



ATLANTIC EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (AEI) STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM 2024-2025 STUDY IN GERMANY OR SWITZERLAND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NOTE: AEI reserves the right to cancel the program at any point prior to or during the study-abroad experience, should any situations arise which would require such a decision to be made.

Q1: What is Atlantic Education International (AEI)?

Atlantic Education International (AEI) was created in 1995 by the Province of New Brunswick to deliver world class education opportunities to the global community through the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. As one of its main lines of business, every year AEI brings hundreds of foreign students to New Brunswick to study in our middle schools and high schools, and to live with host families in communities around the province. For more information on AEI, please refer to our website: <https://aei-inc.ca>.

Q2: What is Youth for Understanding (YFU)?

Youth for Understanding (YFU) is a volunteer-based global non-profit community driven by the passion of people, consisting of 55+ member organizations across six continents. As a leader in intercultural exchange and educational programs for more than 60 years, YFU has impacted more than 270,000 students – and their host families and networks – and more than 70,000 volunteers. YFU and AEI have worked together in recent years to bring many students from around the world to New Brunswick schools and communities, including dozens of young people from Germany and Switzerland. YFU has also been our partner for receiving students through the AEI Study Abroad Program for the last two years. For more information on YFU, please refer to their website: www.yfu.org

Q3: Why did AEI choose to work with YFU Germany and YFU Switzerland?

In recent years, AEI has worked closely with our partners at YFU to bring many international students to New Brunswick. Because of that close relationship, and in recognition of our shared values and standards, AEI has chosen to work with YFU to welcome and support our students during their study-abroad year in Germany or Switzerland.

Q4: If I am selected for this program, how long will I be away from my home?

This program is for a full school year. Although exact dates are yet to be determined, it is anticipated that participants will leave Canada in early- to mid-August 2024 and return at some point in June 2025. Participants will spend the entire school year in Germany or Switzerland, including during the Christmas break.

Q5: What are the eligibility requirements for this program?

To be eligible, students must:

- be entering Grade 10, Grade 11, or Grade 12 in September 2024
 - **Program in Germany:** students must have been born between March 31, 2006 and July 31, 2009.
 - **Program in Switzerland:** students must have been born between September 30, 2006 and May 30, 2009.
- have at least an 80% average in high school on their June 2023 report card, or similar achievement on Grade 8 report card for June 2023
- be flexible and adaptable to change, and be open to experiencing a new culture and lifestyle far away from home
- be willing, upon acceptance, to agree to abide by the rules and code of behavior relevant to this program, and, along with their parent/guardian, to sign a declaration to that effect
- be committed to attending school and taking their studies seriously while in Germany or Switzerland
- be fully vaccinated (double dose) against COVID-19 by November 3, 2023.

Q6: What will be covered by the scholarship?

The scholarship will cover the following costs associated with this study-abroad experience:

- return international airfare to Germany or Switzerland and transportation to the host community
- all tuition costs with the host school
- any language training that may be offered in the host country
- accommodations and meals with a host family
- a modest monthly spending allowance (although participants may want to bring additional funds)
- medical insurance
- additional costs that may be incurred, such as transportation to school, uniforms (if required), school trips, etc.
- costs associated with securing a visa (if required)
- orientation sessions prior to departure and debrief sessions upon return to New Brunswick

Additional costs will be the responsibility of the student and their family, such as passport fees, all personal items like clothing, luggage and toiletries, optional excursions and activities, and spending money beyond the modest amount provided by the scholarship.

Q7: How will this impact on my studies at my local high school?

Selected participants will need to work with their own high schools to determine what the impact will be on their academic programs. Each student's academic program and progress is unique, and their high school will be best able to advise on a course of action. Students should be aware that it is possible they may have to spend an extra year in high school to complete the requirements for a New Brunswick graduation diploma. While participants will be required to participate in their schoolwork fully and diligently in Germany and Switzerland, it is important to remember that a year of studying abroad is an opportunity to grow as a person, to mature as a global citizen, and to learn about the world in a way that is not possible in the traditional school setting.

Q8: How do I apply for the scholarship program?

Interested students can access the online application form by visiting the AEI website at <https://aei-inc.ca>. The form must be fully completed, signed by the student and their parent or guardian, and submitted online by the application deadline of midnight on November 3, 2023. In addition to the completed form, applicants must upload a personal essay of 500-1000 words outlining their desire and suitability for the program, as well as a copy of their June 2023 high school or middle school report card, as appropriate. Students will also be asked to provide two (2) references:

1. a school principal, vice principal, guidance counselor, or teacher
2. an adult outside of your family who knows you well (i.e. employer, mentor, coach, family friend, etc.)

*NOTE: References may be contacted directly by the selection committee.

Q9: How will students be selected for this program?

The applications will be reviewed by an independent selection committee. A shortlist of applicants will be identified based on all of the information received, and interviews will be arranged for early December. References may be contacted for those selected for an interview. A final decision will be made before the end of December.

Q10: Will my family have to host an international student in our home?

No, there is no requirement for your family to host an international student. However, if your family is interested in doing so, more information is available on our website at <https://aei-inc.ca/host-a-student-in-new-brunswick/why-host-a-student/>.

Q11: In what part of Germany or Switzerland will I be living?

Placement of international students is the responsibility of the host country. There will be many high school students just like you from around the world who will be placed in welcoming homes and communities around Germany and Switzerland. Part of the excitement of the program is to discover an entirely new community and school, where you will be able to make new and lasting friendships and explore the culture and natural beauty of a place you may never have heard of before.

Q12: What activities might be part of my experience?

Each country, community, school, and homestay family are unique, so it's impossible to know exactly what kinds of activities and outings you might take part in. If you are selected for this opportunity, your job will be to try new things and do your best to appreciate the many cultural, community, athletic, and other experiences that your host family and your school will introduce you to.

You'll find lots of great information about what it's like to spend a year in Germany and Switzerland from the YFU Germany website: <https://study.yfu.org/germany> or the YFU Switzerland website: <https://study.yfu.org/switzerland>.

Q13: How will this benefit me in the future?

There are many benefits to spending a year studying abroad, such as developing a new appreciation for a different culture, seeing the world through a different lens than the one you've grown up with, learning a new language, becoming more responsible, inquisitive and resilient in the face of personal challenges, coming to more fully embrace diversity, becoming more accepting of different perspectives and opinions, and having time to think about your future and what that might look like. Many students who have completed a study-abroad year like this have found they are more confident, they are better prepared to interact with others, and they are better able to make decisions about their future. However, the exact benefits are as varied and unique as you are as an individual. The best way to approach an opportunity like this is simply to embrace it, throw yourself into many new experiences, make lots of friends, and have fun!

Q14: What will I be expected to do after the year away?

We would be pleased if you would help us promote this opportunity to other students who may be interested in a future study-abroad experience. Mostly, though, we would like you to use your new insights, attitudes, and skills to champion diversity, to reach out to newcomers who may feel like you did when you embarked on your year away, to strive to be the best "you" that you can be as you plan your future life, and to take whatever action you can to make the world a better place.

Q15: I still have questions. How can I or my parent/guardian contact somebody for answers or help with the application process?

Please feel free to submit any questions or inquiries to aei@gnb.ca.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL INTERESTED STUDENTS!