

Guidelines

on the Awarding of the Social Entrepreneurship Program Scholarship at RWTH Aachen University

Dated December 14, 2021

Please note: This publication is an English translation. Only the German original of these regulations as published in the Official Announcements of RWTH Aachen University (“Amtliche Bekanntmachungen”) is legally binding.

Based on §§ 2 (4), and 16 of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz – HG) in the version dated September 16, 2014 (Law and Official Gazette NRW p. 547), most recently amended by Article 1 of the Act to amend the Higher Education Act and the Art Colleges Act dated November 25, 2021, (Law and Official Gazette NRW p. 1210a), RWTH Aachen University has issued the following guidelines:

§ 1 Purpose and Eligibility

- (1) The purpose of the Social Entrepreneurship Program is to support student projects in the field of social innovation and social entrepreneurship at RWTH Aachen University and FH Aachen University of Applied Sciences that have a real social impact. The funding focuses on the downstripping of high-tech, i.e. the simplification and application of technologies from the university environment for non-profit purposes in Germany, Europe, and the rest of the world.
- (2) Individuals and groups that are part of the student body of RWTH Aachen University are eligible to apply. Project members must provide corresponding evidence upon request.
- (3) Associations and groups consisting of one or more individuals are eligible for funding:
 1. if the application has been submitted in proper form and in due time,
 2. the applicant is enrolled at RWTH Aachen University, and
 3. provided that the Advisory Board has determined applicants eligible for funding as defined in Paragraph 4.
- (4) Eligibility will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - **Project idea and social impact (70%)**
The evaluation of the project idea and its social impact is based on how much the implementation benefits humanity and climate and environment protection. Both the quality of improvements for single individuals' lives and the overall quality must be considered. The project idea and social impact are graded from "The project idea and its social impact lead to an enormous improvement in living conditions for single individuals and/or has an enormous impact on the living conditions of countless individuals and/or protects climate and environment to an outstanding degree" (10) to "The project idea and its social impact only have an insignificant impact on living conditions, as well as climate and environment." (0).
 - **Feasibility of the project (20%)**
The feasibility rating is based on how costly the implementation of the project would be. Feasibility is graded on a scale ranging from "The project can be implemented easily under the current circumstances" (10) to "The project cannot be implemented or can only be implemented to an insufficient degree, even with the greatest effort" (0).
 - **Presentation of the project (10%)**
The evaluation of the project presentation is based on the design, clarity, and comprehensibility of the presentation. Presentations are evaluated with grades ranging from "All essential information about the project is presented clearly and understandably" (10) to "In the presentation, essential information remains unclear, or the project description is not understandable" (0).

If there is no legal form (e.g. registered association), the funds are paid out as (tax-free) grants. For this purpose, the project group must designate one person as the recipient. This individual must be enrolled at RWTH Aachen University during the entire funding period.

- (5) The scholarships are awarded regardless of the applicants' income.

§ 2 Type and Scope of the Financial Support

- (1) RWTH Aachen University receives funding to support the project groups from Santander Consumer Bank AG.

- (2) Individual projects can be funded up to a total of 12,000 euros (over a maximum of two funding periods), depending on reported and demonstrated need. Only applications with a minimum requirement of 200 euros per funding period are eligible for funding.
- (3) The scholarships are usually granted for one semester at a time. The funding period begins at the start of the respective semester and ends at its conclusion. The funding period is specified in writing in the grant letter.
- (4) The maximum extent of funding is 2 funding periods of 6 months each.
- (5) Eligible expenses include prototyping (e.g., materials, simulations, tools) and project group organization (e.g., travel expenses, software licenses).
- (6) Approved funds are disbursed after successful application and acceptance of the funding recommendation by the RWTH Aachen University Relationship Management Staff Unit. At the end of the grant period, an audit of the use of funds (costs incurred) will be conducted. Funds not used for the project must be repaid to the RWTH Aachen University Relationship Management Staff Unit at the end of the funding period. The project group commits itself to provide the necessary expenditure reports. The Collective Incubator e.V. provides easy-to-use forms (Excel spreadsheet) to assist with this task.
- (7) Funded project groups receive access to the co-working space of Collective Incubators e.V.
- (8) The scholarship does not constitute an employment relationship and is not subject to social security contributions, as it does not count as remuneration according to § 14 SGB IV (the Fourth Book of the Social Code). The scholarship is tax-free under the conditions of § 3 No. 44 EStG (Income Tax Act).

§ 3 Rights and Obligations

- (1) There is no legal entitlement to the scholarship and the scholarship benefits.
- (2) If eligibility ceases, the scholarship may be revoked at any time and without notice.
- (3) By accepting the scholarship, the recipients commit themselves on behalf of the project group:
 - to notify RWTH – specifically the Relationship Management Staff Unit – immediately of any changes that are relevant to the granting of the scholarship as defined in these guidelines, in particular, if they are considering a transfer to another university or if they have to interrupt or discontinue their studies, and
 - to present the achievements/progress of the project group at the end of a given funding period.
- (4) At the same time, by accepting the scholarship, the recipient declares on behalf of the project group that they will comply with the regulations of these guidelines.
- (5) The recipient must send a current certificate of enrollment to the RWTH Relationship Management Staff Unit without being prompted when they submit the application – and, upon request, for any subsequent funding period.

§ 4

Application and the Application and Selection Process

- (1) The scholarship can only be granted upon application. Applications must be submitted in proper form and due time together with the application forms available on the "Santander X" scholarship platform (<https://www.santanderx.com/calls/social-entrepreneurship-program/607e5d6ad466af001460d3b0?detail=true>).
- (2) Scholarship applications must be submitted via the online application process.

The applicable call deadlines are published for each different call for applications (on the scholarship platform "Santander X" (<https://www.santanderx.com/calls/social-entrepreneurship-program/607e5d6ad466af001460d3b0?detail=true>)).

To be granted a continuation of an already running scholarship after the end of the funding period, the application process has to be initiated and completed again.

- (3) Only students already enrolled at RWTH Aachen University at the time of application are eligible to apply.
- (4) The online application must be accompanied by the documents listed below that must be merged into one pdf document:
 - project description (max. one A4 page),
 - project presentation (max. six slides),
 - budget and milestone plan,
 - CVs of the project group members in tabular form (max. one A4 page each), and
 - Certificate of Enrollment at RWTH Aachen University of the designated scholarship recipient for the project group.
- (5) The Advisory Board is responsible for screening and pre-selecting the applications. This group consists of:
 - a representative from RWTH Aachen,
 - two representatives from Collective Incubator e.V.,
 - the chairperson of the AStA Students' Committee, and
 - one representative from Santander Consumer Bank AG (advisory vote only).

After an application window has closed, the Advisory Board meets to preselect project groups worthy of funding.

The Advisory Board shall inform the Relationship Management Staff Unit of RWTH Aachen University of its recommendation in writing. The latter makes the final decision on the eligibility of the proposed project groups, based on the verification of the formal requirements (application complete and received on time).

§ 5

Approval

- (1) The Rectorate grants the scholarships based on the Advisory Board's recommendation and the RWTH Relationship Management Staff Unit's award decision.

- (2) The selected project groups will be notified of the scholarship award decision in writing through a notice of approval. Awardees must inform the RWTH Relationship Management Staff Unit in writing and in due time that they accept the scholarship.

§ 6

Performance Review During the Scholarship Period

- (1) Failure to submit the documents per § 3 (5) of these guidelines may result in the withdrawal of the scholarship.
- (2) Based on these documents, the Advisory Board shall examine whether the project groups are eligible to continue receiving the scholarship under § 1 (3).

§ 7

Revocation of the Notice of Approval

- (1) The scholarship will be revoked, and the recipient will be required to reimburse any scholarship funds they have already received on behalf of the project group if the grant was obtained through incorrect or incomplete information, if the members of the project group have not fulfilled their obligations to provide the required evidence, or if the Advisory Board determines during their review that eligibility for the grant no longer exists under § 1 (2) of the guidelines. RWTH can claim repayment regardless of whether the scholarship amount has already been used in whole or part.
- (2) If the recipient of the project group violates their reporting obligation under § 3 (3) of the guidelines, the notice of approval may be revoked.

§ 8

Termination

- (1) The scholarship is terminated at the end of the month in which it was previously determined per § 6 of these guidelines.
- (2) The scholarship also ends when the agreement between RWTH Aachen University and Santander Consumer Bank AG regarding the sponsorship of the Social Entrepreneurship Program scholarships ends.
- (3) Scholarships terminated prematurely will be re-awarded in a secondary allocation process based on the ranking lists of the Advisory Board until the original funding period ends. Project groups awarded scholarships in any secondary allocation rounds are not entitled to funding for an entire funding period as described in § 2 (3) of these guidelines.

§ 11

Other Remarks

- (1) Funding is always subject to RWTH Aachen University receiving matching funds from Santander Consumer Bank AG.

- (2) RWTH reserves the right to report any fraud or deception in connection with the application for a scholarship and to reclaim wrongfully paid scholarship funds by all legal means to which it is entitled.

§ 12
Publication and Entry into Force

These guidelines shall be published in the official announcements of RWTH Aachen University and will enter into force on the day after publication.

Issued based on the resolution of the RWTH Rectorate dated November 30, 2021.

It is pointed out that, in accordance with § 12 (5) NRW Higher Education Act, any claims regarding a violation of procedural or formal requirements of the regulatory or other autonomous rights of the University may no longer be asserted after one year has elapsed since the official publication of this announcement unless:

- 1) the announcement has not been properly published,
- 2) the Rectorate has objected, prior to publication, to the decision of the committee adopting the regulations,
- 3) the University has been previously notified about the defect of form or of procedure in a complaint, specifying the infringed legal provision and the fact which gives rise to the defect, or
- 4) the legal consequence of the exclusion of complaints was not pointed out in the public announcement.

Rector
of RWTH
Aachen University

Aachen,
dated

December 14, 2021

sgd. Rüdiger

Univ.-Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Dr. h. c. mult. Rüdiger