

Frequently Asked Questions about the elections in the summer semester 2023

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, this FAQ refers to the elections to the Senate, the Faculty Conferences and the SHK Representative

1. How will elections be held this summer semester?

The elections for the Senate and the Faculty Conferences in the student group, as well as the representatives for the student assistants in faculties and central institutions will take place as on-site elections, with the option to apply for postal voting documents. The director of the BiSEd has also decided to conduct the election for the BiSEd conference in all member groups in this way and to follow the central elections as far as possible with regard to the deadlines.

2. How are the deadlines and regulations applicable to the electoral process made known?

All students will be informed about the election procedure for the elections in question by e-mail and via the University's social media channels and will be asked to inform themselves about their eligibility to vote and to apply for a postal vote via an online form (for eligibility to vote, see par. 3 and 4). In addition, all election notices for the elections to the Senate, the Faculty Conferences and the SHK Officer will be published on the election portal of Bielefeld University (<https://uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen/>) as well as posted publicly at the university. The deadlines and regulations applicable to this election procedure can be found in the First Election Announcements of 28 April 2023 and the FAQ.

3. Who is entitled to vote and stand as a candidate?

All members of Bielefeld University belonging to the student group on the deadline (1 May 2023) and being properly enrolled students and not being on leave for more than six months, are entitled to vote.

Members of Bielefeld University are only entitled to vote and stand as a candidate if they are listed up in the electoral register.

Questions related to the electoral register or the right to vote will be answered by the electoral office (see par. 4 and for communication see par. 18).

4. How can I check if I am listed up in the electoral register?

The electoral register is put on display from 8 May until 12 May 2023 (from 9 am to 3 pm) in the electoral office (V7-116). Information about the entry into the electoral register and the assignment to the status groups can be gathered in person, by phone or e-mail (for communication see par. 18). For a personal inspection, please make an appointment.

5. How and until what deadline can I make list proposals?

Completed list proposals can be submitted until **22 May 2023, 3pm** at the Election Office (UHG V7-144 / 116 / 100) in person or by post or, alternatively, submitted electronically to zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de. For all elections, the original signature of the list spokesperson must be submitted.

If any difficulties or questions arise in this regard, please contact the Elections Office. To submit the declarations and signatures of the other candidates or supporters and possible alternatives, see par. 7.

6. What needs to be considered with regard to gender parity in the composition of lists?

Pursuant to § 11b of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz NRW), the requirements for gender parity representation must be observed when appointing members to committees and drawing up lists. The Senate of Bielefeld University has passed a resolution regarding the details of this. This resolution is available on the election portal (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/senat_fakultaeten/index.xml) (under the item "Erläuterungen und Vorgaben zur Erstellung von Listenvorschlägen" German version only). If a list cannot be filled in accordance with these requirements, the list spokesperson must submit a written explanation of the reasons for not meeting the requirements for the respective body and the respective member group as well as the efforts made, even without an explicit request by the Central Election Office. If no or insufficient reasons are provided, it is up to the election committee to reject a list under certain circumstances and not to admit it to the election.

7. What can I do if I, as a candidate or supporter, cannot sign on the original list?

If a signature cannot be affixed to the original list proposal or to an original support list, it can also be affixed to a copy of the original document. In order to simplify the procedure for submitting list proposals, the signature can alternatively be submitted to the list spokesperson in digital form (i.e. scan, photo, fax, etc.) or by means of a declaration of consent. This declaration of consent for candidacy and the declaration of support for a list proposal are available on the election portal (www.uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen) (under the item "List forms" for the respective committee/office) or can be requested from the electoral office. They can also be sent to the list spokesperson in digital form (see above) for submission to the electoral office. The signature of the list spokesperson must be submitted in the original. However, upon request by the electoral office or the electoral committee, the list spokesperson must be able to submit all the original signatures of the candidates or, if applicable, of the supporters.

8. How do I apply for a postal vote?

All eligible voters at Bielefeld University have the opportunity to apply for their postal voting documents using an online form. The link to this form can be found on the front page of the election portal (www.uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen) starting week 17 (publication of the First Election Announcement). The application must include the following information: surname, first name, matriculation number (in case of being a student) and the address to which the documents are to be sent (see also par. 13).

9. For which elections does this application for postal voting apply?

This application for a postal vote can be used to apply for documents for the elections to the Senate, the Faculty Conferences, the SHK representatives and the BiSEd Conference in the student group. Every applicant who is entitled to vote automatically receives all the ballot papers they are eligible for with the postal voting documents. The ballot papers will be sent out by the relevant electoral office. For the processing of personal data, see par. 20.

10. What can I do if I have any difficulties or technical problems with filling in the postal vote application?

If any technical difficulties (e. g. with screen readers) with filling in the request for postal vote occur, please contact the staff of the election office via e-mail or telephone (for communication see par. 18). This also applies for problems concerning legibility of any other document published on the election portal.

11. Why do I have to provide my Uni-ID / matriculation number?

The matriculation number or Uni-ID is asked for a clear assignment and verification in the electoral register. This way it can be guaranteed that a person can only ask for the postal vote documents once and they will only be sent to that specific person. Each student has an individual and unique Uni-ID on the student card. Uni-ID and the number on the library card are identical, but the number on the library card is supplemented by another number (please do not include this in the application form).

12. When is the deadline for applying for postal voting documents?

You can apply for postal vote from 28 April 2023 (publication of the First Election Announcement) until **12 June 2023 12 pm**.

13. When and to which address will my postal voting documents be sent?

The dispatch of postal voting documents will be prepared in week 23. In case you did not receive the respective document by the end of week 24 (16 June 2022), please ask the election office via e-mail or telephone (for communication see par. 18).

The dispatch will be sent to the address entered on the application form. This may differ from the address provided to the University for communication purposes. In order to ensure that the postal voting documents you have applied for actually reach you where you are at the time of the election, it is mandatory to provide an address.

14. When is the deadline for the return of the postal voting documents?

The postal voting documents must be returned to the election office by **4 p.m. on 22 June 2023**. They can be returned by post or the internal post service. The documents may also be handed in personally at the election office (UHG V7-144 / 116 / 100) or at the polling station during opening hours.

15. Can I also hand in my postal voting documents at the polling station?

If you have applied for postal voting documents but then change your mind and prefer to vote on site at the polling station, you can do so during the opening hours of the polling station (see par. 17). If possible, please bring all the documents that were sent to you after you applied for a postal vote, as well as your official or student ID card or any other valid official photo ID. You will receive new ballot papers at the polling station and will then be able to vote in person.

16. Will there be any costs for voters?

No, there are no costs for voters. The return of the postal vote documents is free of charge for the voters.

17. Where and when can I vote in person (at the polling station)?

During the period from 19 to 22 June 2023, a polling station will be open in the central hall of the main university building. Here you will have the opportunity to vote in person for the elections listed under par. 1 as well as for the elections to the BiSEd Conference (all member groups). The polling station is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the above-mentioned period. During the voting in person, rules of conduct and distance must be observed and the instructions of the election workers on site must be followed.

18. Notes on communication (in case of questions or problems)

Personal communication with the election office e. g. in case of questions concerning the right to vote, difficulties in applying for postal vote or submitting list proposals, etc. can be done in person on site or by telephone or via personal e-mail addresses ending in “@uni-bielefeld.de” or similar (in case of certain faculties or institutes incl. their respective abbreviation, e.g. @techfak.uni-bielefeld.de or @cebitec.uni-bielefeld.de). In case of enquiries from voters, the date birth will be requested for verification purposes. Personal communication via functional e-mail addresses, to which more than person usually has access, is not possible. For questions that do not concern the elections to the Senate, the Faculty Conferences, the SHK representatives or the central deputies of the Equal Opportunities Officer, please contact bised-wahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de for the elections to the BiSEd Conference.

19. May I have the postal voting documents in English?

No, it is not possible to obtain postal voting documents in English. Even if there are translations of the election portal or the application form, we cannot offer any official documents as e. g. the postal vote documents or the election announcements in English. In case of problems of comprehension please get in contact with the election office.

20. How will my personal data be processed?

The data collected in the course of conducting the committee elections is collected solely for the purpose of conducting the elections for the Senate of Bielefeld University, the Faculty Conferences, the SHK representatives, the BiSEd Conference in the student group as well as the election for the student central representative of the Equal Opportunities Officer and the by-election of the central deputies of the Equal Opportunities Officer from the group of female professors and academic staff. Your personal data will be treated confidentially and will only be processed by employees of Bielefeld University who are entrusted with conducting the committee elections. As a matter of principle, data will not be passed on to third parties, in particular outside the university. [Further information can be found in the data protection information](#) (German version only).

21. When will the result of the election be announced?

The counting of the election results for the Senate, the Faculty Conferences and the SHK representatives will take place publicly **from 8:30 a.m. on 23 June 2023 in UHG T0-218**. As soon as possible afterwards, the election results will be published in the Third Election Announcement on the election portal.

22. I need help with filling in the vote papers, may I get any help from another person?

Anyone who is unable to fill in the ballot papers themselves due to a physical impairment may enlist the help of another person. The prerequisite for this is that the assistant has reached the age of 16. They must sign the declaration on the ballot paper. Furthermore, the assisting person is obliged to keep secret the knowledge they have gained by assisting in the election.

23. Is there any possibility for an election campaign?

As in previous years, each list has the opportunity to present itself online with a pdf document to be prepared by the list itself. All submitted documents can be published via the election portal (www.uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen) at the earliest with the second election announcement of the approved list proposals (on 5 June 2023 at the latest). This election portal can only be used for election advertising for the elections to the Senate, the Faculty Conferences and the SHK representatives.

The document must clearly state who is responsible for the content of the document, which list it is (list name) and for which body it is running. The election office checks the document only with regard to the requirements mentioned above and whether it contains content relevant to criminal law. Please hand in the Pdf-documents electronically at the election office (zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de).

Likewise, lists can put up posters in the university buildings or display flyers in the canteen in accordance with the applicable regulations.