

FAQ

TUM: Junge Akademie (TUMJA)

INFO-EVENTS

Will the slides of the presentation be uploaded?

We will upload them subsequently on our website.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

How is this different from e.g., Manage and More?

The JA is directed towards an academic career. This does not mean that you are expected to work in Academia later, but there is less of a focus on entrepreneurship than in other programs at the TUM.

How many people were nominated? Based on what criteria?

Around 8500. That means 10% on average, but the exact percentages differ depending on the size of your school. We do not have a grade-cut-off.

How many people usually apply?

About 200.

How many students are invited for the selection days?

About 100.

How many people will be accepted?

About 50.

Is the program online or in person? What about the application?

You can expect that the projects will be in person, at least towards the end. At least one selection day will be held online. Spending some time abroad is always possible though.

Can participating in this program help me to get a PhD position/Master's thesis/...?

You will improve your scientific skills. Whether you get a PhD position is not up to us. However, they are a lot of us who do/did a PhD.

Will the scholarship be in English?

Yes, at least the seminars will be. If you want to talk German within your team, that is up to you.



Can participation in this program get me ECTS?

No.

Do we get a certificate?

Yes, but if that is your only motivation, then we advise you not to apply. This is also in your best interest, as you likely will not enjoy working in a team for 20 months then.

What successful projects have come from the JA?

There are a lot. However, you might know “TUM4Mind” or “Quintessence” (BREAKMORE). The latter was selected as one of the main teams of the TUM Future Learning Initiative 2020.

How interdisciplinary is it?

We nominate students from all faculties and our partner institutions (see <https://www.ja.tum.de/ja/partner/>). The final selection is usually a quite healthy mix.

What if I leave my university/institution during the project?

This is not a problem. Many scholarship holders finish their master’s degree during the project.

Does this program interfere with other programs?

No, usually not. Since the JA is not a financial scholarship program, there is no interference with financial programs. Other than that, the only limiting factor is whether you have enough time to participate in several programs.

TIME MANAGEMENT

What is the expected workload?

We usually say about 6-8 hours per week. This is not a constant in every week; work distribution is quite flexible. But consider that you must find an agreement with your team and taskforce.

Does it make sense to apply if I am doing or planning a PhD?

Yes definitely, that is a great way to get involved. We also have some scholarship holders here that are in a PhD program.

I am currently working as a working student alongside my studies (bachelor/master’s program). Is it feasible to still actively participate in the program on the side?

As a scholarship holder, you are required to form a group and come up with a project that will follow you for an extended period. What we want our scholars to know upfront is that this can be a significant time commitment (approximately 6 to 8 hours per week, sometimes more and sometimes less). Therefore, the decision to join is up to you. That being said, we have a lot of scholars that work during their studies.



Is the experience worth the time?

YES. You get to meet wonderful like-minded people from different fields of study. You can work on and realize your project and learn how to structure and manage a project. You acquire a lot of soft skills doing that and the weekend seminars support you on this.

Is it possible to be less active during exam periods or is it expected that you are always flexible to work on the project?

Do we have to work for JA during the semester break/holidays?

You and your group will have the option to plan the schedule for your project and consider the schedule of each group member. Just discuss this with your team and you will find a solution.

How often is a face-to-face meeting with the team required?

This depends on your team and there is no general answer to this question. You can discuss this with your team and find a solution.

I worry that the Study-JA-Life balance will become too complicated. What should I do?

This is individual and for you to decide. Please consider the workload of about 6-8h per week (not a constant workload) before you decide. Most of our students work and study full time during membership and this works well for them.

What if I get accepted but realize that I do not have enough time?

We have a preliminary acceptance phase of several months. If you really do not have enough time, you will be able to leave. But consider that the later you do this, the bigger your impact on your team members will be.

Is it possible to do your PhD simultaneously to the scholarship?

Yes, this works quite well.

APPLICANTS' REQUIREMENTS/BACKGROUND

Why is the application entirely in English?

Because we also encourage international students to join our program. Additionally, we also have non-German speakers reading the applications.

Do nominated applicants have a better chance of being accepted than non-nominated applicants?

NO. We do not prioritize or differentiate between these two groups.

What grades do I need to have? What grades do you all have?

After the nomination (which already happened) the grades are mostly unimportant. It also depends on what you are studying, so grades cannot really be compared.

What if my grades get worse after this semester?



That does not matter. After a nomination, your grades are largely unimportant for the JA.

Does it make sense to apply if I have not been accepted as master's student yet but have already completed my bachelor's degree?

Yes, if you have reason to assume that you will be accepted eventually. Some people don't get accepted immediately after their bachelor's but a semester later. This would also be fine for us.

Can I apply even if I am doing a semester abroad in the final admission stage?

Can I apply even if I am doing a semester abroad during the project and cannot fully participate?

Can I apply despite being in the ... semester?

Yes.

I only study a minor subject at TUM (30 Credits) but I was nominated. Is that a problem or can I still apply?

You can apply.

Can I finish JA after I graduate (Bachelor's /Master's Degree)?

Yes.

Are most students here from a larger faculty or degree program?

No, this is not the case. We will ensure that JA stays diverse.

Are there any restrictions regarding the diversity of scholarship holders?

There are no restrictions concerning our scholarship holders' background, we just aim for a reasonably balanced number of female and male applicants to be admitted.

Do applicants from all universities compete or is there a set number of scholarships for each university?

There is no limit to how many applicants are selected per university. Only the best will be selected, regardless of which educational institution they apply from. The list of participating educational institutions can be found on our webpage.

FUNDING AND FINANCE

What are the requirements for a project to be funded by the program?

The TUMJA is glad to fund parts of your projects where necessary, as long as your team's demands are reasonable.

Do the scholarship holders also get financial reimbursement?

The projects are financially supported by the JA. You will not receive personal funding as this is not a financial scholarship program.



APPLICATION

Can I apply without nomination?

YES, if you have a letter of recommendation (more here <https://www.ja.tum.de/apply/>). If you do not know a professor who can help you, we might be able to get you in contact with one, so don't hesitate to ask.

What does the entire application process look like?

Until August 31st you will send in your application documents (more here <https://www.ja.tum.de/apply/>), which will then be checked by us. After a month, if you are in the next round, we would invite you to the selection days, where you will be interviewed and participate in group works for an assessment by us and several professors. If you pass that stage, you are accepted. You will then work on your project and after some months there will be a final check-up to make sure that everything is fine (do not worry, we don't aim to throw anyone out at that stage)

Where can I find information about this years' call?

You can find information on our **website**: <https://www.ja.tum.de/apply/>

Is both an essay and a video required?

No. You should only submit one of them. The choice is up to you.

I would like to make a video about the call instead of an essay. Is there a time limit on the length of the video?

Yes, approximately 2-3 minutes.

Can I read out my essay in the video?

No, please do not. If you decide to read out an essay in your application video, you will not be considered in the further application process. Please refrain from just reading out an essay, should you decide to hand in a video instead of an essay.

Does the resume have to be in fluent text?

No.

Is an uncertified statement regarding the grades from TUM Online sufficient for the application?

Yes.

Do I need to submit my bachelor grade report if I am currently pursuing my master's degree?

No, just submit the current grade report of your master's program.

How does the grade report affect my application?

It does not affect your application. However, it is not just a formality, as you are initially nominated primarily based on your grades. For an external applicant, they



must convince us why they would make an excellent scholarship holder regardless of their grades.

Should the essay and the motivational letter be in English or German?

Applicants are required to submit all materials in English, including the essay or letter of motivation.

Does the essay have to be in scientific writing or is it about intellectually challenging perceptions?

A scientific writing format is not required. We are only interested in your ideas related to the current year's call.

What exactly should I write for the call?

We are being vague on purpose. It is intended to give a direction and something to start brainstorming on. While your essay/video and the projects should be related to the call in some way, we do not have a formal restriction.

Is the essay more about inspiring or more about scientific work?

You can write your essay about whatever you like. You can write something scientific, and you can write about what inspires you.

Is there any requirement regarding the length of the motivational letter?

A motivational letter of about 2-3 pages is sufficient.

What is the difference in content between the motivational letter and the essay?

The motivational letter simply states your motivation to join the scholarship program. The essay includes your perception of the call and/or a project idea related to it.

Are the projects based on the essays submitted as part of the application?

They do not necessarily have to be identical. You will have the opportunity to collaborate with a group of your choice and develop a project together, independent of the project idea in your essay.

Should we include a project idea when writing the essay?

We welcome any project ideas that you bring to the essay. However, this is not a must, as you have time in the seminars to define a final topic or project idea.

Is there any specific requirement for the recommendation letter in terms of its content?

There are no special requirements for this document. A standard letter of recommendation is sufficient.

Who decides on the application, scholarship holders or professors?

Taskforce Recruiting sift through the application and decide who will be invited to the selection days.



SELECTION DAYS

What are the selections days?

The selection days are an assessment centre where you can also clarify individual questions. You will have to participate in various group activities and interviews.

I cannot attend the selection days in person, will this be a problem?

We cannot say for sure if the selection days will be held online or in person. However, you will receive a mail informing you of this.

What exactly will the selection days be like? Do we need to prepare presentations or group discussions?

The selection days are basically like an assessment centre. You will have to participate in some group discussions/activities and an interview with a professor and a scholarship holder. Do not worry, you don't have to prepare anything in advance.

Is the language of communication in English or German during the selection days?

English.

What level of English is required during the selection days?

If your English is not the best during the selection process, it will not be a major issue.

Are the selection days just a double check if the applicants meet the expectations of TUMJA members and to avoid a high dropout rate or is this process also part of the selection?

This is an integral part of the application process. We invite around 80-100 students from which only 40-50 are accepted.

Do you have to be particularly outgoing to have a chance of passing the assessment?

We expect our applicants to actively participate in the conversation and bring their ideas forward.

DURING THE TUMJA Program

Is there any exchange program with the international universities within the TUMJA?

We are currently working on an exchange with a London College. A few scholarship holders will get selected each year to participate.

What is the drop-out rate for admission?

There is no specific drop-out rate, as the number of applications varies substantially.



Is it possible to be kicked out of JA due to poor performance?

So far, we have not had such a case.

Approximately how many students are in a team?

Group sizes vary. Usually, we do not have more than 8 students per team.

How decisive is a general social commitment for admission?

No, general social commitment will not play a big role. It is important that you are motivated and actively participate in the project at TUMJA.

Were there any cases of projects being cancelled during the 20 months due to different expectations? Is it possible to redefine your goals?

Yes, you can always redefine your goals. However, it is worth mentioning that so far, no project has been completely abandoned, but the goals have always been changed and redefined.

Where do the weekend seminars take place? Is there any cost or fees?

There are no fees as we take care of them for you. The weekend seminars usually take place somewhere near Munich.

Are we required to participate in a project and an organizational taskforce?

Yes, every scholarship holder is a member of a team and a taskforce.

What does taskforce work look like?

You can find information on the individual taskforces here <https://www.ja.tum.de/taskforces/>. The kind of work differs between all of them.

What are the taskforces for exactly?

TUMJA is in large parts organized and run by its scholarship holders and alumni. The taskforces have organically been created whenever there was a need and interest for a certain task. For example, the entire application process you are currently facing as well as the info-events are organized by the taskforce Recruiting.

Are collaborations with other student organizations or projects generally possible?

Yes.

Does my submitted project have to be strictly related to my field of study?

Preferably not. You will be joining a group of interdisciplinary students from all fields of study. Figuring out a common interest is more important.

What happens to the projects after the scholarship?

That depends on you and your team. There is always the possibility to continue working on it.

How are groups decided? And how are projects decided?

You form groups of 5-8 people based on a first common project idea after the application procedure. The exact projects will then also be found within that group.



You will have a lot of time to find your specific project, so do not worry about having to work on something that you did not agree to.

How many groups are there?

Usually, 5-6. See <https://www.ja.tum.de/projekte/> for last years' groups.

Is the project theoretical or is there a possibility to realize it?

Most projects are realized. You can find more information about our projects on our website.

How free are we in choosing our projects and realizing our ideas?

We expect and encourage you to be creative with it. It all starts with the first kick-off event, where you and other scholarship holders discuss your ideas and form your groups. The project must be related to the call in some way, though.

What restrictions are there on the projects?

You are mostly free to do what interests you. You will be guided by tutors (usually alumni) and supervisors (usually professors), so you do not do anything ridiculous. You must write a scientific paper based on a research question at the end, so your project could either be fully scientific or a product (e.g., an app) that can help answer a research question.

What support will we get for the projects?

Aside from seminars, mentors (usually alumni, 2 per team) and supervisors (usually professors, 2 per team), we can support the project financially or with networking. If there are certain smaller things that your project needs, I am sure you will also find help for that in the JA.

What does project work look like?

Largely up to you, but keep in mind that a team usually has students from various backgrounds. Doing something like lab-work might not be feasible for all participants.

If there is no project I am interested in, is it possible to quit or would this be a disadvantage for others?

YOU define your project with your group and have a lot of time to do so. If you really do not find an agreement with your group, you can quit but should nevertheless think about the consequences for your team. And by doing so, you probably deprive somebody else of the scholarship opportunity who likely would have enjoyed the programme. That would not be desirable.

