



After You Arrive and During Your Stay in Heidelberg

You can use this checklist to keep track of the tasks you have already completed and those, which are still outstanding. The list is not exhaustive; however, we have attempted to include the most important steps to follow after you arrive and during your stay in Heidelberg. There is no need to adhere to the order of the tasks as given in the list.

► Registration at the Welcome Centre for International Scholars

You should register at the Welcome Centre of the University of Heidelberg at the latest upon arriving in Heidelberg. You can register online at www.uni-heidelberg.de/welcomecentre. Your registration allows us to send you important information or to let you know about our numerous events and services. Please be assured that your personal information will be dealt with confidentially.

► Visiting Scholar Card

International scholars at the University who are teaching or doing research without an employment contract with the University can obtain a visiting scholar card from the Welcome Centre. This I.D. card confirms your status as a visiting scholar and thus also as a member of the University. The Welcome Centre needs only a digital passport photo (jpeg format) and a letter of confirmation from your host institute regarding your stay in Heidelberg in order to issue the card. There is more detailed information about the card available on our website at:

www.uni-heidelberg.de/einrichtungen/zuv/international/Gastwissenschaftler-Ausweis_engl.html

You will need the international scholars' identification card in order to register at the University library or to benefit from reduced prices at the University cafeterias. You can also use the I.D. card to apply for a pass for the University sports center.

► Register your place of residence

Every person living in the Federal Republic of Germany must register at the local administration office (Einwohnermeldeamt or Bürgeramt) of the city in which he or she is living, regardless of the length of his or her stay in Germany. You must register within two weeks of moving into your place of residence. For this purpose, you need to show your passport and the form "*Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung*", signed by your landlord confirming your residence. Please remind to place your name on the letterbox.

► Visa and residency permit

In general, foreigners are required to have a visa in order to enter Germany; for a longer stay, it is necessary to obtain a residency permit after arrival. A visa is usually obtained through a German embassy or consulate.

Foreigners who are required to have a visa in order to enter Germany must have any period of residency that extends beyond the validity of the visa approved by means of a residency permit. This is also true for foreigners who were permitted to enter Germany for up to three months without a visa and who intend to stay for longer than three months. The requirements and procedure for obtaining a residency permit depend on your country of origin. If you plan to stay in Germany for

longer than three months, you must apply for a residency permit at the Foreigners' Registration Office (Ausländerbehörde). EU-citizens do not need a residency permit.

► **Rental contract and security deposit**

Usually, you will sign a written rental contract before you move into an apartment. With your signature, the provisions in the contract become legally binding for you. Therefore, you should be sure to read through the entire contract carefully. In most cases, landlords in Germany require the payment of 1-2 months rent as a security deposit. This amount is placed into a savings account on your behalf and is refunded to you in full when you move out, as long as you have incurred no damages to the apartment and have no outstanding payments. A landlord can require payment of a maximum of three month's rent. Please keep in mind that you need to show the form "*Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung*" signed by your landlord that proves your place of residence. This form is required in order to register at the Town Hall.

► **Health insurance**

If you are planning a longer stay in Germany, you should make sure that you and any family members with you have adequate health insurance coverage. German health insurance providers generally cover the costs of medicine, doctor's visits and hospital stays. It is very important that your health insurance covers medical treatment in the case of acute illnesses and accidents. Adequate health insurance coverage is also required in order to obtain a residency permit in Germany.

► **Other important insurance coverage: Liability and accident insurance**

We strongly recommend that you take out private liability insurance at the latest upon your arrival in Germany. This insurance covers damages and injuries that you cause to other people or other people's property, for example through carelessness (causing an accident as a cyclist). Before coming to Germany, you should also inquire whether any liability insurance coverage that you have in your home country might also be valid in Germany.

Accident insurance is a part of the social insurance system. It covers you primarily in the case of work-related accidents and does not cover private accidents. If you are employed in Germany, you do not have to obtain work-related accident insurance yourself as this is covered completely by your employer. You should consider, however, whether you want to take out private accident insurance. Fellowships do not usually pay into the social insurance system and thus include no accident insurance coverage.

► **Bank account**

We recommend that you open a bank account at a bank, Sparkasse or Postbank for the length of your stay in Germany. In general, rent, utilities and insurance payments are paid by direct debit from your bank account and your salary or fellowship payments are automatically credited to your account.

► **University Library**

Visiting scholars can obtain a user account for the university library by showing their visiting scholar card. With the user number, a rental account can be installed at the IT library system with the personal data. In order to set up an user account and obtain a library card, you will need to show the following documents at the lending desk of the University Library:

- your visiting scholar card or your Service Card, if you are employed by the University
- your passport or personal identification card
- a copy of the registration of your place of residence from the city of Heidelberg (*Anmeldebescheinigung*)

In general, you will be allowed to borrow and remove books from the library only if you will be staying in Heidelberg for a minimum of three months.

In case you have a working contract with the University, you will obtain a Service Card, which allows the use of the library functions. Please apply for the Service Card here <https://www.urz.uni-heidelberg.de/en/service-catalogue/campus-and-administration/service-card> .

► **University Computing Centre**

Visiting scholars can use the internet and email free of charge on campus computers. In order to obtain access to the computers belonging to the University Computing Centre, visiting scholars must apply for a so-called project number. The required application form for the project number must be signed by the IT responsible of your institute. The required form can be found in following link: <https://www.urz.uni-heidelberg.de/en/service-catalogue/identity-management/project-number> .

► **Language courses**

It is useful to have at least a basic command of German in order to cope with daily tasks and activities. The University of Heidelberg offers language courses at many different levels to visiting scholars and their families. If you are interested, please ask at the Welcome Centre. There are also numerous language schools in Heidelberg and the surrounding area which provide opportunities to learn or to improve your German.

► **Children**

There is a wide range of leisure activities available for children in Heidelberg. (<https://www.heidelberg.de/hd,Lde/HD/Erleben/Angebote+fuer+Familien.html>). Furthermore, they are always warmly welcome to take part at the events organized by the Welcome Centre.

► **Transportation**

Heidelberg has a well-developed public transportation system which includes buses and trams. There is detailed information on the internet site of the VRN (the public transportation company) about tickets, prices and connections. Employees of the University of Heidelberg can apply for a job ticket, which permits the usage of the public transportation system at discounted prices (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/universitaet/beschaefigte/service/bau/jobticket/>). You can also reach all parts of Heidelberg conveniently and easily by bicycle and there are many possibilities in the city to buy used bicycles or to rent some. If you are travelling to Germany by car, you can find more information about having your own car in Germany for example on the website of *How to Germany* <https://howtogermany.com/transport/traffic/driving-in-germany> or the website of *Make-it-in Germany* <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/housing-mobility/driving-licence-car> .

► **Living in Heidelberg**

The city of Heidelberg is a very attractive place to live with regard to cultural activities, sports, music, and tourism. Our website www.uni-heidelberg.de/welcomecentre includes many links to information about sightseeing and cultural activities in Heidelberg. You will also find information and tips about living in Heidelberg, which we hope will help you to settle in as quickly and comfortably as possible. If you have questions that are not answered on our web site, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Please go to “Download Centre” on our website (<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/international-research/working-researching-in-heidelberg/downloads-for-international-scholars-welcome-centre>) to find other helpful information for your stay in Heidelberg.