

# How do you find yourself an internship in Germany?

## A student's experience report

### Pre-preparation:

#### A detailed version of your CV.

This detailed version should include all accomplishments, extracurricular activities, and so on. This document is something you have to frequently update

#### A clear image in mind.

See whether you can answer the following questions:

- What kind of internship do I want to do? Research-oriented or industrial-oriented?
  - If I want to find a research-oriented internship, do I imagine myself working in universities, research institutions, or the R&D department in companies?
  - If I want to find an industrial-oriented internship, do I imagine myself working in big/traditional/small/start-up companies? Do I imagine myself working in factories or labs?
  - Do I want to work in a specific location? Inside Germany or abroad?
- Is there any specific topic I am interested in, or have specialized during my previous studies, have relevant work experience?
- When do I want to start and finish the internship? How long do I want it to be?<sup>1</sup>

### Looking for positions:

If you have some specific companies or institutions in mind, you can follow their application instructions on their websites or even get in contact with their HR directly. Don't hesitate to send them an email to ask about internship positions (already provide them your CV or even cover letter!). Even though there are no open positions advertised on their webpages, they might remember you regarding future internship opportunities.

However, if you haven't had any specific company in mind, listed below are some employment websites for you to check out. You can not only search for internship positions there, but also read about their tips regarding application documents and interviews. Do be aware that different countries have their own tastes in application documents.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the study plan of CEP the internship (at least 12-week long, full-time) should be conducted during the 3rd semester, however, students can choose the semester of the internship freely, other than the first semester.

## Germany

- [Indeed](#)
- [Stepstone](#)
- [Xing](#)

## Aboard

- [RISE worldwide](#)
- [IAESTE](#)
- [Study and work international](#)
- [Monster](#) (suggested reading: [cover letter advice](#); [access your CV](#))
- [LinkedIn](#)

## Application:

In this stage, you already have a clear expectation of your internship and a list of interesting positions for which you would like to apply. How do you make yourself an appealing candidate? A customized CV and cover letter will do the trick – it lets you stand out from the crowd! But, WAIT! Before you bury yourself in CV and cover letter, you should go through the job advertisement or the group description carefully, to understand what kind of people they are expecting (educational/working background, personality, ...) and what kind of abilities they require. Finding a position is always a two-way choice. By going through the job advertisement, you will also get a better idea of whether you would like to work with them.

## A customized CV.

Now it's the time to modify your long and detailed CV. Make it concise! Keep only information that is strongly related to the position that you are applying for.

Some tips:

- In Germany, people expect to see nationality and photo in your CV, which might not be the case in other countries.
- Since the grading system is different in countries, to avoid misunderstanding, you should convert your Bachelor grade into German grades, using "[modified Bavarian formula](#)".
- If you have focus topics in your Bachelor, you might want to list them in the Education section, to give your CV reader a quick hint, where your strength and interest lie.
- Germany values practical experience. List your practical experience, including student projects, internships, Bachelor thesis, or even extracurricular activities (of course, only if they are related to the position) in your CV. Write a concise description of the position and your contribution.
- If the work experience is shorter than a month, in general this should not be included

in an application in Germany as it is not regarded as relevant experience.

- As a student or someone who doesn't have work experience, your CV is expected to be within 2 pages.
- Yes, CV is a way to sell yourself, but in a professional way. Keep it factual. Never oversell it. Let the facts speak for themselves.
- Make good use of internet, if you need any inspiration. (Search: "German CV" or "Lebenslauf")

### **A customized cover letter.**

How to make your recruiters think you are the one they have been looking for, regarding ability, experience, and maybe also vibe? A customized CV is still like a simple fact sheet, but your customized cover letter is a chance to "directly" point out your strength to your recruiters and give them a taste of your vibe.

Some tips:

- Go through the job description once again, to understand what kind of abilities are needed (education background, working language, specific lab/programming skills) and get an idea of the working atmosphere.
- A cover letter is expected to be within 1 page.
- Use active verbs and make sure you backup your strengths with some evidence. Show them how suitable you are, not tell them.
- Necessary information that should be included in your cover letter:
  - The title of the position and the name of the company/institution
  - Why are you applying for this position right now and why in this company/institution?
  - Where did you learn of this position?
  - Your most relevant skills and experiences and make it clear how these will enable you to tackle the tasks at hand.
- Make good use of internet, if you need any inspiration. (Search: "German cover letter" or "Anschreiben")

Now you should be ready! Send your application as early as possible. You are recommended to start your search at least **6 months prior to the starting date!**

### **Make good use of FAU resources:**

- [Workshops and seminars](#) (e.g., Successful Job Interviews, The Interview – German Culture and Job Finding, Job Interviews and German Society, ...)
- [Open consultation of Career Service at Faculty of Engineering](#)