

Guide for Institutes: Recruiting International Staff

If international scholars are planning on spending time at your institute, you will need to make some preparations and pay attention to a few things. This guide lists the most important aspects to consider when preparing for an international research stay at Leipzig University.

The recruitment form for [academic staff](#) and all other documents should be sent, as early as possible, to the responsible HR administrators at Leipzig University. Please check the [intranet](#) to find out who is responsible for your faculty. Please allow **at least six weeks** for recruitment applications to be processed. It is necessary to check the recruitment documents and any third-party funding proposals. Only then can a [letter of intent](#) be issued; this is sent abroad to your future colleague, and is often necessary for him or her to be able to apply for a visa ([see list of countries requiring a visa](#)) at a foreign embassy.

Please also note that, depending on foreign embassy procedures, some applicants will be required to wait **up to three months** in their home country for their visa.

- Here is an overview of the documents that must be submitted in order to prepare the employment contract:
- Recruitment sheet for academic staff, completed in full and signed by the relevant superiors
- CV in tabular form (each new international staff member)
- Proof of university degree (**original** certificates)
- In order to conclude a contract, a valid residence permit **entitling the holder to take up gainful employment** will also be required. (**exceptions: EU/EEA nationals; short-term contracts of up to three months, provided [no visa is required on entry](#) ; [and foreign nationals requiring a Schengen visa \(Type C\)](#), where no extension of the contract is planned**).

As soon as a letter of intent has been issued by the Department of Human Resources, either a Type D visa (valid for a maximum of 12 months) should be applied for in the home country or, after arriving and registering in Leipzig, the person should make an appointment via the [Welcome Centre](#) to apply for a residence permit. Please click [here](#) for a list of the documents needed when applying for a residence permit in Leipzig

Types of residence permit

You can find an overview of the different types of residence permit for international scholars and staff [here](#).

Please note that there are differences between the various visas (residence permits), which affect: the social benefits that researchers and other staff receive; whether their families (with or without knowledge of German) can accompany them to Leipzig; and whether and to what extent their period of residence can count towards a [permanent settlement permit](#) in Germany. When it comes to their residence status, new members of staff who have not yet earned a doctorate are only considered “doctoral candidates” (Promovierende) and not “research assistants” (wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiter) if the doctorate is the main purpose of their stay and the employment contract is primarily for training and further education purposes, i.e. for the purpose of the doctorate, and if it is the equivalent of less than 0.5 FTE. The new staff members are then granted a residence status as doctoral candidates in accordance with Section 16 b of the Residence Act (“study”), which, in contrast to the residence title under Section 18 d of the Residence Act (“Research”), may entail a number of disadvantages. If the incoming researchers are employed as staff members on a research project with at least 0.5 FTE, carry out independent research work, and will be doing a doctorate in parallel (i.e. as long as doing a doctorate in parallel, with or without enrolment at the University, is not a decisive factor for employing the person on the research project), then the parallel doctoral project should not be prioritised when applying for a visa, and instead a visa for carrying out a research project (“Section 18 d” residence permit) should be applied for. This is particularly important for doctoral

candidates who are not, or will not, be enrolled at Leipzig University, i.e. who do not have student status (and the associated benefits) and who are not enrolled on a structured doctoral programme (such as the Research Academy Leipzig).

In order to obtain the visa (residence permit) under Section 18 d (“Research”), the researcher or staff member must earn enough to fully cover his or her cost of living, including health insurance, and rule out any claim to social benefits (the Foreigners’ Authority will examine each case to determine whether the applicant can claim social benefits), and conclude a [↗hosting agreement](#) with the host institute. The director of the host institute should sign this hosting agreement, which describes the research project. Unlike the [↗agreement on granting visiting scholar status](#) (for scholarship holders, visiting scholars without an employment contract), which can only be signed by the Head of Administration and Finance, it is not an official document of Leipzig University, but is required to clarify the person’s resident status at the Foreigners’ Authority.

Queries about the purpose of employment

Once an application for a residence permit has been submitted, the Foreigners’ Authority will, in case of doubt, contact the Department of Human Resources, or the host institute directly (front office, professor), in order to [↗query the purpose of the employment](#). If you receive such a letter from the Foreigners’ Authority, it is therefore vital that you check the correct box to clarify the future residence status of your new staff member, as this is decisive for whether the person will be granted a residence permit under Section 16 b of the Residence Act (“study”) or under Section 18 d (“Research”). If the employment is indeed primarily based on academic education and training, then [↗the box at the top](#) should be checked. A residence permit should then be issued under Section 16 b. If, however, you intend to employ the person primarily for research purposes – and the employment does not depend on the person pursuing a doctorate in parallel or completing further training – then the residence title can be issued under Section 18 d of the Residence Act ([↗check the lower box](#)). Please inform the responsible HR administrator early on of the purpose of the employment, so that the document can be completed correctly and the correct residence permit can be issued for the new staff member. Once the employment purpose has been notified to the Foreigners’ Authority, it can usually no longer be changed, which means that the residence permit cannot be changed retrospectively.

For all other recruitment documents to be completed before signing the contract, please refer to our guidelines for hiring foreign staff in the public service, which are available in both [↗German](#) or [↗English](#), and also send these guidelines to your new foreign members of staff as early as possible. This will help them to make sure they bring all the necessary documents and originals to Leipzig and have a good understanding of the meaning and background of all the documents that need to be completed. We also recommend that you pass on our [↗“Welcome to Leipzig A-Z” guideline](#), as well as the web addresses of our Leipzig University [↗Welcome Centre](#) and the [↗“Welcome to Leipzig”](#) project to your new international colleagues.

Legal notice and disclaimer

This flyer containing information about employment in the public sector has been compiled as part of the joint project of Leipzig University [↗“Willkommen in Leipzig/Welcome to Leipzig”](#)

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