



German American Exchange (GAE) **INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2027**

MAY 10 – AUGUST 7, 2027

Student Information Package

as of August 1st, 2026



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German-American Exchange Inc. (GAE U.S.), a non-profit organization registered in the state of Georgia, offers students of U.S. universities the opportunity to become familiar with German culture through a three-month (mid-May through mid-August) internship with host companies.

Daily business interactions with leading international firms enable students to gain insights into the German economy, improve their German language skills and engage with cross-cultural challenges. GAE aims to cultivate a positive view of Germany among future leaders of the United States. Through new experiences and relationships, we hope to provide interns with the foundation to serve as the next generation of ambassadors of the German-American friendship.

The program is sponsored by Rückel & Collegen (Munich, Germany) and Baker Donelson (Atlanta, U.S.) as well as PIA Pontis Institutional Advisors GmbH. Since its founding, the goal has always been to provide educational internships to students from U.S. universities.



THE INTERNSHIP

The U.S.-German Internship Program provides students with an unrivaled opportunity to experience the professional environment of some of the world's leading companies – all before finishing their undergraduate degree. The internship experience poses certain challenges to students. We believe that it is exactly these challenges that help craft a meaningful experience for students.

Students will live independently during the summer. The internship will require students to maintain a level of professionalism and responsibility as they adapt to the German business environment. Students are not expected to speak fluent German, or be entirely familiar with their sector they are entering. However, they must exhibit a willingness to learn, work as part of a team, and engage with their mentor and colleagues.

WHY?

Our exclusive program offers students the chance to work at a German host company, which includes top-tier, globally-renowned businesses. The student will have the chance to be placed in an internship that would, under normal circumstances, be difficult to attain.

An internship is a tremendous opportunity to make valuable networking contacts early on. It will be a stepping stone for the student's professional career.

Completing the internship program will provide students with an incredible professional opportunity. They will immerse themselves in an entirely new culture, work

environment, and language.

The U.S.-German Internship Program offers students a professional advantage which could be a game-changer in an increasingly competitive job market. Gaining valuable work experience in an international context highlights an individual's capacity for personal growth and ingenuity. Students will develop numerous skills during their internships, many of which will translate well into future professional positions. Most importantly, students will have the chance to grow and learn more about themselves and their career goals.

Testimonials of former interns about their internships can be found on the website.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The first step for you is to complete an application. You will need to hand in the following documents:

- Application Form
- Statement of Purpose
- Résumé (Lebenslauf)
- Statement of German Proficiency
- Two letters of recommendation
- Transcript from Registrar
- Form I-20 / F-1 visa copy (international students only)
- Passport copy
- Declaration of Certificate of Enrollment (Bundesagentur f. Arbeit)
- Initial application fee of USD 50

1. Application Form

Kindly fill out all fields on the application form. Answers must be typed out and checked for any errors prior to submission.

2. Statement of Purpose (Letter of Intent)

Ideally, your letter should explain how your academic training, interests and career goals make you a good candidate. It should be one full page typed in English (1.5 spacing, 12 pt. font). The essay should include your contact information in the header of the document and should match the information on your résumé (Lebenslauf).

3. Current Résumé (Lebenslauf)

Your résumé should include your declared major and minor, as well as previous internships or work experience. You may also include relevant coursework, previous study abroad experience, and hobbies.

4. Statement of German Proficiency

The document will show your current level of understanding of the German language and will help prospective internship hosts in evaluating your overall skills.

5. Two Letters of Recommendation

These letters should be written by someone, who knows you well and can showcase your skills and abilities. Letters should reference the nature of your relationship, length of time and capacity they have worked with you, relevant coursework, accomplishments, areas of knowledge, work ethic, personality, etc. Letters should be addressed "To Whom It May Concern".

6. University Transcripts

Please provide a copy/PDF of your most recent transcripts. No, we do not require the paid version from Student Clearinghouse. Just download the most recent version from your student portal.

7. Form I-20 / F-1 visa

International students will need to submit a colored scan of their Form I-20 and F-1 visa.

8. Copy of Passport

A colored scan showing the first two pages of your passport containing your passport number, name, nationality and date and city of birth. Passport must be valid until *at least* six months after the program ends. If you happen to have dual citizenship (Germany/USA) please also include a copy of your German passport!

9. Certificate of Enrollment – Erklärung zur Immatrikulationsbescheinigung von der Bundesagentur für Arbeit

Please exclusively use [the form on our transfer drive](#). Complete all fields and under **number 18**, mark the duration of your *mandatory* internship as **3 months**. The original document must be dated, signed and stamped by the registrar's office.

10. Initial Application Fee

Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. The initial fee is payable through **PayPal**:

Please send the amount for the initial fee to info@german-american-exchange.com

Please give yourself enough time to assemble all necessary materials for the application and to write a solid Statement of Purpose.

GAE can only process complete applications, with all forms submitted within the program's communicated deadline for applications.

The deadline for your application is September 30, 2024.



SELECTION PROCESS

1. The Matchmaking Process

GAE will inform you once a company has shown interest in your application via email. Always check the email addresses you provided in your application. After you have been notified by GAE, a company representative will contact you to arrange an interview via Zoom or MSTeams. We encourage all interns to initiate a dialogue and discuss matters such as housing, mentoring and the internship contract.

The contract is negotiated between the intern and the respective company. GAE has no involvement when it comes to contract conditions. Therefore, interns should read their respective contracts carefully before signing in order to have the company adjust them if the need arises. Once the contract is set up and signed by the intern, matters such as salary, vacation, etc. cannot be negotiated. Please inform the GAE representatives in Munich, Germany via email about any developments regarding an internship offer.

2. Successful Placement

Once an internship position has been offered to you and you agree to accept, please complete the following document:

GAE Summer Internship Certification Form (evidence of a mandatory internship) both in English & German – The certificate form must show the official letterhead of the respective university/college and then be signed and stamped by a university/college representative or professor. **Please submit a scanned copy of the certificate by email to info@german-american-exchange.com.**

3. Acquiring a Work Permit

In case you are a U.S. citizen or a citizen of a country who can travel without a visa to Germany, you will need a work permit for a 90-day internship. Otherwise, you will also need to apply for a visa. **Please note that GAE cannot process your visa application.**

If you're applying for a visa, you will need to have a work permit. GAE will submit your work permit application to the German Federal Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit). For this we will need your Certificate of Enrollment and a scan of your passport, which you submitted with your application, along with documents from your host company. Please note that many companies will not fill out the required forms until they have received the signed contract. Therefore, the signed contract needs to be returned in a timely manner.

4. Additional Processing Fee

With your acceptance of an internship, an additional processing fee of USD 150 is due. This fee should be made payable through **PayPal**:

Please send the amount for the additional fee to info@german-american-exchange.com

Limitation of Liability

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MAINTAINING YOUR PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is key throughout your stay here in Germany. We want you to enjoy your time, see new places, experience new things and above all have a wonderful summer. However, your highest priority of the summer is learning about a future potential career and working outside the US.

Some tips for your work experience in Germany:

- Learn the proper dress code of your company.
- Be punctual and prepared for what will often be eight or nine-hour work days.
- Follow through with plans and commitments to your bosses and co-workers. If you cannot commit to an event or meeting, be straightforward.
- Communication is the biggest key to your success. Communicate when you have a problem with a task. Communicate your plans and commitments. Listen to your co-workers. Be respectful. Ask questions. Give your co-workers and the people around you the benefit of the doubt; this is important for both communication and respect.
- Accept feedback and constructive criticism from the people around you. Never forget you are here to learn new ways of thinking, so you cannot always count on previously conceived ideas to guide you. Learning new ideas is one of the most important guiding principles of this internship.

- All college students and interns face the challenge of learning to balance work and personal life. While you're at your place of work:

- keep personal Internet usage to a minimum (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
- Cell phones and personal calls should also be kept to a minimum, unless in case of emergency.

If you follow and respect the suggestions presented, your summer in Germany will truly be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. You will learn about working in foreign situations, which will often prove to be very different than expected. You will learn and develop a standard for professionalism which will guide you later in your life. And most of all, you will learn about yourself.

This internship program and your summer spent here in Germany will give you the chance to open doors you never thought existed. Your efforts will take you very far in life because you will have developed an international perspective. You will be an ambassador to your home country to your university and a worldly citizen all at the same time.



DURING YOUR INTERNSHIP

If your stay in Germany does not exceed 90 days, you are not required to register with the German authorities (Einwohnermeldeamt and Ausländerbehörde). However, if the duration of your stay exceeds 90 days due to an earlier arrival or later departure, you must register with the German authorities (Einwohnermeldeamt and Ausländerbehörde) within the first days of your stay in Germany. **Your visa-free travel to Germany is limited to a stay of 90 days.**

Set up a German bank account through a local or online bank and provide your internship host company with the bank details.

During your internship there will be two mandatory events: the Berlin Get-Together and the Munich Meet-Up. Please see “Accompanying Activities” on page 9 for more information.

Abide by the rules and regulations of your host institution in Germany, such as working hours, work safety regulations, and rules of confidentiality.

Contact the GAE representatives immediately when any major changes regarding your internship occur or in case you fall ill for an extended period of time. Failing to do so will result in a report to your university representatives.

Our U.S.-German Internship Program Facebook / LinkedIn group will help all interns to get to know each other, keep in touch and initiate a helpful exchange.

THE END OF YOUR INTERNSHIP

Students must close their German bank accounts before leaving the country.

Request a written internship evaluation (Praktikumszeugnis) with feedback regarding the projects you were involved in. The document is vital as it will help future employers see how you have been evaluated by others and that you gained valuable international experience in today's business landscape. Ideally, schedule a feedback meeting with your supervisor before you leave your internship.

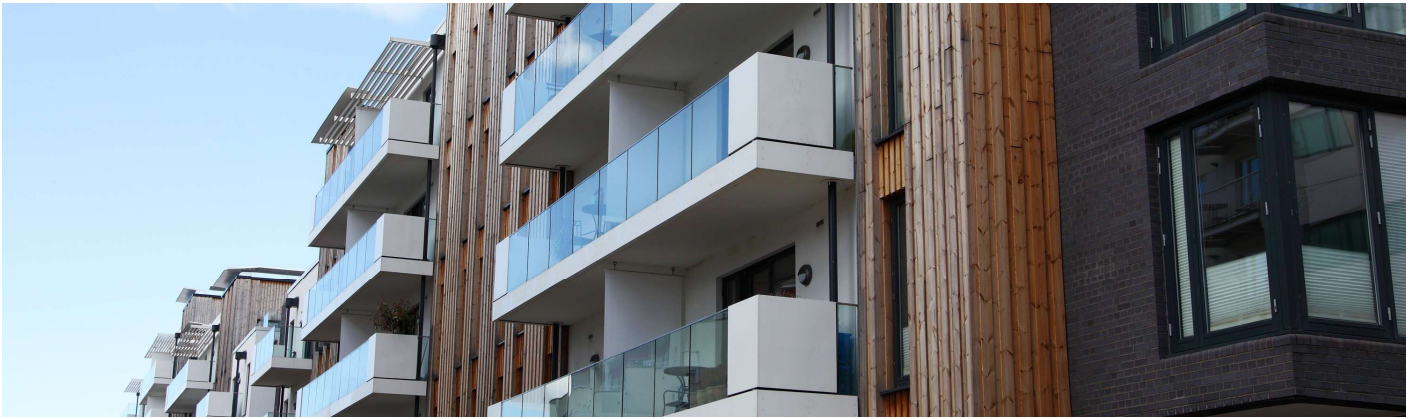
Submit a two to three-page report about your time in Germany within eight weeks after the end of your internship. You can write anything from personal observations to highlights from your everyday worklife. Photos are welcome as well! The most elaborate and fun reports will be featured on the program's official website.

COMPENSATION

Internship program participants will earn a minimum of 992.00 Euro (gross salary) per month from their company; however, compensation packages vary from firm to firm.

Students should also expect deductions (Abzüge) from their gross salary. All deductions are in accordance with German tax law, and encompass social security payments and other fees. The value varies depending upon a student's total income but will not significantly affect the final sum received.

Students should contact their mentor and firm if they have questions or concerns regarding any deductions. GAE Germany is unable to assist with these concerns.



HOUSING

Finding housing can be stressful, and students are encouraged to start as soon as possible. Some employers provide students with a housing option, but most should plan to locate housing and cover the cost on their own.

Websites such as wg-gesucht.de or studenten-wg.de will serve as a good starting point for the housing search. Students in previous years have had a variety of housing options. Many students choose to coordinate a home-stay with an employee from their firm, or a member of the local community; other students have pursued individual apartments, or a Wohngemeinschaft (WG- an apartment with other roommates).

Furthermore, Student Services Organizations (Studentenwerk) of most major cities offer college student dorms as a holiday rental. Students should start the housing search as soon as they have committed to their internship.

Checking postings regularly and remaining in regular contact with potential landlords is key. Our Facebook platform will be a great starting point to connect with interns from previous summers, as they may serve as a good reference should students want any personal advice or tips.

The housing search may seem difficult, but interns in previous years have always found housing by the start of their internships.

Beware of Scammers

Unfortunately, there are active scammers on websites such as www.wg-gesucht.de, www.easywg.de, www.studenten-wg.de and others.

Please take the following precautions to avoid being scammed:

- 1) Never send cash or money by Western Union, Moneygram, TNT, Skrill Ltd., Moneybookers or similar.
- 2) If you should receive a check for a higher amount than necessary, do not under any circumstances send the extra amount back via check. These checks are not covered 99.9 percent of the time! (It may be that the sum on your account will appear in the short-term but will then be rejected by your bank).
- 3) Be cautious if you see photos that are "perfect". Often these either show very attractive women or a great room, reminiscent of a hotel room.
- 4) Also, be mindful when you see low rents of luxury apartments in residential areas known to be popular and expensive. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

Under no circumstance should you send money in advance, neither cash, checks, nor bank account information!

If you have questions regarding your search for housing, you may also contact your mentor at your host company, or us at GAE Germany.



MEDICAL INSURANCE

All GAE interns must have health insurance *valid abroad* during their time in Germany. Students may be able to use the same coverage from the United States; however, students should check with their insurance provider to ensure that their current plan is valid for a three-month period abroad.

Should students not have valid insurance, the U.S. internship office of GAE Inc. can assist students in acquiring insurance through Global Secutive Coverage. Multiple insurance plans are available for the summer and cost approximately USD 125 - 150 (depending upon your coverage). For more details, please contact Laura Pacifico with GAE, e.V.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

All students should have liability insurance for the duration of their stay in Germany. If students have coverage in the USA, they should contact their provider to make sure their coverage is also valid for a 3-month stay in Germany. Global Secutive Coverage also offers liability insurance plans, if students do not have valid insurance. The insurance plan for the summer costs approximately USD 30-40 (depending on the coverage). For more details, please contact Laura Pacifico with GAE e.V.

Limitation of Liability

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GETTING TO GERMANY – AND BACK

Students are responsible for organizing their flights and any additional transportation costs to Germany and back.

Students should plan to budget approximately USD 1,000 – 1,400 for roundtrip air travel to Germany. Fares will vary based upon the flight path, time the flight was booked, airline provider, etc.

PARTICIPATION FEES

Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. Once a student has been selected by a host company, the student also must pay an additional processing fee of USD 150. All fees and additional charges are payable by PayPal. The respective email address is info@german-american-exchange.com

REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible for the internship program, students must:

- have intermediate knowledge of the German language;
- have completed at least four semesters of university coursework within one field;
- be in a degree-seeking program with a graduation date after the completion of their internship program;
- be willing to commit to a full three-month internship in Germany

Note: Master's degree students can apply as well, as long as their graduation date is after the completion of their internship program.

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ACCOMPANYING ACTIVITIES

Pre-Departure Orientation

GAE offers a comprehensive, virtual pre-departure orientation.

Berlin Get-Together and Munich Get-Together (June/July)

The Berlin Get-Together is a two-day event which takes place halfway through the internship. It is a networking opportunity for the interns. You get to meet representatives from major German institutions in Germany's capital, Berlin. Companies are asked to reimburse transportation costs to Berlin. All interns should proactively approach their company mentor regarding reimbursement.

The Munich Get-Together comprises two days in Munich. Companies are asked to provide reimbursement for the transportation.

For both events, more detailed information will be provided in April 2027.

Please note that Berlin Get-Together and Munich Weekend are mandatory events for all interns.



BUDGETING FOR YOUR STAY IN GERMANY

Students should take into consideration the costs of pursuing an internship abroad. Internship placements may affect the cost of living, i.e., larger, metropolitan cities will be more expensive than smaller, rural communities.

Housing Unless students have housing provided by their firm, all should consider the cost of rent and utilities/security deposit (if applicable). It is also important to keep in mind whether or not these costs must be paid in advance. Students should also carefully evaluate the cost of different forms of housing.

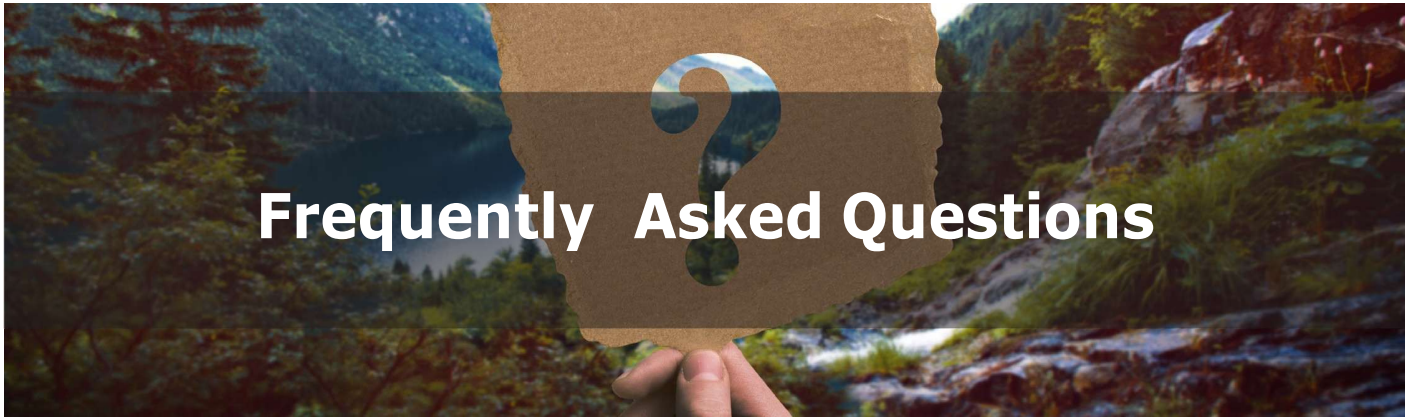
Food Try and think ahead about your dietary needs and what you may eat during the week. Estimating grocery costs will provide a clearer sense of your monthly budget.

Transportation Some companies may cover the cost of local public transportation in the form of a monthly ticket (Monatskarte); however, this is not guaranteed for all students. Accordingly, students should consider the cost and time commuting between one's place of residence and place of work, on regional trains, subways, trams, and/or buses.

Internet Internet may or may not be included in your utilities. If it is not, look into the cost of finding an external provider, and where these services are available.

Phone All major cell providers in Germany offer pre-paid options for both basic and smart phones. Consider looking online at Vodafone, O2, BASE or BLAU for examples of current rates. Alternatively, students may look at local supermarkets for other prepaid or monthly plans (e.g. Aldi). If you are interested in using your American phone abroad, make sure it works within Europe. Keep in mind that when someone is trying to contact you with a German phone number, they will have to incur an international calling rate and vice versa.

Personal expenses After calculating "must-haves", students should begin to consider other monthly expenses. Do you have plans to travel? Sight-seeing in your new town? Consider all of your options so that you can make the most of your time in Germany.



Frequently Asked Questions

Are the dates of the program fixed? Yes, the program dates are set each year, and interns are expected to complete the three-month internship in its entirety. If you are aware of any scheduling conflicts regarding your arrival in/departure from Germany, please notify GAE Germany as soon as possible.

Are there mandatory events that students must attend? Yes, there are at least two mandatory events for interns: the Berlin Get-Together, the Munich Get-Together and, and possibly a third event.

Will I have a say in my placement? Students have the option to state on their applications in what general field they would prefer to work. However, we cannot ensure that all students will (a) receive a placement, and (b) receive a placement exactly where they wish.

Partnering companies will review candidates' profiles - including résumé, statement of purpose and application - and then invite candidates for interviews on a case-by-case basis. Students may decline an offer should they choose; however, it is not guaranteed that another placement will be available.

Will GAE cover my transportation costs? Students are responsible to organize their flights as well as cover the transportation cost to Germany and back. Students should plan to budget approximately USD 1,000 – 1,400 for round trip air travel to Germany. Fares will vary based upon the flight path, time the flight was booked, airline provider, etc.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

Will my mentor help with my housing process? Certain companies may provide interns with housing, or assist in finding housing. However, most interns should plan on locating housing on their own and fully covering their rent. Mentors may be able to provide suggestions regarding where best to find housing in the area. However, housing is ultimately the interns' responsibility.

We recommend that interns remain in contact with their mentor during the housing search. The process can be difficult, and often stressful; however, all interns have found housing in previous years. Should you encounter any significant problems, speak with GAE Germany and they will be able to assist you further.

Will I be expected to work full-time? Yes, the internship is considered a full-time position. Daily and/or weekly schedules will be organized between you and your mentor, but you should plan on committing to a full-time (i.e., 40-hour week) schedule.

Will I work with other interns? Some companies have multiple interns from the U.S – German Internship Program, but it is not universal. In many cases, you will have the opportunity to work alongside other interns at your respective company who aren't affiliated with the internship program. This can be a great opportunity to get to know individuals in your community, as well as learn from other students.

Do I receive any vacation time? According to German employment laws, companies are not required to grant interns vacation days for short-term internships. Therefore, GAE cannot guarantee that all interns will receive vacation time. However, some companies grant vacation time to interns according to their company policy. If vacation is granted the amount typically ranges between three to four days of paid vacation for the three-month period.

Are there any fees involved with the program? Every student is required to pay an initial application fee of USD 50. Once a student has been selected by a host company, the student also must pay an additional processing fee of USD 150. For more details, please get in touch with your university contact for the program.

Do I get a refund if I am not selected by a host company? No. There is no placement guarantee, therefore you will not be able to claim a refund.

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“Our U.S.-German internship WhatsApp group will help the interns to get to know each other, keep in touch and initiate a helpful exchange.”

Do I need a visa? Due to the Visa Waiver Program and Schengen Agreement (USA – Germany), citizens of the United States are permitted to stay in countries of the European Union for up to 90 days without a visa. The internship program runs formally within this 90-day period. However, should you choose to arrive early and/or stay longer than the official dates of the internship program, you will need to evaluate your options for a visa.

For non-U.S. citizens studying in the United States, please consult the website of the German Federal Foreign Office (www.auswaertigesamt.de) to determine your visa eligibility for your stay in Germany.

Please note that GAE cannot assist with the visa acquisition process. Students who require a visa for a longer stay in Germany should remain in contact with the appropriate government offices in Germany. GAE Germany does not have the ability to process visa requests.

ETIAS – Starting in 2024, there will be new travel regulations applicable to non-Europeans called the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS). ETIAS will require all visitors who currently travel to Europe visa-free, such as citizens from the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, to apply for travel authorization and receive approval prior to their departure. It only requires a quick online application, with approval delivered via email. To receive authorization, visitors must fill out an online form providing details about their basic biographical information, travel plans and travel history, as well

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as other security questions. Here is [a list of countries](#) which require ETIAS travel authorization.

Do I need a work permit? Yes. Even if you are a U.S. citizen or in general a citizen of a country who can travel without a visa to Germany, you will need a work permit for an internship up to 90 days. Otherwise, you will not only need a work permit, but also need to apply for a visa.

To obtain the visa, you will need a work permit. After you sign your employment contract, GAE will submit your work permit application to the German Federal Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit). GAE will send you the work permit once it has been issued.

Will I receive an employment contract? Interns should make sure to address this topic with their employers prior to, or at the start of, their internships. GAE Germany is not responsible for individual contracts between students and employers.

Should you have questions regarding this before starting your internship, please contact your company mentor directly.

What do I need to do once I get to Germany? We recommend that all interns open a German bank account in order to be paid electronically by their employer(s). Opening an account is generally simple and provides students with the flexibility of having a German bank card. Students must remember to cancel their bank account before leaving Germany.

As long as your stay in Germany does not exceed 90 days, you are not obliged to register in Germany.



CODE OF CONDUCT – HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL AS AN INTERN

For many of you, participating in this internship program will be your first opportunity to go abroad. It may also be your first opportunity working for an international company in a professional work environment. You may feel unsure or unprepared as to how you should approach this internship program, its etiquette and what is expected of you as an intern. Here are some tips and information on how to make your stay in Germany as successful as possible.

- Your university's code of conduct will remain valid throughout your stay in Germany. This means you are to live up to the standards set by your home university. This includes following the university code of conduct and living up to its mission statement.
- Always maintain the utmost level of professionalism throughout your time here. This includes abiding by any confidentiality agreements at work at all times. Properly scheduling your vacation days (in case your company grants you any) and notifying your employer promptly when absence from work is required (i.e., sick days, vacation and personal requirements).
- Become acquainted with the daily operations of your job. This includes familiarization with work-related events, organized gatherings and work standards and procedures, how to work the coffee machine, etc..
- Laws regarding alcohol are much different in Germany. For many, this will be your first experience in an environment with more relaxed customs with regards to alcohol. While you are in Germany, make sure you are making responsible decisions and maintaining a high level of professionalism.
- The use of drugs is absolutely forbidden. Drug use in any form will not be condoned nor permitted. You will immediately be reported to your company and university for disciplinary action, and you may face the consequences of local authorities.
- Above all else, be aware of the fact that you are not only a visitor in a foreign nation, but an ambassador to your own country. You are also an ambassador to your company and university. Throughout your stay in Germany, your conduct should remain professional and respectful of local customs and the organizations which you are representing.

Any action you take that negatively affects you, other interns or your employer will not be condoned. Your actions here are definitive of your university and your country. We want you to create a positive, lasting impact that will give companies the desire to host future interns.

I agree to the above stated U.S. German Internship Program Code of Conduct and will make every effort to abide by it.

Full Name (type or print clearly) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING COMPANIES



www.german-american-exchange.com



CONTACT FOR APPLICATIONS:

The office of PIA Pontis Institutional Advisors in Munich represents the German counterpart of GAE U.S., the German non-profit organization German American Exchange e.V. (GAE Germany).

GERMAN AMERICAN EXCHANGE E.V.

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80636 München / Germany

Phone from the U.S.: +49 176 42 28 9279

EMail: info@german-american-exchange.com

GAE U.S. and GAE Germany have agreed on a close cooperation. GAE Germany is the official administrator of the program in Germany and the contact point for all matters regarding work permits and host companies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.GERMAN-AMERICAN-EXCHANGE.COM

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