

UZH Doc.Mobility: Information set for fellow-ship holders

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1 General Information

This documentation summarizes the most important information that may be helpful for your stay abroad. This is a general overview. For the assessment of individual cases, only the legal provisions are authoritative.

For details regarding your fellowship, the [Guidelines](#) to UZH Doc.Mobility apply. Please refer to these for questions regarding changes in the research plan or location, waiving or discontinuing the fellowship, and reporting after your stay has been completed.

2 Grant payment

The mobility grants are not a salary. They are meant to cover living expenses during the stay abroad and travel costs. The grant will be transferred all at one time to the recipient's personal banking account.

The awarded mobility grant will be paid out upon application of the grant holder. The awarded sum will be transferred in Swiss francs to a bank or postal check account in Switzerland one month before the start of the fellowship at the earliest. Please submit an application for payment in due time (<https://www.research.uzh.ch/en/funding/phd/uzh-doc-mobility.html> > Links for Grantees > Request for payment).

The grant will expire if the mobility fellowship will not be commenced within the time period specified in section 1.4 of the Guidelines.

3 Insurances

The fellowship does not include any insurance. All insurances for the fellowship holders and for their dependents, including accident and health insurance, are the responsibility of the fellowship holders. Please check with your health insurance company and with any other guarantors (e.g. liability insurance) well before the beginning of your fellowship to find out which regulations apply during your stay abroad.

Most foreign universities require proof of sufficient insurance coverage. Depending on the host country, additional insurance may be required. We recommend that you check with the host university in due time.

3.1 AHV/IV/EO contributions

Persons who are granted a mobility fellowships are generally considered as non-employed under AHV law (see margin note 2016 of the "Guide on contributions of self-employed persons and non-employed persons to AHV, IV and EO" ([Wegleitung über die Beiträge der Selbstständigerwerbenden und Nichterwerbstätigen in der AHV, IV und EO \(WSN\)](#), available in German, French, or Italian only)). Thus, they ought to register as unemployed at the cantonal compensation office ('Ausgleichskasse') for statistical purposes. The compensation offices and their municipal branch offices will inform the grant holders on their duties with regard to AHV/IV/EO. You will find a list of all AHV compensation offices at:

<https://www.ahv-iv.ch/en/>.

Most UZH Doc.Mobility fellowship holders will maintain their official domicile in Switzerland during their stay abroad. If this is the case, fellowship holders are obliged to maintain their health insurance according to Art. 1a Para. 1 Letter a AHVG during this time and to pay their dues to the cantonal compensation office (for exceptions, see the leaflet "Contributions of non-employed persons to the AHV, IV and EO", <https://www.ahv-iv.ch/p/2.03.e>).

3.2 Unpaid leave

If you are employed at UZH and opt for an unpaid leave during your stay abroad, please contact the Human Resources Department (www.pa.uzh.ch) for information on the proceedings.

Please note that the risk insurance of the pension fund (death and disability) will be omitted after one month of the unpaid leave. However, the employee is free to maintain this insurance at his/her own expense.

The obligatory accident insurance for accidents out of work will also be omitted after 31 calendar days of unpaid leave. However, this insurance can be extended by up to six months by means of a so-called agreement insurance.

4 Entry and exit formalities, residence

As a rule, foreign researchers will need a residence permit and sometimes a visa to enter the destination country. If the host university does not provide you with information, please contact the foreign representation of the respective country in Switzerland (embassy, consulate) directly. Please find out early enough whether you need a visa, as the application and issuing process may take several weeks. For travel to the USA, please refer to section 4.2.

You may change your official residence to the destination country or keep it in Switzerland during the period of your fellowship (which is more usual). This can have an effect on the possible taxation of the fellowship or on the insurances (AHV, health insurance, etc.). Information can be obtained from the local residents' registration office, compensation office or the relevant tax authority.

Fellowship holders who go abroad temporarily for the purpose of education and further training, i.e. do not settle there for permanent stay (Art. 23 ZGB), do not take up a new residence abroad in legal terms. According to Art. 24 of the Swiss Civil Code, a person's domicile, once established, remains valid until a new domicile is acquired. However, if you wish to deregister in Switzerland during your stay abroad, please contact your district or municipality office.

Persons without Swiss citizenship must observe the legal provisions on civil law residence and the validity of their permit.

4.1 Register with the Travel Admin App of the FDFA

The Travel Admin App provides optimal support when preparing a trip. The app also provides useful information and services when you are on the road as well as in case of emergency.

[Travel Admin App](#)

4.2 Travelling to the USA

For visa-related questions, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Switzerland (<https://ch.usembassy.gov/visas/>).

Swiss citizens who are not residents of the U.S. need a machine-readable passport to be able to apply for a U.S. visa. The passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the requested visa period. The

visa must be applied for online at http://www.ustraveldocs.com/ch_using_form_DS-160. In most cases it also involves a personal visit to the U.S. Embassy in Bern. Due to the processing time, it is important that you apply for your visa early. The embassy is very busy especially during the summer months (peak travel season), so please make an appointment early enough.

All fellowship holders will receive an English confirmation from the UZH Grants Office. It is required to apply for the visa.

Important: Please request a completed SEVIS form "DS 2019" (for J visa) or "I-20" (for F-1 visa) from your host institute as soon as possible. Please also consult the website of the U.S. Embassy in Bern for information (<https://www.ustraveldocs.com/ch/ch-gen-faq.asp>).

A good overview of the visa formalities and the first time in the USA can be found in the SNSF document "Tips for fellowship holders going to the USA":

- http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/stip_mobilitaetsstipendien_usa_tipps_d.pdf

- http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/stip_mobilitaetsstipendien_usa_tipps_e.pdf

5 Taxes

The handling of tax liability in Switzerland depends on cantonal regulations and is therefore very diverse. Many cantons consider fellowships as taxable income. However, there is no uniform taxation practice throughout Switzerland. Please contact the responsible tax authority at your place of residence for information on the possible taxation of your fellowship.

If you need a confirmation of the payments made for your tax return, please contact the UZH Grants Office: support@research.uzh.ch.

6 Maternity or paternity, illness and accident

Female fellowship holders are entitled to four months of paid maternity leave during the time span of the mobility fellowship.

Male fellowship holders are entitled to two weeks of paid paternity leave during the time span of the mobility fellowship.

In the event of illness or accident during the mobility fellowship, the amount of grant money and the duration of the fellowship may be raised appropriately upon request, provided that the scientific objectives pursued can not be achieved otherwise. The fellowship may be extended by a maximum of one year.

7 Useful links

FDFA - Living abroad: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/leben-im-ausland.html>

Various guides and information dossiers.

FDFA Helpline: <https://www.eda.admin.ch>

The FDFA helpline is the main point of contact for Swiss citizens living abroad. It deals with issues of consular services as well as finances and taxes.

Euraxess in Switzerland: <http://www.euraxess.ch>

The Euraxess network plays an important role in making the mobility of researchers easier. It provides key information on immigration, funding opportunities, social security and pensions. Job offers and CVs can be published free of charge on a Europe-wide job portal for research positions.

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