

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions about applications to KAAD from African students

1. Who can apply?

1.1.

- only students who already have a first degree
- only students who want to go for postgraduate studies (either for a Master-course or for a PhD)
- in rare cases also students who already have a PhD and who would like to come to a German university for a short research period.

1.2.

KAAD is not giving funds for:

- development projects
- schools, educational institutions
- projects and institutions in general

1.3.

Furthermore, KAAD's mission is to give scholarships mainly to lay members of the Catholic Church. This means, that

- There is a preference for Catholic applicants. Among the scholars there is however also a limited number of: Protestant Christians, Orthodox Christians (especially from Ethiopia), Muslims.
- Catholic Priests and Religious People are eligible only in very rare cases. There are other scholarship programmes catering especially for them. In Germany, we recommend to take up contact with MISSIO in Aachen.

2. Where can KAAD-scholars study?

2.1.

- at universities in Germany
- not: at universities in other European countries, USA, Australia, etc.

2.2.

For the KAAD Africa-department, there is an exception from this rule in that scholarships can be given for *Master-studies* in three African cities: These are Kumasi/Ghana, Nairobi/Kenya, Harare/Zimbabwe.

3. What does the so-called in-country programme comprise?

Since the in-country scholarships are an exception, we can not go beyond these very limited borders:

- only certain universities in Kumasi (KNUST), Nairobi (UoN, KU, JKUAT, CUEA), Harare (UoZ).
- only Master-studies, no PhDs

4. Is there an age limit?

The general rule is that applicants for Master-scholarships should be of the maximum age of 30, while applicants for PhD-scholarships should not be older than 35.

5. For which subjects can the scholarships be given?

There is no specific subject-preference. However, the selection board has often given preference to courses and subjects that they felt to be of significance for the home country of the applicant. This holds true especially for subjects of PhD-theses. There is therefore a certain leaning towards “development oriented” studies – this does however not mean that other fields (cultural, philosophic, linguistic, etc.) can not be of significance for a country and are ruled out.

6. From where can one apply?

There are two scholarship programmes that KAAD is running

5.1. The “S1”-programme

Here the scholars apply from their home countries for studies in Germany.

Also the “In-country programme” (see 2.2. and 3.) falls under S1.

Applicants who are awarded scholarships for Germany under S1 are helped by KAAD with their Visa-modalities, paid for the flights to Germany and back, provided with language training in Germany prior to their studies, etc.

In order to use the limited funds in a structured approach, KAAD has laid emphasis on specific focus countries in Africa, which have a certain preference in the application process.

These are: Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya (with Uganda and Tanzania) and Zimbabwe.

In these countries, KAAD has so-called “Partner Committees”, who coordinate activities, link with the Alumni-associations and do pre-selection interviews with the short-listed candidates.

5.2. The “S2”-programme

Here the scholars are already in Germany. They have come on their own and have started to study at a Germany University through different means. Also here, Applications can be done for Master and PhD-studies (in exceptional cases also for the “old” German degrees “Magister” and “Diplom”).

The important difference here is that the application is not channelled through the KAAD-offices in Bonn and/or the Partner Committees in Africa.

The only authorized institutions to propose S2-candidates to KAAD are the Catholic Chaplaincies at German Universities (mostly called “Katholische Hochschulgemeinde” – KHG). They have the forms, they decide who to suggest to KAAD as an applicant.

7. What does KAAD expect from its scholars?

- a) To be part of the activities of the Catholic chaplaincy at the place of their studies
- b) To participate in the educational programme of KAAD (seminars, annual meeting)
- c) To return to their home-country (or to another developing country) after finishing their studies in Germany and so to make their knowledge fruitful for their home societies.

KAAD furthermore hopes that its Ex-scholars

- d) join the KAAD-alumni-groups that exist in different countries and therefore continuously join forces with their scholarship organisation and with their fellow alumni. In these associations of scholars and alumni, the KAAD 'family' lives on.

8. Who is eligible?

8.1.

Applicants need to show significant social and religious commitment. This can be activities in the church (at the university chaplaincies, in youth work, in parishes, in social groups, Small Christian Communities, spiritual associations, etc.) and/or in civil society (voluntary work in awareness raising, advocacy, social action, community health, women groups, etc.).

A clear preference is given to Catholic (or Ethiopian orthodox) applicants. The ideal candidate should be creative, with a distinguished personal integrity and leadership qualities.

8.2.

Applicants need to show academic excellence: A university degree (Bachelor, Master) with very good results.

Very good results means for instance:

- * in countries where no GPA, CGPA or CWA is given, the average of grades must be B or above (more As than Cs),
- * CWA must be close to 70 (where 60 is 2nd class lower and 70 is 1st class)
- * where the maximum CGPA is 4.0, applicants must have at least 3.2

9. Can one apply for a master scholarship with the hope of a subsequent PhD-scholarship?

This is not possible when the Master-Course is in Germany. Applications for Master-programs in Germany will be considered for candidates whose professional experience and objectives reveal that a Masters-degree, and not a Ph.D., is the final goal of their higher education ('terminal Master'). If someone changes his/her mind after the Master-program and wishes to apply for a Ph.D.-scholarship, he/she must obtain an additional three years of relevant work experience in Africa first.

For in-country scholars who have done their Master-studies in Ghana, Zimbabwe or Kenya, there is no problem with applying for a PhD-scholarship in Germany.

10. Is it possible for married scholars to bring their spouses/families along for their studies in Germany?

Unfortunately, KAAD does not have the funds to fend for family members living in Germany. This results in significant hardships for families and therefore married applicants need to think well before applying and discuss this with their spouse.

For PhD-scholars, the situation can be eased by choosing a research topic for which research needs to be done in the home country. Here the scholars spend several months at home during their three years of study. Also a visit of the family members during the last three months of PhD-studies in Germany is possible.

11. Do KAAD-scholars need to know the German language?

All beneficiaries of KAAD-scholarships (except for in-country-scholars) need to know German. This is especially important for scholars whose study programme includes German (some Master programmes are bilingual German/English; some PhD-study programmes include oral exams in German). But even for scholars whose studies are entirely in English, KAAD emphasizes knowledge of the German language.

The reason is that scholars need to be able to be in dialogue with the German society, German students, in short: with the country they live in during their studies. Also for the participation in the programmes of the university-chaplaincies and in the KAAD educational programme, knowledge of German is indispensable.

KAAD strongly recommends to applicants to use every opportunity to learn German in their home countries (language schools, Goethe Institutes, ...). On top of that, several months of intensive language training in Germany is obligatory for KAAD-scholars. This is done prior to the university studies and takes place in Bonn, where also the KAAD headquarters are located. As a rule, Master-scholars have four months, PhD-scholars have six months of training at a certain language school in Bonn.

12. How does one apply to KAAD?

The first request is placed through filling a questionnaire and sending it to the KAAD offices per Email ([af3\[at\]kaad.de](mailto:af3@kaad.de)). This questionnaire can be downloaded from the KAAD home page. In the course of the application process, more documents need to be provided by the applicant and the KAAD-Partner-Committees are involved.

If the pre-selection process has been positive for the applicant, the application is passed on to an independent selection board, which sits twice per year (in March and in September).

13. How to fill the questionnaire?

The questions are self-explanatory. When asked about academic grades, applicants need to be specific (for example: "I have a B.Sc. with 2nd class upper comprising 10 A, 15 B, 5 C, 1 D, and an M.Sc. with 1 A, 5 B, and 1 C" or: "I have an MA with a CWA of 67 points"). N.B.: In case a GPA or CGPA is given, it needs to be indicated if the highest is 4.0 or 5.0 (for example: "I have a BA with GGPA of 4.1/5.0").

Also the question about social and religious activities needs to be answered by providing specific information (type of activity, applicant's role/position in the group/initiative, duration of activity).

14. What is the time-frame for applications?

Applications to be tabled in the March-session of the selection board need to be complete by end of November the previous year. Applications for the September selection need to be complete by end of June.

Many times, applicants get admission letters (especially for Master-courses) only when these deadlines have passed. In these cases, the university has to be asked to defer the admission to the next academic year.

Applications can be made already before admission letters are received. However at the end of the application process, the applicant needs to show either an admission letter or a confirmation by the university that they are eligible for the course and that the application has been received and being processed.

15. Does KAAD help the applicants in finding Master-courses or PhD-supervisors?

To find the right course or to find a supervisor is the work of the applicant.

KAAD is dealing with too many applications to be able to do this work.

Concerning international Master-courses at German universities, there is a database on the homepage of the German Academic Exchange Service (www.daad.de).