

N.U.in Germany Visa Guide 2025

CIEE, Berlin



This visa guide was developed in collaboration with CIEE and Northeastern University.

Please note that this information was updated in March 2025. Visa requirements are subject to change. It is the responsibility of each student to verify all requirements with their local German consulate. These instructions are intended for U.S. citizens residing in the U.S.; non-U.S. citizens or students residing outside of the U.S. should contact their respective consulate and N.U.in immediately at nuin@northeastern.edu.

Travelling prior to the start of the program may complicate the visa process and may jeopardize your ability to participate in N.U.in Germany. Please make sure you limit any travel to the Schengen Area after May 1. Students planning to travel outside of the U.S. prior to the start of the program must take the timing of the visa process into account and may need to change their travel plans to accommodate the residence permit process.

Introduction to German Residence Permit

All N.U.in Germany students will be required to apply for a German Residence Permit after their arrival in Germany. A residence permit is a document you receive on-site in Germany that allows you to reside in the country legally beyond 90 days. All students who are US Citizens or non-EU Citizens and who will be staying in Berlin for longer than 90 days will need to apply for a residence permit by following the steps listed in the Step by Step section of this document. If you hold EU Citizenship or dual citizenship with the EU will have to complete their Anmeldung (registering your address) during the first week of the program, but this will be discussed further onsite.

Instructions + Entry Requirements for Non-US Citizens

If you are not a citizen of the US, Canada, or an EU-member country, check with your local German consulate for regulations regarding your stay in Germany. With few exceptions, you must follow a visa process to obtain a visa through a German consulate before arriving in Germany.

It is your responsibility to obtain such a visa. The German Foreign Ministry recommends that students start this process at least two to three months prior to the planned arrival in Germany. Information on the German student visa process for non-US citizens can be found at: <https://www.germany.info/us-en/service/visa>.

Also, you should call the nearest district office of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement for information on the documents necessary for you to leave and re-enter the United States. This information depends on your visa and passport status and CIEE cannot advise you on US customs regulations that may apply.

Before departure from the United States, non-US citizens must also obtain a **certificate of compliance from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**. This document, also popularly known as the “sailing permit” or “departure permit,” will certify that you do not owe taxes to the US government. Contact your local IRS office for information on documents required to procure this permit.

Once you notify N.U.in and CIEE if you are not a US or EU citizen, CIEE can provide a letter to confirm your acceptance in the program, as well as your accommodation and insurance coverage.

Step By Step Instructions for US Passport Holders

The Immigration Office of Berlin has created an expedited process for issuing residence permits as long as all documentation is submitted in bulk by CIEE Berlin staff. Nonetheless, the application process has several steps, which must be completed in a specific order and are regulated by German law. CIEE does not have the ability or legal authority to grant exceptions if deadlines or documents are not submitted in a timely manner.

Please note that once we have been given our processing dates by the Immigration Offices of Berlin, we cannot reschedule them or request individual visa processing exceptions.

Here's what you should expect:

- 1** | During your first week of the program, you will begin the application paperwork for a Residence Permit by filling out two documents: the **Anmeldung (registering your address)** and the **Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels (residence permit application)** to extend your stay beyond the customary 90-day limit placed on visitors.
- 2** | All students who apply for a residence permit are also required by German law to register their residence address with the local district authority. CIEE staff in Berlin will assist you with this process. This first piece of documentation is the basis for all further bureaucratic activity, including applying for a residence permit. For this process, CIEE staff will need to collect your passport for approximately 2-3 days during the first 7-10 days of the program.

- 3** After the first step of registering your address is completed, your application is ready for submission to the Immigration Office, and they can start processing your residence permit application. In anywhere from 3-6 weeks after this process begins, CIEE staff will need to collect students' passports for approximately 2-3 days to complete this processing.

Please note that the dates of this final stage of processing are communicated quite short-term – often only 1-2 weeks before the appointment itself. Local staff will not know the exact dates of when students' passports are needed to complete processing until sometime in October. As a result, students should not make travel plans for personal excursions until the passport collection date is finalized and announced in Berlin.

- 4** When students receive their residence permit back from the Immigration Office, they must check their passport for the final date they are legally permitted to be in the Schengen zone and not overstay this date. *Expect to be required to leave within two weeks of the end of your program.*

Should a student not have their passport available by the collection date or submit the required forms, they will have to follow a different process to request a residence permit on their own. Please note that the success of this process cannot be guaranteed because usually all preliminary appointments to get this process started are fully booked months ahead of time. Therefore, students who do not adhere to the steps described above may need to depart early from the program without a refund if they are unable to acquire a residence permit on their own within 90 days. ***To avoid this, it is critical that students follow the instructions of CIEE center staff.***

Have you already studied/spent time in Europe before the CIEE program start date?

Students who are a resident of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, or the United States can attend the N.U.in Germany program visa free, and are required to complete the Germany Residence permit process once in country. It is important to note that the in-country Germany residency process time is experiencing delays due to high demand. Therefore, we strongly encourage that students limit any travel in the Schengen Area after **May 1**. If students plan travel to the Schengen Area prior to the start of the program this will impact students 90 visa free days before the group residence permit process is completed. If students use their 90 days before receiving their residence permit, they are required to remain in Germany until their residence permit has been processed. If you anticipate you will have early travel in the Schengen Area, please let us know by emailing nuin@northeastern.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions

1 Will CIEE help me obtain a residence permit?

Yes, CIEE will help you in the process and will give you all the instructions you need once you arrive on site. However, it is your responsibility to complete all your documents and pay the processing fees. Be sure to read all instructions from CIEE staff very carefully in order to ensure you are taking all necessary steps to remain in the country legally.

2 What if I have already studied/spent time in the Schengen zone before the CIEE program start date?

Please be sure to inform the N.U.in team at nuin@northeastern.edu and your CIEE Advisor immediately if you have recently spent time in the Schengen zone as this may alter the necessary steps in the application process for your residence permit.

3 Do I need to complete any forms before I leave/bring any documentation from the US?

Students should carry the following letters with them:

- a. **A passport** valid until at least July 2026
- b. **Letter from CIEE to “The Border Protection Officer and Airline Official”** confirming your enrollment in the program. This will be sent to students via email a few weeks prior to the start of the program. (This is for students who will be studying in Berlin for more than 90 days.)

Students who are under 18 at the time of departure for Germany must also complete and carry the following documents with them to Berlin for the residence permit application process:

- c. **Notarized Power of Attorney Form and Copy:** Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who will be under 18 on their date of departure for Germany should complete the Power of Attorney Form. This form must be notarized. Students should carry the original, notarized form and a copy of the form (copy does not need to be notarized) with them to Berlin.
- d. **Copy of Parent/Guardian’s Passport:** Students should copy the passport of the parent(s)/guardian(s) who signs their Power of Attorney form; this copy does not need to be notarized. Students should carry this passport copy with them to Berlin.
- e. **Copy of Original Birth Certificate:** Students should carry a copy of their original birth certificate with them to Berlin. This copy does not need to be notarized.

Important Reminders

Northeastern University and CIEE have no influence on the outcome of immigration applications, including the decisions and policies of German consular officials and the Berlin immigration office, no ability to inquire about an individual immigration application, or to expedite the process for an individual student. In addition, N.U.in employees are unable to provide legal advice to students or families concerning country-specific immigration requirements and/or application processes.

Students are responsible for completing all required applications for immigration permissions or registrations correctly and in a timely manner, and for obtaining any required permissions prior to the program start date. If the student cannot obtain valid permission in time for the program start date, please refer to the N.U.in Withdrawal Policy and contact the N.U.in office to discuss the next steps.