

Residence permit for self-employment

As a graduate of a German university, you may run a business on a self-employed basis in Germany or work as a freelancer, as an engineer for example. You can learn about the various options open to you in the section on **Types of new business**.

Business startups

In order to start a business, you require a residence permit for the purpose of self-employment (Section 21 AufenthG (German Residence Act)). You need to apply for this at the relevant Foreigners Authority. You will find detailed information on the requirements to be met in the section **Visa for self-employed business**.

Working as a freelancer

If you would like to work as a freelancer, you must apply for a residence permit for the purpose of self-employment (Section 21 (5) AufenthG (German Residence Act)). As a general rule, you will need your CV, your degree certificate, a description of the planned activity and a financial plan for this purpose. You will find detailed information on the requirements to be met in the section **Visa for freelance business**.

The period of validity of the residence permit for the purpose of self-employment is limited initially. If your business idea is successful and the income covers the living costs of you and your family, it is usually not a problem to extend the residence permit.

Before applying, ask the Foreigners Authority what documents you will need to bring with you. Some authorities also provide online information on this subject.

Our section **Advisory services** gives details on the special advice and information services available to you.