



# Summer Program Handbook

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## **What to Expect Moving Forward**

Now that you have been accepted to the AJY Program you will start receiving Pre-Departure Information from AJY Staff in Germany. The most pertinent information can be found in this handbook, the Guide to Course Offerings, the Internship Guide and our website, but make sure to check your emails regularly for updates from us!

### ***Meet the AJY Staff!***



**Martin Kley, Ph.D.**

Resident Director

[mkley@heidelberg.edu](mailto:mkley@heidelberg.edu)

Martin Kley studied at the universities of Augsburg, Pittsburgh, and Texas at Austin. Following his Ph.D. in German Studies, he was Assistant Professor of German at Gettysburg College from 2008 to 2013. Upon returning to his native Germany, Martin served first as Academic Director and then Center Director for CIEE's Global Institute Berlin. Combining his pedagogical and scholarly background with administrative experience in the field of international education, Martin works with AJY participants in various capacities – as teacher, academic advisor, mentor, and liaison to the University of Heidelberg.



**Valeria Elsesser**

Program Coordinator

[velsesse@heidelberg.edu](mailto:velsesse@heidelberg.edu)

Valeria Elsesser joined AJY in April 2026, covering for Cara Meysen during her maternity leave. She holds a BA and MA in Political Science and English Studies from the University of Heidelberg, where she specialized in International Relations during her graduate studies. During her studies, Valeria worked as a student assistant and trainee at the Schader Foundation in Darmstadt. She also spent a year abroad at the University of Leeds in the UK. In her capacity as Program Coordinator, Valeria is responsible for a smooth transition into German university life for all students, both concerning paperwork and extracurricular activities.

AJY Staff also includes **Program Assistants** Finn Wegmüller, Julia Pinkow and Tom Drechsler, as well as several adjunct faculty. To read more about their backgrounds, visit the [AJY website](#).

<b>Contact the ...</b>	<b>if you have questions regarding ...</b>
<b>American Office:</b> Tel. +1 (419) 448-2953 Email: <a href="mailto:ajy@heidelberg.edu">ajy@heidelberg.edu</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Your application</li><li>- Pre-Departure Forms</li><li>- Payment &amp; Billing</li></ul>
<b>German Office:</b> Tel. +49 6221 23874 Email: <a href="mailto:mkley@heidelberg.edu">mkley@heidelberg.edu</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Your summer in Heidelberg</li><li>- Academics and courses</li><li>- Host Family assignment and what to bring</li></ul>

## What Do I Still Have to Do Before My Departure?

- ✓ Submit your confirmation form and deposit (**if applicable**) to the AJY office in Tiffin, Ohio by the deadline stated on your acceptance letter.
- ✓ Submit all Pre-Departure Paperwork on [Slate](#):

- Transcript with current semester grades
- Transfer Credit Approval
- Disciplinary Clearance
- Medical History
- Liability Release
- Passport (scan of the picture page)
- Housing Questionnaire
- Arrival Information

- ✓ Make sure you have a valid passport! US citizens do not need to apply for a visa prior to their arrival in Germany. Non-US citizens should contact the German consulate to find out their visa requirements.
- ✓ Talk to your physician about any medication you are taking and make sure to bring enough for your entire semester abroad. Some medication might not be available for refill in Germany.
- ✓ Book a flight to Frankfurt Airport (FRA) and a return flight home. You can find your semester's arrival and departure dates on the AJY website.
  - If you are arriving on Arrival Day, please make sure your flight arrives in Frankfurt between 8-10 am, otherwise a pick-up at the airport by AJY Staff cannot be guaranteed.
  - Early arrival before the official start of the semester can be arranged and is beneficial as it gives you a few days to settle and get over jetlag before orientation and classes start. **Please contact AJY staff before booking a flight if you would like to arrive early!**
  - Due to visa requirements, your return flight should be before December 31<sup>st</sup> (Fall Semester) or July 31<sup>st</sup> (Spring Semester). Students need to move out of their dorms by the end of December (Fall Semester) or the end of July (Spring Semester).
- ✓ For safety reasons, AJY requires you to have a smartphone with a working phone number. Talk to your cellphone provider about a possible international plan. If unavailable, AJY staff can help you buy an inexpensive pre-paid German SIM card.
- ✓ Figure out your banking situation. A lot of places in Germany do not accept credit cards, therefore most AJY students rely on cash. Alternatively, you can create a multi-currency account using [Wise](#).

## **What Will Be Taken Care of by AJY Staff?**

### **Before your departure, AJY will ...**

- place you with a host family,
- sign you up for health insurance with a German healthcare provider,

### **After your arrival, AJY will ...**

- buy you a public transportation pass for use throughout all of Germany
- help you with any other needs you may have to facilitate a smooth transition into life as a study abroad student.

### ***Of Note: Host Family Placement***

You will receive your host family placement via Email a few weeks before your arrival. We recommend reaching out to your host family and start getting to know them, as a good connection to the family is vital for your success in the Summer Program. Most students will eat breakfast and dinner with their host families. We also recommend bringing your host family a small thank-you gift from the US.

### ***Of Note: Health Insurance Coverage***

AJY arranges comprehensive health insurance coverage for you, which is recognized in both Germany and Europe. Coverage includes doctor's visits, prescription medicine, hospital care, routine dental and eye care, physical therapy, and psychological counseling. Coverage starts on the date the program begins and ends on the last day of the last month of the program. If you plan to arrive early or to remain in Europe after leaving the program, you are responsible for your own insurance. You are also responsible for adding any insurance policies regarding medical evacuation, repatriation of remains or personal liability.

### ***Of Note: Physical Address in Germany***

Upon entry into the EU, customs and border patrol agents at the airport might require you to provide proof of enrollment at the university of Heidelberg. Please make sure to have your **Acceptance Letter** with you. They might also require you to provide an address in Germany, you may use the address for the AJY Study Center:

**Your Name**  
**c/o American Junior Year**  
**Hauptstraße 133**  
**69117 Heidelberg, Germany**

Each student has a mailbox at the Study Center, which they can have mail sent to throughout the program. We advise against receiving packages from the U.S. (such as care packages sent from your family), as you will have to pay an exorbitant customs fee upon their arrival.