

Guidelines of the Österreichischen HochschülerInnenschaft at the Johannes Kepler University (JKU) for provision of support from the Social Fund

Status: September 2021

General requirements

§1 (1) The requirement for the support to be granted by the JKU Student Union is admission to studies at the JKU and social need as defined in the guidelines. Doctoral students and students attending a course at JKU must have a special eligibility for support (sudden, unforeseeable, unavoidable event). It is irrelevant whether the student is a regular or associate student. Nationality is not taken into consideration.

(2) Study performance will be considered in the decision-making process. The student must demonstrate serious and purposeful study. The study is considered serious and purposeful when

a) regular students of higher semesters who have at least 16 ECTS credits or 8 semester hours per academic year or 8 ECTS credits or 4 semester hours after the first semester. In special cases of hardship, this limit can be disregarded (e.g., illness, pregnancy, unforeseen event).

b) extraordinary students who have at least 12 ECTS credits or 6 semester hours per academic year or 6 ECTS credits or 3 semester hours after the first semester.

(3) Students who are in the first semester of their studies are generally not entitled to any support from the social fund of the ÖH JKU Linz.

(4) Students from foreign universities who complete periods of study or practical training at JKU as part of transnational, EU, state, or university mobility programs (incomings) are not entitled to funding from the Social Fund.

(5) The Social Department can support projects that benefit students in need with money from the Social Fund. A requirement for the granting of support is the submission of a project description. In addition, a defined group of people, consisting of the ÖH Chair, the Social Representative, and the Economic Representative, must decide positively on the project funding. This group of people decides by consensus and must act no later than two weeks after the submission of a project. For long-term projects (longer than one semester), the committee must decide again. In this case, an evaluation of the project must be enclosed with the new application.

Deadlines and regulations

§2 (1) Support from the ÖH JKU Social Fund can be applied for once per semester. The application period for the winter semester runs from 10 October to 15 December, for the summer semester from 10 March to 15 May of the relevant year. In cases of hardship, support from the social fund can also be applied for after these deadlines.

(2) The support from the ÖH JKU Social Fund is not a permanent support but is intended to ease the financial hardship of students. Students can receive support from the ÖH JKU Social Fund a maximum of three times during their entire period of study at JKU.

(3) The application for a support from the social fund must be filled out completely and truthfully to be processed. If the applicant demonstrably attempts to deceive the ÖH JKU Linz by providing untrue or incomplete information or documents, the application must be rejected. Support that has been obtained based on untrue or intentionally incomplete information must be repaid. In this case, a processing fee of EUR 100.00 shall be paid. The staff of the Social Department must be informed within 14 days of any facts that would result in the repayment of the support since the support was granted. The ÖH JKU Linz reserves the right to take legal action in the event of a violation.

Social Neediness

§3 (1) There must be no substantial liquidity reserves, e.g., in the form of savings. The student must confirm this with their own signature. Bank statements from the last period (12 months) will be inspected by the Social Department. The student confirms that they only have the accounts listed.

(2) When processing the application, the applicable provisions in the field of the "Federal Act on Settlement and Residence in Austria" and the accompanying ordinances and implementing regulations shall be considered in an appropriate manner and in case of doubt in favor of the applicant.

(3) The student is in a financial emergency and cannot afford to pay for essential study expenses (scripts, books, etc.), which are essential for further academic success. The expenses will be considered in part or in full, depending on the necessity.

(4) If the student receives or has already received a student grant or is exempt from the prescription fee or broadcasting fees, they must submit this evidence. Other exemptions or support must also be proven. This evidence serves as an indication of social neediness according to these guidelines. Negative notices and other letters that provide information about the student's financial situation must also be attached to the application.

Calculation

§4 (1) The calculation is made by comparing all living expenses plus the proven deductible expenses as defined in §4(3) and the available income as defined in §4(2). After the comparison has been made, no monthly surplus of more than EUR 250.00 may remain.

Income

(2) For the purposes of this guideline, the following income is considered as income: Maintenance payments, social benefits, family allowance, study allowance, housing allowance, heating allowance, income from employment and suchlike. The inclusion of possible income from spouses/life partners is done at the discretion of the Social Welfare Department, considering the overall situation and the financial hardship. The exact requirements are specified in more detail in §4 (5-13).

Deductible Expenses

(3) Deductible expenses are Health insurance, deductible housing costs, costs for care and assistance services, maintenance payments made by the student, costs for childcare, costs for study materials and compulsory paid courses, loan rates and repayment obligations, travel costs to and from the university and suchlike. The exact requirements are specified in more detail in §4 (5-13).

Non-Deductible Expenses

(4) Not deducted are, for example, car insurance, newspaper subscriptions, television, account maintenance fees, costs for food, clothing and the suchlike and costs that have no relation to the current emergency.

Maintenance Payments

(5) Maintenance payments received by the applicant themselves due to maintenance obligations of their own parents must be proven and considered in the income calculation. Maintenance payments received by the applicant through maintenance obligations of divorced partners for one or more children are not to be considered in the income calculation. If maintenance payments are made by the applicant for one or more children or the ex-partner, these are to be considered under deductible expenses as defined in §4 (3).

Family allowance

(6) If the applicant's parents are entitled to family allowance, this is only to be considered in the income calculation if it can be proven that this is also regularly transferred to the student's account. If the payment is made in cash, a corresponding statutory declaration signed by the parents must be submitted. If the

applicant themselves receives family allowance for one or more children, this is not to be considered in the income calculation.

Housing costs

(7) For the apartment, a maximum of EUR 400.00 is claimed as deductible expenses within the meaning of §4 (3). For single parents, the deductible amount can be increased to a maximum of EUR 525.00. The rental contract must be submitted to substantiate the housing situation. All persons registered in the same household must be listed to calculate the actual cost share of the rent. If the applicant is in receipt of a housing allowance, the notification of this must be enclosed.

Childcare

(8) Expenses for childcare (e.g., costs for kindergarten or after-school care) may be claimed in full as deductible expenses within the meaning of §4 (3) if appropriate evidence of the costs is provided. In addition, the maximum allowable surplus within the meaning of § 4 (1) shall be increased by EUR 200.00 per child for whom care obligations exist.

Loan rates

(9) Loan rates and other regular repayment obligations of the same kind can only be claimed as deductible expenses within the meaning of §4 (3) if the loan or repayment obligations at least implicitly serve to bridge the current emergency and are proportionate in view of the overall situation. The proportionality with the emergency must be made credible. The decision on consideration under §4 (3) is at the discretion of the Social Department.

Costs of public transport

(10) The costs of public transport are deducted as travel costs to and from university, which are, for example, the costs of a commuter ticket of the OÖVV; for students residing in Linz, the monthly costs for a MEGA ticket for students or for the "Aktivpass" are used uniformly.

Expenses for study materials and course fees

(11) Expenses for study materials and course fees are generally considered at a flat rate of EUR 15.00 per month as deductible expenses within the meaning of §4 (3). In the case of higher expenses, this amount may be increased up to EUR 165.00 if this can be proven by original invoices.

Expenses for internet fees

(12) Expenses for internet fees for the purpose of e-learning are considered monthly at EUR 25.00 as deductible expenses in the meaning of §4 para. (3), provided that an internet connection in the student's own home is to be paid for by the student themselves. A flat rate of EUR 10.00 will be charged for the telephone if this is demonstrably paid by the applicant.

Tuition fee

(13) If the Johannes Kepler University Linz has a social fund for the waiver/refund of tuition fees for socially needy students, the tuition fee will not be considered.

Application

§5 (1) Students of the Johannes Kepler University Linz can apply for support from the Social Fund at the Social Department of the ÖH JKU Linz. These applications must be processed as soon as possible.

(2) The following documents must be enclosed:

Necessary for processing:

- Student ID (JKU Card)
- Confirmation of registration (cf. KUSSS)
- Student record sheet (cf. KUSSS)
- Confirmation of study success (cf. KUSSS)
- Account statements of all accounts of the last 12 months in the form of turnover (“Umsatzlisten”) (amounts of EUR 200.00 or more must be commented)
- Rental contract and proof of payment of the rent (payment confirmations)
- Proof of payment of any operating costs (payment confirmations)
- Proof of payment of any Internet fees (payment confirmations)
- Proof of payment of any travel costs (payment confirmations)
- Current registration sheet (copy)
- Social insurance data sheet (copy)

If applicable:

- Notification of receipt of student aid (copy)
- Notification of exemption from prescription charges (copy)
- Confirmation of attendance of a German course for which a fee is charged
- Proof of your income (payslip for the last 3 months)
- Proof of income of members of the household excl. shared accommodation (payslip for the last 3 months or annual payslip)
- Proof of income from your spouse/life partner (payslip for the last 3 months or annual payslip)
- Confirmation of receipt of support payments from parents or spouse/life partner (statutory declaration)
- Confirmation of support from other persons (statutory declaration)
- Confirmation of support from other sources e.g. housing assistance, social services (copy)
- Copy of your savings book (amounts of EUR 200.00 or more must be annotated)
- Copy of residence title/visa in case of non-austrian citizenship
- Proof of financing the stay (copy of declaration of liability etc.)
- Birth certificate/s of your child/ren & current registration sheet of your child/ren (copy)
- Marriage certificate/ Partner certificate (copy)
- Current registration sheet of your partner (copy)
- Arrangement of alimonies and confirmation of alimony payments

Other confirmations depending on the emergency situation (e.g. rent arrears, loan payments, doctor/therapy costs etc.)

(3) Any statement from a public body that brings additional transparency to the financial situation should be additionally attached.

(4) The social department collects and processes the applications. The economic department and the three chairpersons can inspect all data. In principle, there is a duty to provide information to university mandataries, but the names of the applicants are kept secret. Similarly, no personal data of the applicants is passed on to authorities that provide financial resources to the Social Fund.

Decision-making structures

§6 (1) Applications are submitted to the ÖH Social Service Department. Applications up to an amount of EUR 500.00 will be processed and decided by the Social Department after consultation with the Business Department. Decisions must be announced in written form within four weeks after the end of the application period. A list of the applications processed is submitted to the Chair and the Economic Department.

(2) If there are higher costs to be reimbursed in a case, or if the case is not clear-cut, the chair and the economic department are involved in the joint decision-making process. This decision must be made by consensus.

(3) There is no legal entitlement to benefits from the ÖH JKU Social Fund.



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Economic Representative of ÖH JKU