



Support structures for at-risk scholars at the University of Cologne

Universität Köln | International Office

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Situation at the University of Cologne - a few numbers

2016 started hosting at-risk scholars

17 total number of scholars hosted so far
(plus a varying number supported as guests)

11 funded through Philipp Schwartz-Fellowships

(Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation)

(Other funding: Scholar Rescue Fund, Artist Protection Fund, DFG, Volkswagen Foundation, university funds)

12 scholars (plus guests) currently active

Situation at the University of Cologne - some starting points

Welcome Center

- helps with housing, visa, insurance, settling in Germany/Cologne etc.
 - but: needs of at-risk scholars oftentimes exceeds the support that can be offered

Workshop with scholars / later:
questionnaire to find out about wishes and needs

Psychosocial needs

- we refer to experts for trauma / psychological support,
- we see our task in providing an environment in which certain things are made easier for the scholars,
- we try to stay in close contact to the scholars, and – if possible – to establish a relationship in which psychosocial needs are expressed or shown

Focus on the two main areas of **career development & family support**

Family Support for at-risk scholars

Objectives

- help families overcome language barriers and escape isolation
- connect families and foster social contacts
- get to know the city, solve everyday problems
- empower families

Activities

- support with language courses, schools, child care, doctors, ...
- getting to know the city and opportunities/initiatives in the city
- sports and cultural activities
- arranging tutoring for children
- supporting partners in job search (or in pursuing hobbies)
- excursions and meetings
- consultation and home visits
- ...

Career Development for at-risk scholars plus **Family Support**

Language classes/tutoring:
German (for scholar AND partner), Academic English

Welcome Center

Getting to know the city

Coaching
one-on-one career coaching

Support with schools, child care, doctors, tutoring for children

Workshops (in co-operations with other universities hosting at-risk scholars)
German academic system, alternatives to an academic career, (self-)positioning as a scholar, presentation skills, proposal writing, ...

sports and cultural activities

supporting partners in job search

excursions

Equipment

regular meetings

Supporting academic events

Mentor(-ing) support

consultation and home visits

External psychological support



Summary

Using existing structures (Welcome Centre, workshops in English, language classes)

Creating new structures (maybe in co-operation) such as workshops

Strengthening existing resources (mentors!)

Strengthening the families

Offering easy access to psychosocial support, if necessary

Establishing contact and keeping in touch

Thank you very much for your attention!

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