

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

„Sustainable Water Management“ Programme

Instruction - How to Write the Letter of Motivation

When applying for a graduate programme leading to a master or Ph.D. degree in Germany, applicants are requested to submit a letter of motivation. These letters of motivation play an important role in the selection process.

How do you write a successful letter of motivation?

1. Take your time and start early. The letter of motivation is a crucial document in your application.
2. Do not start your letter of motivation by repeating your CV.
3. The letter of motivation should answer the following questions:
 - What professional experience have you achieved so far and to what extent do you think that it will be useful for your future studies?
 - What professional or personal goals do you hope to achieve during your stay in Germany? What do you expect to learn?
 - What are your professional goals in the context of sustainable water management?
 - How do you intend to use your qualification and degree earned in Germany for your home country and the further cooperation between your home country and Germany? (You may refer to knowledge from books and newspapers as well as to your professional or personal experience. Some facts and figures are highly welcome.)
 - Why do you want to study in Germany?
 - Is there anything in Germany (technology, science, society, political system, economy...) which you think could serve as an inspiration for your own country? (Try to get some reading material from German organizations, visit the website <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/> (facts about Germany) or the website of the German Embassy in your home country and try to make contact to Germans or people who have lived in Germany.)
 - In the context of sustainable water management, which specific technologies developed in Germany would you like to learn more about and to apply in your home country? Why?
 - Are there any German organizations, institutions or companies in sustainable water management you would like to visit or learn more about? Why?
 - (*Only for applicants for a master scholarship:*)
 - Why do you apply for the selected master programme? Which of the courses offered in this programme are particularly beneficial in pursuing your professional goals? (Make sure you are well informed!)

- If possible, name a person from your home country as a mentor, preferably with industry contacts, or ideally a mentor who works for your current or prospective employer.
- *(Only for applicants for a doctoral scholarship:)*
 - Give a short outline of your research proposal and planned work during your doctoral project. Why have you chosen this specific university and supervisor?
 - If possible, name a person from your home country as a mentor or co-supervisor, preferably with industry contacts, and/or a mentor of who works for your current or prospective employer, if applicable.
- With which company, or type of company or institution, do you imagine doing your 6-month internship?
 - Typically, the internship should be arranged with (water sector related)
 - component manufacturers
 - engineering companies/consultants
 - associations
 - utilities
 - plant/ system manufacturers
 - construction companies
 - chemical industry
 - authorities of the federation or federal states
 - municipalities
 - water authorities
 - corporations under public law concerned with water management and regulation of resources

but you are, of course, free to suggest other suitable fields, such as “process and operational management in the water sector”.

- If possible, name a contact partner in the German water sector as prospective internship provider.
4. Make sure your letter of motivation is well composed. First reflect on all the above questions, take notes, read more, discuss with friends. Then write an outline. Then write the text.
5. Apply an appropriate style of writing:
- Avoid all kind of platitudes, flowery phrases and flattery.
 - Deal with your topics in a reflective and factual way. Do not campaign for your beliefs.
6. Proofread the text and delete all dispensable and redundant parts. At the end, your letter of motivation should comprise **not more than two pages**.