

Centres of Excellence in Africa – Resource Management and Food Security

Programme objectives

The German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD) is distributing funds provided by the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt – AA) for the programme 'Centres of African Excellence'. In the context of the programme line, 10 Centres of Excellence in various fields are currently funded at 12 higher education institutions in Africa (www.african-excellence.de).

The establishment of Centres of Excellence at universities in sub-Saharan Africa that are dedicated to training professionals and management staff at an internationally competitive level, is part of the DAAD's Africa strategy. The objective is to significantly increase the quality and relevance of education at African higher education institutions in selected disciplines, to build research capacities and to establish a network of African higher education and research institutions, as well as German partners. Support for future professionals and management staff in the fields of science, the society and the business sphere shall play a particularly important role in this context. Future decision-makers, professionals and teaching staff will be educated in line with contemporary international quality standards at the Centres. An environment where research is promoted sustainably, and where there are favourable conditions for international cooperation and the involvement of stake holders shall be created at the same time. Each Centre should ideally develop its own impact that reaches beyond its regional location.

Ongoing climate change, declining biodiversity and limited natural resources are presenting key challenges for the growing global population now and in the future. These challenges are particularly apparent in the African context. Sustainable resource management, in particular with regard to water resources, sustainable agriculture and soil use, food security and dealing with increasing urbanisation are important issues that must be addressed to meet these challenges and to develop viable future-oriented solutions for the African continent.

The objective of the thematic focus of this call for applications is to contribute to an efficient and responsible use of resources, to finding technical solutions, and establishing a corresponding social framework.

The Centres of African Excellence for Resource Management and Food Security that are to be set up shall work and teach in a trans-disciplinary manner, addressing cross-sectional issues, such as:

- Researching framework conditions for a sustainable food situation for Africa in the light of an increasing impact of global climate change.
- Improving supply routes, production conditions (as well as supply chains) for food and other agricultural products in consideration of general socio-economic and environmental conditions.
- Researching the links between sustainable soil use, the agricultural industry and securing the general nutrition situation.
- Developing practical solutions and approaches (irrigation technology, sewage systems) for using soil and water resources in a sustainable manner, and under consideration of cultural and societal aspects in rural and / or urban areas.
- Researching the societal consequences of water scarcity with regard to settlement behaviour, exodus from rural areas and increasing urbanisation.
- Researching and preserving the cultural significance of practices that are linked to the issues of soil and water use, taking sustainability aspects into account.

- Developing solution strategies to counteract the challenges of increasing urbanisation, such as sustainable waste removal and waste water disposal. Relationships between urbanisation, soil use and food security.

In addition to building capacities in one or multiple disciplines (MA or doctorate programmes or training options), the Centres are intended to provide an attractive setting that will bring experts from various disciplines together, such as engineering, geology, climate research, environmental technologies, urban planning, cultural anthropology and farming, and to work together to find approaches for a sustainable use of resources.

The long-term objectives of the programme are:

- To make a contribution to improving the function of sectors that are relevant to society in the African countries through activities performed by graduates holding key positions in education, business and the society.
- To make a contribution to establishing sustainable and internationally competitive Centres that are publicly visible, and to develop model institutions for the African higher education system.

These programme objectives should be achieved by means of the following direct results (outputs):

- Qualified graduates in fields that are relevant to society are trained with regard to specialist, methodical and personal skills.
- Teaching at the partner institutions is improved in consideration of the local context and in line with international scientific standards.
- Development and increase of research capacities.
- Integration of Centres of African Excellence into networks of relevant employers and players from the fields of politics, business and civil society, to achieve greater public visibility within Africa.

These programme outcomes should be achieved by means of the following direct results of measures / activities (outputs):

- Promoting students and doctoral candidates with strong disciplinary and methodical competence;
- Developing teaching modules / curricula for application-oriented and socially relevant courses of study that match the local context and meet international scientific standards;
- Creating structural conditions that allow for these courses of study to be offered;
- Qualifying staff at the partner institution with regard to specialist, didactical and administrative aspects;
- Implementing applied or mission-oriented research;
- Establishing contacts with relevant employers and players from the areas of politics, business and civil society.

The targets listed above are, on the one hand, intended to ensure that graduates of the Centres of African Excellence are educated in line with the requirements of the employment market. On the other hand, these measures for

achieving the programme's long-term objectives will also contribute to innovative and strategic approaches for ensuring that the Centres of African Excellence are sustainable with regard to financial, staff-related and structural aspects.

Individual Centres of Excellence can focus on different aspects within the programme. It is not necessary that each project contributes to all programme objectives. Projects are also permitted room for manoeuvre in formulating their objectives and in their strategies for achieving them; whereby the project objectives must be consistent with programme objectives. The higher education institutions are accordingly asked to develop their projects based on the programme's impact analysis structure and programme indicators, thus enabling them to formulate measurable project objectives and associated indicators. These must be presented in the application and project planning summary (for the detailed procedure please refer to the 'Handbook on Results-oriented Monitoring').

Eligible measures / activities

Funding is provided for establishing a total of two Centres of Excellence in the form of a cooperation between at least one German and at least one African higher education institution. Strong practical relevance is desirable with regard to the Centre's specialisation.

Various measures and activities can be promoted to reach the project objectives, such as:

- Development of curricula for individual modules and / or new courses of study
- Scholarships (master's degrees and doctorates)
- Supervision for master's and doctorate theses
- Summer schools
- Research stays of researchers, master's students and doctoral candidates at the partner institutions
- Visits and travel for lecturers and project staff for administration and coordination purposes
- Student exchanges between the German and the African higher education institution(s)
- Realisation of workshops, conferences and alumni events
- Short and long-term lectureships (mobility and stays)
- Postdoc positions
- Advanced education and training measures for students, lecturers and staff members of the Centre of Excellence, incorporating the digital teaching and learning platform that is available for the Centres of African Excellence programme (see short profile DIGI-FACE)
- Development and implementation of e-learning components
- Surveys (e.g. for identifying demand for training) and publications
- Marketing measures

Expenditure eligible for funding

All costs that are necessary and appropriate for project implementation (implementation of the measures / activities) are eligible for funding. These include in particular:

Personnel resources for project implementation and support

For coordination purposes and on an appropriate scale, project resources can be used to hire project staff in Germany and abroad.

- Research associate
- Academic assistant
- Student assistant
- Other personnel

Personnel costs include the gross salary paid by the employer. Annual bonus payments are only eligible for funding during the appropriation period and only insofar as the payment date is within this period.

Insofar as there are difficulties in employing student assistants to undertake project-related administrative activities, applications can instead be submitted for expenditure on TV-L employees (salary group 8) if required.

Equipment funding

- Remuneration for external service providers and experts (see attachment 'Fees for projects abroad', plus expenses for travel and the stay in line with principles of economic efficiency and frugality)
- Travel expenses for project personnel
Journey / flight pursuant to the relevant laws (BRKG/LRKG)
- Periods of residence by project personnel
Accommodation and daily allowance pursuant to the relevant laws (BRKG/LRKG)
- Equipment funding in Germany/outside Germany
 - Consumables
 - Assets
(eg IT equipment, desks and chairs, items for laboratories, etc.)
 - Room rental
(observe distinction from existing infrastructure, rent for conference rooms, rent for office rooms, etc.)
 - Printing / publications / advertising and public relations
(flyers, brochures, posters, scientific publications, etc.)
 - External services
(Companies that are commissioned to provide services or procurement services, such as catering, coach companies, repair work, translation services, IT support, external audits, etc.)
 - Material expenditure:
In Germany and in the partner country, for holding or taking part in workshops, seminars and other scientific events, as well as selection meetings and events related to project coordination and administration. Reference books, teaching and course materials, printing and reproduction, CDs, etc. Expenditure for arranging for a discipline-related and cultural framework programme (excursions, visits to museums, etc.). Meals are covered by the daily allowance, mobility costs of participants can be reimbursed (incl. participation fees, booth rent, visa fees, health insurance fees, vaccinations if applicable).
 - Research resources
 - Infrastructure to a low extent
 - Miscellaneous
(teaching materials, money transfer fees, software, licences)

Funded individuals

- Mobility expenditure for funded individuals is reimbursed upon presentation of receipts and in line with principles of economic efficiency and frugality.
- Stays of funded individuals: see attachment 1 – Funding Conditions.

Type of financing

Funding takes the form of full financing

Funding period

The funding period begins at the earliest on 1 March 2021 and ends on 31 December 2025. Planning provides for a second five-year funding period.

Amount of funding

As a general rule, planning provides for a funding amount of EUR 350,000 for the first budget year, and EUR 475,000 in the following budget years.

Discipline(s)	<p>The programme is open for – but not limited to – the following disciplines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social sciences (anthropology, sociology) • Nutritional and agricultural sciences • Agriculture • Geology • Urban construction • Engineering (environmental technology with particular emphasis on hydraulic engineering, water technology, food technology, water construction and management)
Target group	Students, graduates, doctoral candidates, researchers, lecturers, lecturers qualified to teach at professorial level, administrators, multipliers
Eligible applicants	Eligible applicants are officially recognised German higher education state institutions.
Application process	<p>The application for project funding may only be submitted in complete form and before the deadline via the DAAD portal (www.mydaad.de). The project description should be submitted in English.</p> <p>At least one African higher education institution must be involved in drawing up the application. Cooperation of multiple faculties and / or institutions is possible in the sense of a multi-disciplinary approach.</p> <p>A cooperation agreement that is considered part of the grant agreement must be closed with the African partner to allow for money to be transferred abroad.</p>
Application requirements	<p><u>Application documents relevant to selection:</u></p> <p>1. Project description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the starting situation / background, presentation of a problem or developmental justification (please use the <u>Project Description</u> template) • Direct and indirect target groups and intended staff use (involvement of German and foreign researchers) • Project objectives: A short description of the desired project outcomes: • Project concept: Overview of the intended course content or the planned master’s degree course(s). If applicable, overview of networking with existing Centres of Excellence for the first five-year project phase and possible further content-related steps for an assumed second five-year funding phase. The description should illustrate how the project contributes to achieving the objectives of the Centres of Excellence in Africa programme. It should also include an explanation of which project-specific outputs are intended to give rise to which outcomes. Please indicate, who should realise which project activities and when, to achieve the outputs. The outcomes, outputs and activities must be entered in the <u>project planning overview</u>. One or two decisive indicators should be added here that are suitable for specifying and measuring the project’s outcomes and outputs. For further information, please refer to the ‘Handbook on Results-oriented Monitoring’. • An overview of the partnership and its activities with regard to regional networking opportunities • Risks to project success: An outline of the general conditions that promote and possibly hinder the project, and risks that can affect the project’s success.

2. Information about the project partners

The applicant must submit the following information about the German and African project partners:

- An overview of international cooperation in the past and the results of such collaboration;
- Information about the existing academic staff and infrastructure at the target university, in particular with regard to the intended specialisation of teaching;
- Information about the commitment of project partners, their infrastructure and available human resources;
- Information about existing network contacts (academic, and depending on the area of specialisation also in the private and public sector and in civil society).

The German partner institute(s) and the African target university must submit the following information:

- An overview of international cooperation in the past and the results of such collaboration;
- Information about the existing academic staff and infrastructure at the target university, in particular with regard to the intended specialisation of teaching;
- A clear account of the commitment of both universities, infrastructure and available human resources;
- Information about existing network contacts (academic, and depending on the area of specialisation also in the private and public sector and in civil society).
- Copies of the short project description in English and approval from the higher education institution that are signed by all partner institutions, must be presented.

3. Information about agreements already in place with the respective partner (copies of contracts or agreements).

4. If applicable, a short description of any other ongoing or completed projects and activities of the applicants that relate to the project applied for here, due to their content or the partners involved.

5. A financing plan that is provided in the DAAD portal and must be completed in line with the 'Information for completing the financing plan'.

6. An alumni concept that allows for the required aspects of sustainability and networking

7. A staff development plan for academic, administration and technical staff at the African host institution, taking the required level of sustainability into account.

8. A sustainability concept for the academic programme and the university cooperation beyond the end of full financing via the Centres of Excellence programme, regarding financial and structural aspects

9. A schedule for intended measures / activities in the initial five-year funding period in the form of a project planning overview.

The application documents relevant to selection listed above are mandatory attachments that must be submitted before the application deadline. The submitted documents must be named and numbered in line with this guideline.

The DAAD will not request any missing documents after the application deadline, and no documents submitted later on or changes (including to the financing plan) will be considered after the application deadline. **Incomplete applications will be excluded from the selection process.**

Application deadline

The application deadline is **30 November 2020**.

Selection procedure

Selection of applications for project funding

Using the criteria listed below, the DAAD will select projects to be funded and decide upon the extent of such funding based on a review and on recommendations made by an external selection committee of expert academics appointed by the DAAD.

Selection criteria

Applications are assessed based on formal and content-related criteria. The quality of the project and its relevance to achieving the programme objectives is of particular importance in this context.

- Relationship of the project to the programme objectives (as per the impact analysis structure) and results-oriented planning using indicators that meet the SMART criteria¹.
- **Quality of the project**
 - Academic quality of the measures described in the application
 - Degree of existing expertise in the department
 - Feasibility of project objectives with the intended measures and in the allotted time
- **Relevance** of the project to achieving the objectives (innovative character for promoting the development of capacities in the target region, practical and societal relevance) and public visibility
- **Efficiency:** Plausibility of the financing plan and efficient use of resources
- **Suitability and previous experience of the higher education institutions involved**
 - **Suitability** of the intended African target institution and its environment for an international and regional cooperation project (including verifiable commitment of the target institution and the partner country to actively support the project)
 - Existing **expertise** of both partners in the discipline
 - **Cooperation experience** of the German higher education institution(s) involved with partners in Africa
- **Expected level of sustainability of the effects achieved**
 - Permanence of structural improvements to teaching conditions at the partner institutions in the target region
 - Networking with further stake holders from the areas of science, politics and civil society
 - Development of viable perspectives for other funding options and sources of income after the end of the DAAD funding period.
 - Potential for regional expansion / impact and networking with other local initiatives

Scholarship selection procedure

Selection of funded individuals

A selection committee appointed by the grant recipient will decide upon the scholarship applications (see Funding Conditions).

Contact

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service
Referat P31 – Hochschulstrukturförderung in der Entwicklungs-

¹ See call for applications 'effects-oriented project planning and monitoring handout', section 3.2 Indicators.

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Attachments to the
call for applications

1. Funding Conditions
2. Fees for projects abroad

Important
information and form
templates

- Project description
- Project description (English)
- Handbook on Results-oriented Monitoring
- Form template – Project planning summary
- Short profile DIGI-FACE
- Information for completing the financing plan
- Approval of the German university
- Approval of the foreign university
- Scholarship certificate and declaration of acceptance
- Mobility information for those with a disability or chronic illness

Funded by:



Auswärtiges Amt