

DAFI Scholarship Programme Slovakia

Call for Applications for the 2026/2027 Academic Year

Application deadline: 31 August 2026

I - What is the DAFI scholarship programme?

The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, known as the DAFI scholarship programme, offers selected refugee students the possibility to complete an **undergraduate degree** (Bachelor's degree or equivalent) **in their first country of asylum**. Thanks to the support of the German Government and other donors, the DAFI programme has supported over 27,000 refugee students worldwide since 1992. In Slovakia, a total of 42 students have been supported since the launch of the programme in 2022.

Main objectives of the DAFI programme:

- promote **self-reliance** among young refugee women and men by providing opportunities to earn a higher education qualification, paving the way for future employment, entrepreneurship, other livelihoods or postgraduate studies;
- develop the **civic, social and leadership skills** of students to promote human rights, gender equality, peace and non-violence and community development in the societies where they live and work;
- contribute to **sustainable development, peace and stability** in regions affected by conflict and displacement and to enable refugees to **access solutions**.

Scholarships awarded under the DAFI programme contribute to a **wide range of costs**, depending on the local cost of living and the needs of the specific country programme.

Studies at Master's level are **not** supported under the DAFI programme.

II - What are the terms and conditions of the scholarship?

The DAFI scholarship may be **renewed each year to cover the whole period of the undergraduate degree (usually three years; in some cases, a maximum of four years)**, based on regular class attendance, successful completion of each semester and academic year, progress towards the degree within the regular study time foreseen by the higher education institution, and participation in DAFI programme activities such as student meetings and practical sessions focusing on career-preparedness.

Once awarded a DAFI scholarship, scholars sign a **Scholarship Agreement form**. DAFI scholars are expected to work diligently towards the successful completion of the programme of study and to inform UNHCR if they are experiencing challenges. In cases of fraud or misconduct, the scholarship will be discontinued

immediately. In case of repeated absenteeism, underperformance or academic failure, continuation or discontinuation of the scholarship will be determined taking into account specific circumstances and reasons provided.

DAFI scholars in Slovakia receive a **monthly allowance** to cover costs such as accommodation, food, local transportation and study materials.

Participation in the DAFI programme includes a **variety of student activities** (student meetings, educational events, etc.). Scholars are also strongly encouraged to **get involved in volunteering activities and participate in community-focused and youth-led activities**.

III - What are the criteria to be eligible for a DAFI scholarship?

To be eligible for a DAFI scholarship in Slovakia, you must meet the following criteria:

- ☐ You have been granted **refugee status** (or have **applied for asylum**) or have been granted **Temporary Protection (TP)** in Slovakia (*please note that applicants who have **Temporary Residence in Slovakia at the time of application** are **not eligible** for a DAFI scholarship*);
- ☐ You are **under 28 years old** at the start of your studies¹;
- ☐ You have **completed high/secondary school** and are able to present **documents attesting your achievements**²;
- ☐ You achieved **at least 60% marks** in end of high/secondary school examinations;
- ☐ You have been admitted to an **undergraduate study programme in an accredited university or higher education institution in Slovakia** (either you have just been admitted, or you are currently studying in an undergraduate study programme and have at least two years of study left);
- ☐ You are **proficient in the language of instruction** of the degree programme in which you enrolled;
- ☐ You are **in need of financial assistance** to pursue your studies;
- ☐ You have a **strong motivation to contribute to your community** through leadership, volunteering, community service, mentoring, community development or similar;
- ☐ You are **not currently receiving a scholarship from another source** (e.g. private scholarship, scholarship from the Slovak government, Erasmus scholarship, etc.);
- ☐ **None of your siblings** is currently **receiving a DAFI scholarship**.

Qualified female candidates and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Are not eligible for a DAFI scholarship:

- Applicants with advanced resettlement or complementary pathways/sponsorship cases (departure expected within one year);
- Applicants who do not intend to finish their undergraduate studies in Slovakia because of planned repatriation or other reasons;
- Students who already hold a tertiary or higher education level degree.

¹ Exceptions to the age limitation may apply if you started your Bachelor studies in your home country but had to interrupt your studies due to flight, or if you faced particular challenges to access higher education (e.g. childcare responsibilities, disability, etc.)

² In case you do not possess the relevant documents, please get in touch with UNHCR prior to the submission of your application and indicate the reason why you are not able to submit the certificate.

IV – How to apply for a DAFI scholarship for the 2026/2027 academic year?

Applications for a DAFI scholarship for the 2026/2027 academic year have to be **submitted online in English**, through UNHCR's global tertiary programme platform:

<https://unhcr-dafi-tertiary.scholarshipsplatform.com/>

You will need to first **register an account**, before being able to start your online application.

Please make sure **“Slovakia”** is indicated as the **“Country of Study (Country of Asylum)”**. All the information requested in the different **online tabs** needs to be provided (unless indicated as optional). You will be able to save your information in-progress.

You will be asked to **upload the following documents** as part of your online application:

- ☐ **Proof of refugee status (or asylum application) or Temporary Protection (TP) status** in Slovakia [*tab “Eligibility criteria”*];
- ☐ Copy of your **high/secondary school transcripts and diploma or certification of completion** (if issued in another country, proof of official recognition of the diploma should be uploaded) [*tab “Academic background”*];
- ☐ **Proof of enrolment in an accredited university or higher education institution in Slovakia** (admission/acceptance letter, Bonafide letter) [*tab “Your study plan for this scholarship”*];
- ☐ If you are currently studying in an undergraduate study programme (with more than two years left of study), copy of **transcript of prior learning or credits completed** [*tab “Your study plan for this scholarship”*].

Your application has to be submitted through the online portal **by 31 August 2026 (23:59, Central European Time)**. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

V – What are the different steps of the selection process?

Following submission of your online application:

- Suitable candidates will be **shortlisted and invited to an interview**;
- Interviews will be conducted **online by a Selection Committee** (*interviews will be conducted in Slovak or English, depending on the main language of instruction of the degree programme in which you enrolled*);
- Based on the interview performance and application, the Selection Committee will identify **scholarship recipients** according to the number of DAFI scholarships available in Slovakia;
- Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will receive a **notification** from UNHCR about the outcome of their application;
- Successful applicants will be **officially enrolled** in the DAFI programme and will be **paid a monthly allowance** starting from September 2026 onwards (paid retroactively).

UNHCR does not charge any fee at any stage of the selection process.

Any questions?

Please contact the UNHCR Slovakia DAFI Focal Point:

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