

Centres of Excellence West Africa

Call for tender within the DAAD “African Excellence” programme

What are the goals of the DAAD’s African Excellence Programme?

The establishment of university centres of excellence which operate on an internationally competitive level to train experts and leaders for sub-Saharan Africa is a part of the DAAD’s Africa strategy. The objective is to significantly improve the quality and relevance of education at African universities in selected subjects, to create research capacity, and to establish networks among African universities and research institutions as well as with German partners. Promoting the development of future experts and leaders in science, business, and society plays a particular role in this project. The centres of excellence will offer future decision-makers, specialists, and teachers the opportunity to obtain training and education that correspond to international quality standards. At the same time, they will create an environment conducive to long-term research with conditions favourable to international cooperation and the involvement of key stakeholders. The aim is for each centre to have a broader regional impact.

The German Federal Foreign Office has provided funding to the DAAD for this programme as part of its efforts to promote foreign cultural and educational policy. To date, the programme has funded eight centres of excellence in different disciplines at seven university campuses in Africa (www.african-excellence.de).

The direct short- and medium-term objectives of the programme include:

1. The professional, methodological and personal training of qualified graduates in fields relevant to society.
2. The improvement of teaching and courses at partner universities which correspond to the international state of science and suit the local context.
3. The expansion and improvement of research capacities.
4. The integration of centres of excellence into networks with relevant employers and stakeholders from politics, business, and civil society in order to achieve increased visibility within West Africa and especially in Mali and Niger.

These objectives should firstly ensure that the graduates of the centres of excellence are integrated into the labour market in a manner adequate to their training. Secondly, they will contribute to the development of innovative and strategic approaches for securing the financial, personnel and structural sustainability of the centres. This will further ensure that long-term programme objectives are achieved.

The long-term objectives of the programme are:

5. To contribute to the improvement of sectors relevant to society in African countries by placing graduates in key positions in education, society, and business, and
6. to contribute to sustainable and internationally competitive centres of excellence which achieve a high visibility in society.

The current call for tender addresses cooperation projects of higher education institutions in West Africa, with a preference for French-speaking Africa. The German Federal Foreign Office has provided the funds to the DAAD from its special “Flight and Migration” funds.

Migration from West Africa to Europe across the Mediterranean and the Atlantic has increased considerably in recent years. In addition to political instability, conflicts, and wars, increasing economic hardship and a widespread lack of prospects for much of the population in West Africa play a key role. The main migration routes pass through Mali and Niger to the Sahara and then on to the Mediterranean coast. By establishing two centres of excellence at universities in West African countries, the DAAD seeks to create practice-oriented and sustainable educational opportunities that offer competitive training opportunities for young people at a local level in a region heavily affected by migration. The courses should be structured with an eye for practical, solution-orientated approaches, while also teaching management skills and soft skills to further increase graduates' employment prospects and thus contributing to the creation of incentives to stay in the region. In addition, graduates of the centres attaining key positions contribute to the stabilisation of socially relevant sectors in the target region.

Given the key role of both countries, a special focus of the projects will be put on Mali and Niger. Due to the current security situation hindering the establishment of appropriate structures in these countries, a triangular cooperation with neighbouring countries (for example, Germany–Burkina Faso–Niger or Mali–Senegal–Germany) can be set up. The possibility of relocating and extending activities on the ground to Mali and/or Niger once the security situation improves should be a part of the planning from the outset.

The university cooperation projects selected will be subject to an indicator-based, outcomes-orientated monitoring. Participating universities are expected to align their annual reports to these monitoring requirements. The annual reports should address the programme indicators listed in annexe 2 as well as the project-specific indicators yet to be defined. Universities selected for funding will receive all the necessary forms for these reports along with the funding agreement. In addition, the annual status reports must provide a description of how the funded partnership is contributing to the achievement of goals and to the outcome of the project.

Who can apply?

Applications may be submitted by:

one or several German higher education institutions or their specialist departments or institutes in collaboration with an accredited West African university. In addition, a partnership with at least one higher education institution in Mali and/or Niger should exist or be established where possible.

What will be funded?

Funding measures:

The establishment of a total of two centres of excellence as a result of a partnership between at least one German and at least one West African university in the applied fields of social sciences (focus on economics, politics, public administration, and sociology) and/or engineering (focus on environmental engineering) as well as public health care/medicine will be funded. The focus of the centres' speciality should be strongly practical in nature.

The following measures and activities may be funded to ensure achievement of the project objectives (please see the regulations for funding described in the guidelines, annexe 1). In addition to eligible expenditures on staff, equipment, and scholarships, these also include:

- Preparatory measures for identifying potential partners and deepening cooperation for the German or the West African partner universities
- Development of curricula (workshops etc.)
- Summer schools
- Supervision of master's theses
- Placements

- Short courses and staff development courses
- Temporary lecturers (transport and accommodation)
- Transport and accommodation for lecturers and project staff for administrative and coordination purposes
- Research funds (limited; primarily for use on master's theses)
- Infrastructure and equipment (limited)
- Research stays by researchers and master's students at partner universities
- Exchange of students between German and West African universities
- Organisation of workshops and conferences (networking conferences)
- Marketing activities
- E-learning components

Funding period:

The projected funding period is five years (subject to the provision of funding by the German Federal Foreign Office; the current special funds are assured for two years; a subsequent transfer to the DAAD's regular fund for the African Excellence programme is planned). Beginning of funding is envisaged within 2017 (with funding through 31.12.2021). A second five-year funding phase is planned.

Funding levels:

A funding level of 300,000 Euro for each year 1 and 2 (2017 and 2018) and of 400,000 Euro for each following year is envisaged.

The project will be funded under full financing.

Which subjects are eligible?

The programme is open to the following subjects:

- Economics and Business
- Political science
- Public administration
- Engineering with a focus on environmental engineering
- Healthcare and Public Health

Which target groups will be funded?

Students, graduates, doctoral candidates, scientists, lecturers, professors, administrators/multipliers

Which additional conditions should be met?

The following conditions apply to the application:

- Integration of at least one university from Mali or Niger into the network to be established
- At least one project must be located in a French-speaking West African country

Application procedure

The application procedure is divided into:

- a) Preparatory measures for project initiation
- b) Project application

a) Preparatory measures for project initiation

To identify potential partners and opportunities for extended cooperation, universities can apply for project start-up funds from the DAAD right away (to cover travel for negotiations, shorter project start-up workshops, etc.). The application is submitted to the DAAD by email. No formal requirements apply.

Expenditures for travel to and subsistence within the African target region for members of the German university and/or a counter-visit by the African partners can be funded (reimbursement will occur in line with the

b) Project application

Federal Travel Costs Act (BRKG), usually second-class rail tickets, economy class airfares).

The application should provide a short description of the proposed project (including the planned networking situation with Mali and/or Niger, a timetable, and budget), present the project partners, and describe the preparatory activities/measures necessary for planning and their objectives.

The rates of the Federal Travel Costs Act (BRKG) apply.

Criteria for the selection of preparatory measures are:

- The relevance and application of the project idea for the target region and the benefit to the specialist field;
- Existing, demonstrable networking with African partners (also in other programmes);
- Applicants' experience with such partnerships;
- Realistic time and budgetary planning.

A report must be submitted to the DAAD no later than two months after the preparatory work is complete. It shall describe the preparatory measures and activities in detail, provide an analysis of the obtained outcomes measured against the planned objectives and a travel plan.

The complete, joint application made by the cooperation partners must be submitted via the DAAD online portal (<https://portal.daad.de/irj/portal>) by the stipulated deadline.

The application must be endorsed by the heads of all participating universities. **The application must be written in English.**

The application's countersigning by all project partners is mandatory. The document provided for signing the endorsement (Annexes 7 and 8) will be provided on the tender homepage and must be uploaded to the portal as a PDF file when submitting the application.

Application documents relevant for selection:

1. Description of the project consisting of:

- a) Description of the current situation/background, problem definition, and justification for the project from a development-oriented perspective
- b) Direct and, if relevant, indirect target groups as well as planned personnel deployment (involvement of German and foreign academics)
- c) Project goals: brief description of the project's objectives (outcomes)
- d) Project concept: overview of the course content (first draft of the structure and content of the planned master's degree course). Overview of plans for networking with Niger and/or Mali for the first project phase of five years and potential further steps in a possible second five-year funding phase. The description should clarify how the project will contribute to the achievement of the African Excellence programme. It should also describe which project-specific outputs will lead to which outcomes. Please indicate when and by whom which project activities will be implemented to achieve those outputs. The outcomes, outputs, and activities must be included in the "Project planning overview" (Annexe 3). There, one or two meaningful indicators must be added that will be suitable for specifying and measuring the project's outcomes and outputs. For further information, please refer to the "Guideline for results-oriented monitoring (RoM)" (Annexe 2).
- e) Overview of the partnership and its activities with regard to networking with Mali and/or Niger

- f) Risks to project success: present those conditions and risks that could hinder or affect the success of the project.

2. Information regarding the project partners

The German partner institution(s) and the West African target university must provide the following information:

- a) An overview of previous international partnerships and the results of the cooperation;
- b) Available academic staff as well as infrastructure at the target university with particular reference to the subject-related content of the planned course;
- c) A clear indication of the commitment of both universities, the available infrastructure and the human resources available;
- d) Information on existing networks (academic, but also with the private and public sector as well as with civil society, if relevant to the field).

In addition, details about any pre-existing partnerships with a university in Mali and/or Niger if applicable.

3. Information regarding the **agreements** already made with the partner in question (copies of contracts or agreements).

4. If applicable, a brief **description** of other **ongoing or completed projects** and activities on the part of the applicants which are related to the proposed project, in terms of content and the partners involved.

5. A financing plan with a calculation of the planned revenue and expenditures for the first five years is necessary for the contribution to be made by the German university and the African university. Use the financing plan at the DAAD portal and take the "Instructions for filling out the financing plan" (annexe 4) into account.

6. An alumni concept taking into account the required long-term sustainability and networking with Mali and Niger.

7. A staff development plan for academic, administrative and technical staff at the host university, taking into consideration the required sustainability and the inclusion of personnel from Mali and Niger (e.g. measures for staff retention with special focus on the respective subject).

8. A concept for sustainability of the master's degree course and the university partnership beyond the funding period (including cooperation with Mali and Niger), both financially and structurally.

9. A schedule for planned measures/activities within the preparatory and implementation phases for the first five-year funding period.

The application, including all previously mentioned documents, must be submitted as described above to the DAAD by 31st August 2017.

The **application documents listed above are mandatory documents and must be submitted by the application deadline.** The documents are to be named and numbered as indicated in this specification. After expiry of the application period, no documents will be requested by the DAAD and no subsequent submissions or amendments will be considered, (this also applies to the financing plan). **Incomplete applications will be excluded from the selection procedure.**

Deadline

The application deadline is 31st August 2017.

Which selection criteria apply?

A selection committee appointed by the DAAD composed of experts and academics (university professors) will consider all complete applications. Selection criteria are:

- Relevance of the project for the achievement of objectives (innovative character to promote capacity development in the target region, practice orientation and relevance for society);
- The suitability of the proposed West African partner university and its environment for an international and regional cooperation project (taking into account the possibilities for integration of target groups from Mali and Niger);
- The existing expertise of both partners in the subject-related field;
- Previous partnership experience with potential partners in West Africa (especially with Mali and Niger);
- The plausibility of the financing plan and efficient use of funds;
- The potential for regional expansion/impact.

Particularly eligible for funding are projects that:

- lead to a permanent connection between the participating partner institutions;
- have active support for the project execution by respective decision makers at the partner universities and can show a verifiable commitment (including of the host country), measurable by indicators;
- aim to achieve high national and international societal visibility;
- have a clear personnel development concept regarding quality and quantity of teaching and administration, but also regarding long-term sustainability (ownership);
- have developed a strategy of sustainable financing (which, for example, involves the development of sustainable prospects for other financing options and sources of income after the end of DAAD support);
- are designed to enable an extension of the project to Mali and/or Niger;
- plan to locate the centre in a French-speaking West African country.

Contact and further information

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
 German Academic Exchange Service
 Department P31 – Development Cooperation – Institution Building in Higher Education
 Kennedyallee 50
 53175 Bonn

Contact:
 Dr. Dorothee Weyler
 Email: weyler@daad.de
 Telefon: +49 (0) 228 882 115

Annexes

1. Funding Guidelines (including funding framework and requirements)
2. Guideline for results-oriented monitoring (RoM)
3. Project planning overview
4. Instructions for filling out the financing plan (in German)
5. Fees for foreign projects (in German)
6. Endorsement of the German university
7. Endorsement of the foreign university

Sponsored by



Federal Foreign Office