Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Guide to Results-oriented Project Planning and Monitoring

We recommend the following procedure for results-oriented project planning:

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Introduction and overview

The DAAD implements results-oriented monitoring (RoM) for many of its programmes. This guide provides for an outline of the background and foundations of RoM (Chapter 1), followed by step by step instructions for your results-oriented project planning (Chapters 2 and 3) that forms the basis of your application. Impact analysis structures and indicators for the pro-gramme are illustrated in the final part (Chapters 4 and 5).

In our FAQ on result-oriented monitoring for project funding programmes, you will find important questions and answers and a clear overview of definitions of terms related to results-oriented monitoring.

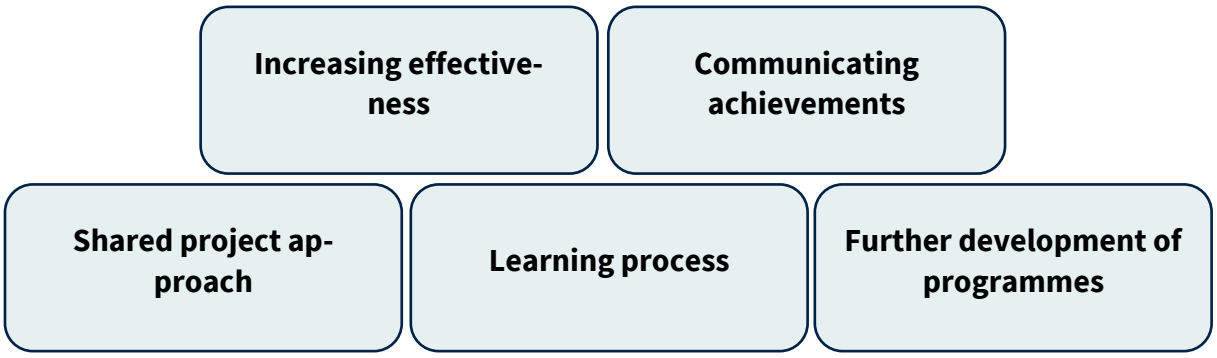
1. Why do we use results-oriented monitoring (RoM)?

As a learning organisation, the DAAD is committed to working with higher education institutions, funding bodies, and other partners to continually improve the achievement of objectives and the implementation of its programmes. The DAAD uses results-oriented monitoring (RoM) to plan its projects in an effect-oriented manner. Guidance for the implementation at the project level is provided through ongoing monitoring. The focus of interest is always on achieving results and objectives in this context. Indicators are used during the implementation to compare the planned or expected changes with those that actually occurred.

We use results-oriented monitoring (RoM) because it provides for tangible **added value** for you and the DAAD.

- ✓ RoM promotes your project's **effectiveness** and achievement of the intended objectives.
- ✓ RoM allows for easier **communication** of your projects' results to the DAAD and the general public, as your results-oriented project planning includes a clear definition of the desired results and the approaches for reaching specific goals.
- ✓ A shared **project approach** is ensured right from the start. This allows, for example, for easier collaboration with project partners.
- ✓ Using specific figures to define when your projects' goals are achieved, the indicators allow for a continuous **learning process**. You can therefore identify challenges early on and use your limited resources in a targeted manner.

- ✓ RoM enables the DAAD to **manage and develop** its programmes more effectively, for example with regard to adaptation to the requirements of higher education institutions.

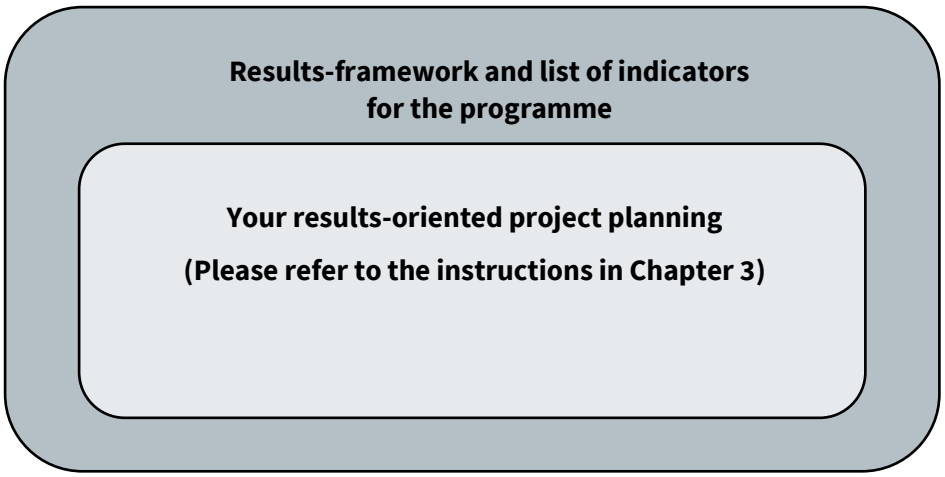


Results-oriented monitoring also supports transparency and accountability with respect to funding bodies, the public, and partners in Germany and abroad. The DAAD uses RoM to create a basis for success control.

2. Requirements for results-oriented project planning

2.1 The structure of results-oriented project planning

The programme's results framework that is outlined in Chapter 4 and the list of indicators in Chapter 5 form the structure of your results-oriented project planning. The purpose of a results framework is to **visualise the funding logic** of a programme. The list of indicators clarifies how the DAAD reviews the effectiveness of the programme.



Your results-oriented project planning should be prepared based on the programme's results framework and list of indicators. Results-oriented reporting allows for the status of project implementation and the achievement of goals to be assessed systematically in the form of a target-performance comparison. This is the basis for results-oriented management of a project and its further development in dialogue between the partners involved. In addition to this, the aggregated project information enables the DAAD to review the achievement of objectives of the programme and to determine areas that require adjustment.

2.2 The levels of the results framework

The results framework is the primary reference document for results-oriented planning. It il-lustrates the funding logic of a programme and comprises five different impact levels: Inputs, measures/activities, programme results (outputs), programme objectives (outcomes) and impacts. The DAAD bases its definition of the five impact levels on the OECD/DAC definitions[1].

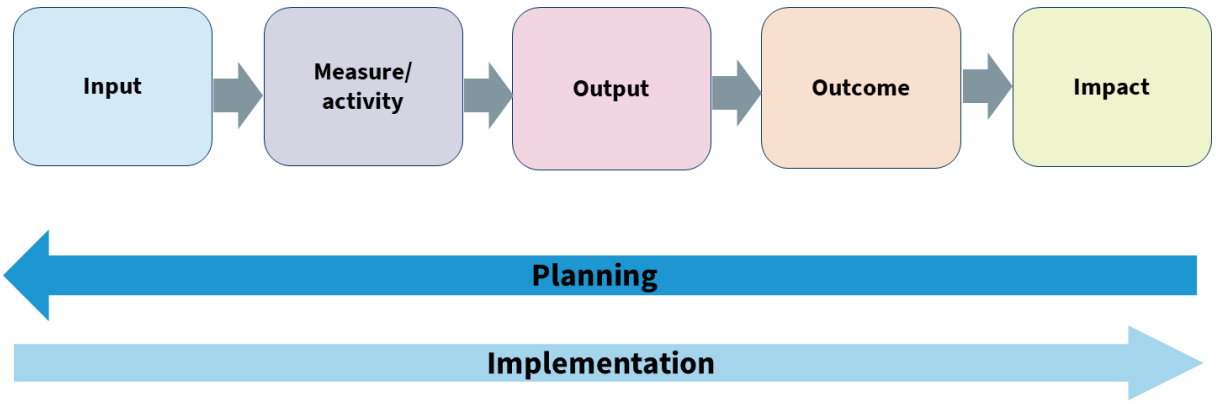
The measures/activities, programme results (outputs) and programme objective (outcomes) levels that you must specify in the project planning summary (please refer to the instructions in Chapter 3) are particularly relevant to results-oriented project planning.

Important note:

The programme's results framework allows for individual projects to focus on different aspects. A project does not have to contribute to all programme objectives (outcomes). However, it is essential that each project contributes to enabling junior researchers to gain international research experience and to undergo further training at an international level (Programme Objective 1).

The wording of project objectives and outputs allows for some flexibility. Project objectives must be in line with the programme objectives, i.e. it must be possible to assign all project objectives to programme objectives.

The first step of results-oriented project planning is to define the desired results as project objectives (outcomes). The next steps are to identify the desired project results (outputs), followed by measures/activities and finally the required inputs. Implementation takes place in reverse order, starting with the inputs and ending with the intended effects (project objectives (outcomes)).



Programme impacts

The higher-level programme objectives (**impacts**) describe the direct or indirect long-term effects of a programme. Impacts are usually reviewed in the context of evaluations (often ex-post), rather than being covered by monitoring. You therefore do not need to specify any im-pacts for your projects, since the projects contribute to the programme impacts through the project and programme objectives.

[1] Based on OECD/DAC (2009): Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management. Available online at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2754804.pdf [20.10.2020].

Examples of impacts: a contribution to structural support for teaching at the partner higher education institutions or to the institutions' level of internationalisation. There can be an additional second level of overarching objectives (impacts), such as 'establishing high-performing cosmopolitan universities'.

Programme/project objektives (outcomes)

The project objectives (**outcomes**) contribute to achieving the higher-level goals (**impacts**). The programme objectives are defined at the outcome level. You should specify these when preparing the results-oriented project planning for your project (as project objectives). The programme/project objectives (outcomes) describe the intended short and medium-term results that arise from using the outputs.

Examples of programme objectives (outcomes): availability and use of newly developed degree courses at the partner institutions, which reflect the latest developments in science and suit the local context, or: establishment of specialist networks between the participating universities and other institutions.

Programme/project results (outputs)

Programme/project results (**outputs**) are results, services and changes that result from the measures/activities and that represent the intermediate stage towards programme/project objectives (outcomes). The use of the achieved results (outputs) allows for the project/programme objectives (outcomes) to be reached).

Examples of programme results (outputs) include: jointly developed curricula or teaching modules compiled within projects, the creation of structural conditions for degree courses at the partner universities, or the expansion and consolidation of contacts. Outputs also include personal skills gained or knowledge transmitted.

Measures/activities

The realisation of **measures/activities** in the context of a programme or a project gives rise to programme/project results (outputs). A measure/activity may comprise multiple interconnected individual activities, provided that these are pooled in a plausible manner.

Examples of measures/activities include: the organisation of events (including further and continuing education activities), project-related stays, and the develop-ment/revision of teaching/learning materials.

Inputs

Input is required to realise measures/activities. Inputs include funding from the DAAD, as well as human, professional and infrastructural resources of the grant recipient and from third parties.

Examples of inputs: staff and material expenditure and expenditure for funded individuals, covered by funding from the DAAD; own and other resources provided by the grant recipient or by third parties, technical expertise, infrastructure and permanent staff.

2.3 The programme and project indicators

The inputs, measures/activities, results (outputs) and short and medium-term effects or objectives (outcomes) listed in the results framework are assigned programme indicators, which are used for specification and measurement. An indicator is a value that can be measured empirically, providing

information about a construct that cannot be measured directly. The DAAD uses the internationally used OECD/DAC definition of an indicator[2].

You must specify meaningful indicators with precisely defined target values (**benchmarks**) for your project. These target values indicate how much should be deployed, implemented and achieved in the project within a specific timeframe. These details must be defined to al-low for a SMART indicator. Examples are provided in Chapter 3.1, item c.

SMART indicators

To define indicators, you should use the **SMART rule**. Indicators should meet the following quality criteria:

Specific:	precise and unambiguous in terms of quality and quantity (who? what? how?)
Measurable:	can be measured with reasonable effort and at reasonable cost
Attainable:	objectives are realistically achievable within the specified parameters
Relevant:	meaningful in terms of the intended changes
Time-Bound:	has a defined timeframe

3. How do I plan my project in a results-oriented manner?

3.1 Completing the project planning summary

The first step of your results-oriented project planning is to complete the **project planning summary** table. Start by defining the desired short and medium-term results or objectives of your project (outcomes), followed by the required results (outputs) and suitable measures/activities. The measures/activities are not described in the project planning summary but in the project description (see Chapter 3.2 'Completing the project description' below).

It is important that you provide a brief and clear account in the project planning summary, to allow for your project to be understood at a glance during the selection process. You do not need to develop a results framework or list of indicators for your project. The essence of both documents should be presented in your project planning summary. Please use the exemplary project planning summery for orientation and make sure the information you provide is **presented briefly and clearly**.

Based on the results framework of the programme, you should proceed as follows:

a) The first step is to define your project objectives (outcomes). These describe the short and medium-term effects of your project. Based on the programme objectives (outcomes) you should specify all relevant details in the project objectives at project level (e.g. which higher education institutions, which course of study, etc.).

[2] cf OECD/DAC (2009): Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management. Available online at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/43184177.pdf [20/07/2016].

Example 1 Specifying the project objective (outcome)

Outcome (programme level)		**Outcome** (project level)
Binational research cooperation has been promoted and can be used as a starting point for future co-operations.	▷	**Cooperation with the partner institution A** has been consolidated in the context of the PPP project.

b) The second step is to define your **project results (outputs)**. Pursued results (outputs) are visible and quantifiable. Based on the results (outputs) at the programme level you will then specify all relevant details in the results (outputs) at the project level (e.g. which higher education institution, which course of study, etc.). The results (outputs) result from the measures/activities and the outcome objectives should be reached through their use.

Example 2 Specifying the project objective (output)

Output (programme level)		**Output** (project level)
International joint **publications** have been created.	▷	The two research groups have **published** their joint **research findings** in prestigious **specialist journals**.

What is the difference between outputs and outcomes?
The project objectives (outcomes) describe the intended results that arise from using the out-puts. For example, a curriculum must first be developed (output), before it can be offered and pursued by students (outcome).

c) In the third step, you must determine one meaningful **indicator** for each project-specific result (output) or objective (outcome). Ideally only one indicator should be specified for each desired result (output) or project objective (outcome). However, to record results and make statements regarding the achievement of objectives, it can be necessary to stipulate more than one indicator (e.g. number of classes and participants).

- **Specification**:
  Use the programme indicators presented in Section 5, provided that these are relevant for your specific project plan and management. You may use the pro-gramme indicators for your project. These must be specified as project indicators in this case. You may also specify your own indicators, if the programme indica-tors do not allow for appropriate statements for your project.

- **Benchmarks**:
  For each indicator, you have to specify how much should be deployed, implemented and achieved in the project within a specific timeframe (**benchmarks**). These benchmarks are used to measure to what extent the objectives of the project and programme have been achieved. To do so, enter a specific value for the 'quantity' of the programme indicator, and describe the timeframe, e.g. 2 teaching modules should have been revised by the end of the third funding year. This helps with reviewing project progress and target achievement. The benchmarks should be determined based on your own experience,

your higher education institution's guidelines, experience values from similar projects, or discussions with partners and experts. Outline the indicators briefly but concisely. All indicators should meet the SMART standards (please refer to Chapter 2).

Do you also need to define project indicators for measures/activities?
No. The measures/activities are the eligible programme measures and they are therefore covered by the programme indicators.

Example 1 Specification/benchmarks for indicators for project objectives (outcome)

Outcome (programme level)		**Outcome** (project level)
Binational research cooperation has been promoted and can be used as a starting point for future co-operations	▷	**Cooperation with the partner institution A** has been consolidated in the context of the PPP project.
Indicator (programme level)		**Indicator** (project level)
Number of joint applications for external funding (in the reporting year), differentiated by • **Status** (Planned, Submitted, Approved)	▷	By the end of the funding period, **an application for external funding has been submitted** based on the research cooperation with partner institution A.

Example 2 Specification/benchmarks for indicators for project results (outputs)

Output (programme level)		**Output** (project level)
International joint **publications** have been created.	▷	The two research groups have **published** their joint **research findings** in prestigious **specialist journals**.
Indicator (programme level)		**Indicator** (project level)
Number of items published, differentiated by • **Type** (e.g. Peer-reviewed specialist journals, Contribution to scientific anthologies including conference volumes, Scientific monographs, Encyclopaedia entries/overview articles, Articles in newspapers/magazines/online publications, other)	▷	**5 articles in specialist journals** and **2 monographs** have been published before the end of the funding period. 2 of the 5 articles and one of the 2 monographs are **published via an open access medium**.

• **Has it been published via an open access medium?** (yes/no)	

d) In the fourth step, you should describe the **information sources and methods**. Be brief. Participant lists are helpful.

Justified changes to the project plan are possible during the project in consultation with the DAAD. The programme indicators and the individual project indicators defined in your application form the frame of reference for the annual **report** submitted to the DAAD. This structured substantive report is submitted via a dedicated web-based monitoring tool. In addition to entering the quantitative indicators, there is also sufficient space for a qualitative description of your project results. The substantive report is part of the annual interim substantiation/evidence of use that must be submitted. It comprises the substantive report, numerical evidence (incl. a participant list) and any further documents that are listed in the grant agreement.

3.2 Completing the project description

The project description should provide for an outline of the project, the objectives and the time plan. Among other aspects, it should be prepared from the perspective of results-oriented project planning. With reference to the results logic, you should give an account of how the boxes of the project planning summary table are interconnected. The project description and the project planning summary table are interlinked. Please make sure to keep the project planning summary short and clear.

The results-oriented project plan is taken into account in **selection criterion 1** 'Relationship of the project to the programme objectives (as per the impact analysis structure) and results-oriented planning using indicators that meet the SMART criteria'.

Checklist regarding results-oriented project planning as a selection criterion:

- ✓ Clear relationship between the project objectives (outcomes) and the project results (outputs)
- ✓ Clear connection between the **project** and the **programme** objectives (outcomes) and the **programme** results (outputs)
- ✓ The project description clarifies comprehensively which measures/activities are to be realised over the course of time, and how these contribute to the **project**-specific results (outputs) and objectives (outcomes)
- ✓ **Project**-specific indicators have been developed based on the **programme**-specific indicators and in line with the SMART criteria

In the 'measures/activities' section, please describe the intended measures/activities with regard to their content and indicate the time frame for realising them.

Regarding the basics and terminology or RoM, please refer to Chapter 2 of this guide and to the FAQ on results-oriented monitoring for project funding programmes. Here you will find important questions and answers and concise definitions of terms related to results-oriented monitoring.

4. Impact analysis structure for ‘Programmes for Project-Related Personal Exchange (PPP)“

The impact analysis structure for programmes for project-related personal exchange was developed by the DAAD. It forms the framework of reference specified for project funding in coordination with the funding body.

At the **impact level**, programmes for project-related personal exchange are designed to pro-mote the establishment of high-performing cosmopolitan higher education and research institutions and sustainable networking among these organisations. The PPP contribute to internationalisation of the higher education and research institutions involved.

To contribute to the achievement of these long-term effects (impacts), the programme pursues two **programme objectives (outcomes)**:

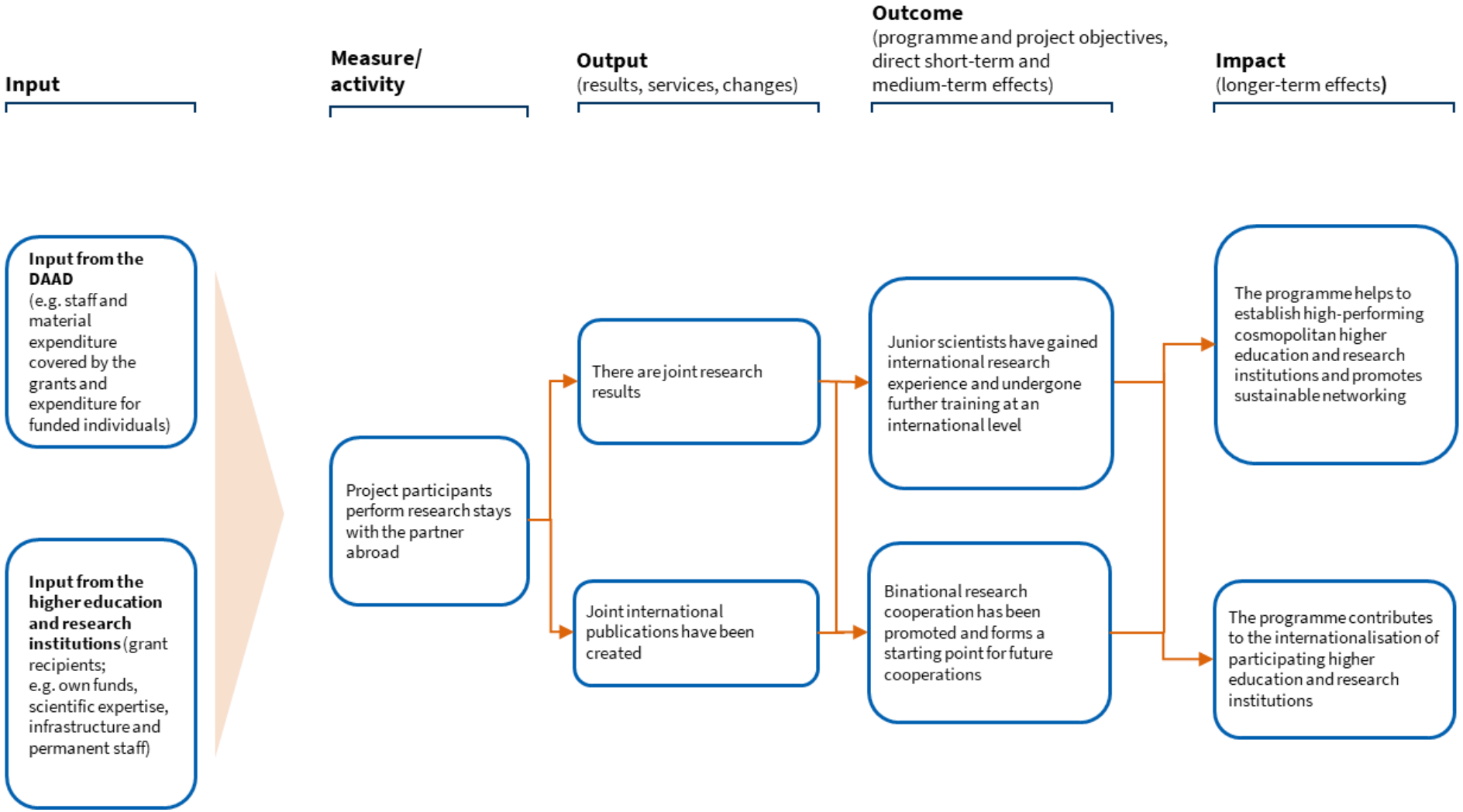
1. Junior scientists have gained international research experience and undergone further training at an international level.

2. Binational research cooperation has been promoted and can be used as a starting point for future co-operations.

To achieve this, planning provides that at the output level joint research results are generated in the projects of the PPP and that joint international publications are created.

To realise these results (outputs), the universities and higher education institutions involved can implement various **measures/activities**. Expenditure for research stays with the foreign partner are eligible for funding. (Please refer to Appendix 2 to the call for proposals for information about mobility and residence allowances).

The actors involved contribute **inputs** (see above) to implement projects. On the part of the DAAD, this is the grant (used to finance expenditure for funded individuals); on the part of the higher education or research institutions submitting the application, these are the contributions of the grant recipient and project partners (e.g. technical expertise and infrastructure).


Input
Measure/ activity
Output (results, services, changes)
Outcome (programme and project objectives, direct short-term and medium-term effects)
Impact (longer-term effects)
Input from the DAAD (e.g. staff and material expenditure covered by the grants and expenditure for funded individuals)
Input from the higher education and research institutions (grant recipients; e.g. own funds, scientific expertise, infrastructure and permanent staff)
Project participants perform research stays with the partner abroad
There are joint research results
Joint international publications have been created
Junior scientists have gained international research experience and undergone further training at an international level
Binational research cooperation has been promoted and forms a starting point for future cooperations
The programme helps to establish high-performing cosmopolitan higher education and research institutions and promotes sustainable networking
The programme contributes to the internationalisation of participating higher education and research institutions

5. Indicators for "Programmes for Project-Related Personal Exchange (PPP)"

Programme indicators were set for the PPP, for which the DAAD requests data in the context of the annual substantive reporting submitted by the higher education institutions. This data helps the DAAD with programme management and accountability.

Measures/activities and allocated programme indicators

Measure/activity	Indicator
Project participants perform research stays with the partner abroad	Number of trips/research stays with the partner abroad performed by the German project participants, differentiated by • Participant status (bachelor's, master's student, PhD, postdoc, etc.)
	Number of stays with the grant recipient performed by project participants from the partner abroad

Programme results (outputs) and allocated programme indicators

Output	Indicator
Joint research results have been gained	Number of master's theses completed in the funding period
	Number of doctoral theses completed in the funding period
International joint publications have been created	Number of items published, differentiated by • Type (e.g. Peer-reviewed specialist journals, Contribution to scientific anthologies including conference volumes, Scientific monographs, Encyclopaedia entries/overview articles, Articles in newspapers/magazines/online publications, other) • Has it been published via an open access medium? (yes/no)

Programme results (outcomes) and allocated programme indicators

Outcome	Indicator
Junior scientists have gained international research experience and under-gone further training at an international level	Number of junior scientists who have gained international research experience and undergone further training at an international level, according to the funded individual statistics
Binational research cooperation has been promoted and forms a starting point for future co-operations	Number and type of follow-up activities planned, differentiated by: • Joint planning and realisation of research projects • Cooperation with further partner institutions • Guidance for academic qualifications (master's degree, doctorate) • Joint conference attendance • Joint publications • Other
	Number of joint applications for external funding (in the reporting year), differentiated by • Status (Planned, Submitted, Approved)