a doctoral researcher by the respective KIT department.

3.13 I do not have a second assessor for my dissertation yet. Which person should I name in the respective column of the “Key data” file?
You should name the person, which gave you the second expert opinion for the application.
4. Further Funding During The Scholarship

4.1 Can I work while being funded by the Graduate Funding from the German States (LGF)?
Generally, yes. Please note the Statute of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (available in German only), § 4 Employment and the Consideration of Earnings. The following conditions do apply:
- Work carried out by scholarship holders must predominantly focus on their doctoral research project.
- If and when gainful occupation is pursued besides the scholarship, Karlsruhe House of Young Scientists (KHYS) has to be informed. Taxable income as defined in the German Income Tax Act EStG of the scholarship holders in the funding period may not exceed 20,000 euros a year. For periods shorter than one calendar year the exemption limit is reduced by 1/12 per calendar month. For every child pursuant to §2 this amount is increased by 1,000 euros. Higher income precludes the scholarship; family and parental benefits are not taken into account.
- If gainful occupation at KIT is to be taken up or has already been taken up at the beginning of the funding, the activities within the scope of this occupation have to be separated into an employment relationship (subject to instructions) and the scholarship (not subject to instructions). If and when there is an existing employment relationship with KIT, or one is to be concluded, the service unit Human resources (PSE) has to be informed of the scholarship. It includes the notification in the personal file. If the employment relationship and scholarship cannot be separated, then the gainful occupation and scholarship funding are mutually exclusive and the occupation may not be exercised simultaneously with the scholarship funding.

4.2 May I receive a scholarship from another sponsoring body while receiving LGF funding?
You are not permitted to receive full scholarships from other sponsoring bodies during the funding period. For a research stay abroad the LGF funding may be suspended for a maximum of one year so that you can receive a full scholarship from a different sponsoring body. You may, however, apply for partial scholarships for a research stay abroad during the LGF funding period, for example the KHYS Networking Grant or the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Additional Scholarship GRAFOG.

4.3 How much is the family allowance and what evidence do I need to submit?
L GF § 2 Support Rates:
Scholarship holders receive an additional family allowance of 400 euros per month if they are responsible for a child under the age of 18. As evidence of this status, scholarship holders must submit written confirmation from the Residents’ Registration Office (“Einwohnermeldeamt”) stating that their child lives in their household. For scholarship holders with more than one child, the family allowance increases to a total amount of 100 euros per month. A higher family allowance may be granted in exceptional cases. This decision is made by the Central Awarding Committee. If both partners receive a scholarship in accordance with the Law on Graduate Funding from the German States (LGFG) or if the partner of a scholarship holder receives a scholarship that meets the objectives of the LGFG scholarship, the family allowance will only be granted to one partner.
5. General Questions About The Scholarship and Its Procedure

5.1 What is the procedure for granting the scholarships?
After the formal check at KHYS, the applications will be forwarded to the respective committee at the KIT departments. Here the applications will be assessed and ranked and forwarded to the central committee. Taking note of the assessments and rankings of the respective department’s committees, the central awarding committee (LGF) in mid-November each year makes the final decision. Chairman of the central committee is the Vice President for Research, Prof. Dr. Oliver Kraft.

5.2 When and how do I find out whether I have been granted a scholarship?
After the respective meeting on the granting of scholarships, applications will be processed in the following order:

- 1. Approvals
- 2. Rejections

A specific date cannot be specified because the processing time depends on other factors such as the number of applications. We will, however, try to inform you of the outcome of your application as soon as possible (by e-mail or post). Due to data privacy laws we are unable to provide you with any information about the decisions made by the Awarding Committee over the phone. Therefore, please refrain from calling us about such matters.

5.3 Do I have to write a progress report or a final report?
You don’t have to write a progress report. If you are a scholarship holder and you want to apply for a continued scholarship, you have to submit a work report including the work and time schedule of the research completed so far and a work and time schedule for the work concerning issues that still have to be solved.

5.3.1 Final report
If the dissertation is not yet completed six months after the funding period according to § 9 LGFG you have to additionally submit at KHYS (in both cases via email and mail)

- either an official confirmation of your KIT-department, that you have submitted your dissertation

or

- or a final report (1-2 pages).

Concerning the final report, the following aspects have to be considered:

- objectives and impact of the research work
- progress of work up to now
- steps and time required to complete the work
- information about published papers during the funding
- basic formal requirements (date, name, signature on the reports)
5.3.2 Do I have to submit a final report after I have finished my PhD?
After completion of your dissertation project you have to submit a copy of your PhD diploma and certificate as a verification (it does not have to be legally certified).

5.4 Who should I contact if I have any questions? Who should I contact if I want to report changes in my income situation or in the case of delay?
Please contact the Karlsruhe House of Young Scientists (KHYS) via e-mail at lgf15@khys.kit.edu.

6. Extension of The Scholarship for The Duration of The Maternity Protection Act & Interruption Of The Funding

6.1 Extension of the scholarship for the duration of the Maternity Protection Act

6.1.1 What happens in the case of pregnancy?
Based on the Maternity Protection Act, your scholarship will automatically be prolonged at least for the duration of the maternity protection period (rounded to the full month). This period begins 6 weeks prior to the expected date of birth and ends 8 weeks after your child has been born. Therefore, you will automatically receive an extension of 14 weeks. In case of multiple birth, premature birth or disability of the child you will be given more time.

6.1.2 Do I have to apply for the extension? What do I have to do?
The prolongation will come into effect as soon as we have received a copy/scan of your gynecologist’s confirmation of the expected date of birth. Please send us this confirmation as soon as possible. Apart from that, there is no further action needed from your side.

6.1.3 When do I have to apply for family allowance?
You can apply for family allowance any time after the birth of your child. The funding rate is 400 euros per month for the first child, 100 euros per month for each additional child. After your child has been born, send us a scan/copy of the birth certificate which you will get in the hospital and send us the filled in family allowance form on the website. We will initiate the payment as soon as possible. When things have quieted down, please hand in the written confirmation from the Resident’s Registration Office.

6.2 Interruption

6.2.1 When do I have apply for an interruption?
As soon as the need for an interruption arises, it must be indicated. Therefore, please let us know as soon as possible if you want to apply for an interruption.

6.2.2 Under what circumstances am I allowed to apply for an interruption? What do I have to take into consideration?
Due to pregnancy, illness, and other reasons up to one year (under certain circumstances up to two years) the university might allow an additional interruption. The supervisor has to confirm that the interruption will not undermine the scientific project.
The approval can be granted under the condition that one must keep a professional connection to the university. This condition is to be fulfilled by handing in a report after every six months during the interruption. In this case, the supervisor is supposed to issue a statement about the report. The funding will be extended for the period of the interruption, rounded up to the full month.

6.2.3 Do I still get my payment during an interruption? Do the payments change?
During the interruption, the scholarship will be paid in full until the end of the month after six weeks after the beginning of the interruption. After that, the scholarship can continue to pay 210 Euro monthly, but only upon application and for half a year maximum.

Here is an example: The interruption starts on May 1. You will receive full funding for another six weeks (June 13), but also until the end of the month (June 30). Starting from July, you might receive up to 210 Euro monthly for half a year maximum.