



„FÖRDERRAHMEN“

Centre of Excellence for Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems and Applied Agricultural and Food Data Science (South Africa)

**Line C (Doctoral and Postdoctoral Funding for African Doctoral Students and Postdocs)
(2025 - 2029)**

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

1

The German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD) distributes funding provided by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) to promote the programme ‘Centre of Excellence for Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems and Applied Agricultural and Food Data Science (programme location South Africa) - Line C (Doctoral and Postdoctoral Funding for African Doctoral Students and Postdocs)’ as part of the programme ‘Centres of African Excellence’ ([African Excellence – Centres of African Excellence – DAAD](#)) that has been funded since 2008.

The Centres of African Excellence programme generally funds the development and establishment of (degree) programmes in selected fields of study relating to the training and professional development of specialists and managers for participation in academia, society and business, creating research capacities and promoting networking among African and German research institutions.

Future decision-makers, specialists and university lecturers should be given the opportunity to receive an up-to-date and internationally competitive education and skills at the centres. At the same time, an environment should be created that is sustainably conducive to research and offers favourable conditions for international cooperation and the involvement of relevant stakeholders. Each Centre should ideally develop its own supra-regional impact.

As part of the above-mentioned multi-institutional, practice-oriented and transdisciplinary project, **the research component of the centre of excellence** is to be developed through **Line C by means of doctoral and post-doctoral funding for African doctoral candidates and postdoctoral fellows**; Smaller research projects are also supported as part of the research work, whereby it needs to be ensured that the produced products are suitable for ecological and organic production (for detailed information on the programme and concept, see **Annexes 1 and 2**).

The objectives of the funding programme in **line C** are:

- 1: (Junior) scientists are (further) qualified in the field of applied and transdisciplinary research

- 2: The (digital) supervision of doctoral and postdoctoral candidates at the participating partner universities and other universities in sub-Saharan Africa has been improved.
- 3: The results of the applied transdisciplinary research projects are accessible to a pan-African and international specialized public.

With regard to the funding logic, the results (outputs), the programme objectives (outcomes) and the longer-term effects (impacts) of the funding programme, see the results framework in the guide to RoM (see **Annex 3**).

Project objectives must also be defined for all programme objectives.

For results-orientated project planning, see **Annex 3**.

Ecological sustainability

The DAAD has set itself the goal of further reducing its ecological footprint as an organisation and funding provider. In the context of project funding, efforts should be made to plan and realise all projects in a way that preserves resources and protects the climate and the environment. This particularly applies to mobility/travel. Depending on the type and scope of the project, it may also affect procurement and contract tendering, event management, or marketing and public relations work. Further information on the implementation of climate-sensitive DAAD-funded projects can be found in the [handout](#).

Diversity

In its diversity agenda, the DAAD defines diversity, equal opportunities, and inclusion as important goals for international academic exchange. Talented people should be given the opportunity to contribute their diversity and different perspectives as part of project funding. Projects must be planned and realised with this cross-cutting objective in mind. People with disabilities and chronic illnesses can be funded separately (see information sheet "Information on mobility with disabilities and chronic illnesses"). Further information on diversity in DAAD-funded projects can be found in the [handout](#).

MEASURES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

2

Measures eligible for funding are:

- Awarding of doctoral scholarships to African doctoral candidates (usually for 36 months, an extension up to a maximum of 42 months is possible)
- Awarding of postdoctoral funding to African doctoral candidates and/or establishment/filling of postdoctoral positions
- Realisation of smaller research projects by postdocs or as part of the training of doctoral students
- Organisation of work/strategy meetings

EXPENDITURE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

3

All expenditures necessary for the realisation of the project (implementation of the measures) are eligible for funding. This includes in particular:

Personnel resources for project implementation and support

PERSONNEL ABROAD (only in the context of a forwarding)

- scientific employee (0.5 FTE)
- scientific assistant (0.5 FTE)
- student assistant

Personnel expenses are eligible for funding in the amount of the customary local remuneration.

Material resources

HONORARIES (not for own personnel, not for personnel of the forwarding recipient)

Fees for external experts, trainers (e.g. for supervision of publications) (see **Annex 4**)

Expenses for mobility (travelling) and accommodation can also be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality. These expenses, which do not relate to the fee itself, must be included in the fee agreement.

MOBILITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL (forwarding recipients)

Expenses for mobility (travel/flights) can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality.

STAY PROJECT PERSONNEL (forwarding recipient)

Expenses for the stay (accommodation and meals) can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles economic efficiency and frugality.

MATERIAL RESOURCES INLAND/ABROAD

- Consumables (e.g. pens, conference folders, paper, seeds, test tubes, chemicals)
- Assets (e.g. laboratory equipment, computers, projectors, tables and chairs, software licences, online licences)
- Room hire (e.g. hire for conference rooms)
- Printing/publications/advertising and public relations (e.g. flyers, brochures, posters, scientific publications, online adverts)
- External services (e.g. catering subject to the upper limit of EUR 32 per meal and per person, coach travel, repair services, translation services, IT services, external audits)
- Others
 - › e.g. fees for money transfer/bank charges, visa, insurance, vaccinations
 - › Expenses for a German language course (not for a lingua franca of the third country). Exceptions are possible if this is essential in the interests of a project.



- › Expenditure for small research projects by postdocs or as part of the training of doctoral students to carry out field research, studies, evaluations and analyses. A holistic and practice-oriented training of the junior scientists needs to be ensured. The universities decide on the granting of additional funds after consultation/decision by the supervising university lecturers. These additional costs need to be aligned reasonably with the overall costs of the project.

Funded Individuals

MOBILITY OF FUNDED INDIVIDUALS

- Mobility lump sum (Southern Africa/Sub-Saharan Africa ↔ Germany)
 - › For African (post-)doctoral students participating in (research-related) events as well as academic and non-academic training at the German partner institute, a mobility lump sum (see **Annex 5**) can be applied for and claimed for travelling/flights from Africa to Germany and back.
 - › The mobility lump sum is payable from the first day of the trip and must be evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants. The mobility lump sum covers all expenses associated with the trip (including travel and flights as well as expenses for visas, vaccinations, excess baggage, baggage insurance, etc.).
- Expenditure for mobility within Southern Africa/Sub-Saharan Africa can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality.

RESIDENCE OF FUNDED INDIVIDUALS

- Residence scholarships
 - › For **research stays of African doctoral students** at the German partner institute and/or at renowned research institutions (including federal or BMEL departmental research institutes - e.g. Friedrich Loeffler Institute, Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute, Julius Kühn Institute, Max Rubner Institute - or at other relevant research institutions).
 - › The residence scholarship must be included as a benefit in the scholarship agreement.
 - › The instalment for the stay in Germany is offset against the instalment for the doctoral scholarship

Residence scholarships	Monthly instalment (from day 23) (Euro)	Daily rate (total stay up to 22 days) (Euro)	Daily rate (in the last, incomplete month of a stay of several months) (Euro)
Doctoral candidates	1.300	58	43

- Sur-place and third-country scholarships for doctoral purposes
 - › For **African doctoral candidates** at African partner institutions within Southern Africa/Sub-Saharan Africa.

Region/Country	Incountry (Sur Place) (Euro)	Third country (Euro)
South Africa	900	900
Malawi	300	350
Mauritius	500	500
Namibia, Botswana	475	500
<i>Scholarship rates for Zambia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Lesotho, Mozambique, Eswatini must be agreed with the DAAD</i>		
Western Africa	500	550
Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda	280	430
Ethiopia	210	230
Sudan	230	270
West and Central Africa	500	550

- › rent subsidy: To compensate for higher rents for students who cannot live on campus or in halls of residence, a rent subsidy of 30 euros/month can be applied for and claimed.
 - › subsidy for health insurance at the usual national health insurance rates. This also applies to stays in Germany.
 - › Subsidy towards tuition fees: In principle, tuition fees charged by African universities for the study programme are eligible for funding. The DAAD should be contacted with regard to the country-specific upper limits. However, the project partners should endeavour to obtain a fee waiver for national and international students at the centre.
- The Sur Place and third country scholarship for doctoral purposes, the rent subsidy, subsidy for health insurance and the subsidy for tuition fees must be provided for as benefits in the scholarship agreement.
- Postdoc funding
 - › For **research and teaching stays of African post-doctoral researchers** at the German partner institute and/or at renowned research institutions (including federal or BMEL departmental research institutes - e.g. Friedrich Loeffler Institute, Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute, Julius Kühn Institute, Max Rubner Institute - or other relevant research institutions) up to 6 months, max. two semesters a lump sum for their stay can be applied for and claimed.

- › The lump sum for research stay is payable on the first day of the stay and must be evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants. The lump sum for research stays covers the costs of accommodation and meals as well as health, accident and liability insurance.

Residence lump sum	Monthly instalment (from day 23) (Euro)	Daily rate (total stay up to 22 days) (Euro)	Daily rate (in the last, incomplete month of a stay of several months) (Euro)
Postdoctoral researchers	2.000	89	67

- › **For African postdoctoral researchers** at African partner institutions within Southern Africa/Sub-Saharan Africa
- › Depending on the planning of the applicant universities and the legal requirements in South Africa or other sub-Saharan African countries, monthly funding is provided within the framework of the establishment of postdoctoral positions or fixed terms per grant and is based on the customary local salary on the basis of a confirmation from the host university of the appropriate amount (plus location allowance if applicable). As a rule, the position or funding can be filled for 12 to 24 months and can be extended by a maximum of 6 months in individual cases agreed with the DAAD.

FORWARDING

4

Forwarding of the project funding grant (in whole or in part) is possible if this is necessary to achieve the purpose of the grant.

The **project description** must list the measures and associated objectives of the forwarding recipient(s) in addition to the project's own measures and objectives. This means that the entire project must be addressed (including the forwarding level).

In the **financing plan**, the expenditure items of the forwarding recipient(s) must be labelled separately (e.g. with "WL") in addition to the recipient's own expenditure items. This means that the expenditure of the entire project (incl. forwarding level) must be shown in the financing plan.

If the intended forwarding (recipient name, specific content, etc.) is not yet known at the time of the application for project funding (before the contract is concluded), the expenses that would be incurred by a possible forwarding recipient must first be shown in the financing plan as own expenses and their ne-

cessity must be justified in the project description. As soon as the actual forwarding of the grant becomes known (after conclusion of the contract), a change application for project funding (adaptation of the project description and financing plan) must be submitted to the DAAD.

Forwarding takes place on the basis of a forwarding agreement.

The audit certificate for the evidence of use by the forwarding recipient must be attached to the evidence of use by the grant recipient, which must be submitted to the DAAD.

TYPE OF FINANCING

5

Funding takes the form of fixed-sum financing.

The grant is subject to the proviso that own funds, third-party funds and other funds are brought in to finance the project. If own funds, third-party funds and other funds are contributed to the form of income/expenditure that cannot be documented, these must be plausibly presented in the financing plan and project description.

FUNDING PERIOD

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The funding period begins on 1 January 2025 at the earliest and ends on 30 September 2029 at the latest.

Following a successful evaluation of the first main phase or build-up phase in 2028, follow-up funding for a further five-year consolidation phase can be applied for in the second quarter of 2029, subject to the current budget situation at that time.

GRANT AMOUNT

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A grant of up to EUR 1,430,000 can be applied for, divided over the financial years in the approval period as follows:

2025: 200,000 euros

2026: 310,000 euros

2027: 308,000 euros

2028: 332,000 euros

2029: 280,000 euros

DISCIPLINES

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The programme is open to disciplines in applied agricultural and food data sciences that deal with the thematic focus of the planned centre in an inter- and transdisciplinary manner, i.e. in the broadest sense with the holistic consideration and transformation of agricultural and food systems in Southern Africa and in particular:

- (Applied) agricultural and food sciences incl.:
 - › organic farming,

- › Agroecology according to the agroecological principles of the HLPE (2019),
- › agricultural and food systems along the entire value chain,
- › One-Health approach (holistic approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of humans, animals and ecosystems)
- Forestry, incl.:
 - › sustainable forest management,
 - › Integrated agroforestry systems
- sustainable fisheries/aquaculture/aquatic systems (both coastal/marine and inland waters)
- Climate and environmental sciences (including climate protection and climate adaptation in relation to sustainable food systems, food security)
- Relevant areas of engineering sciences (environmental technology with a focus on nutrition technology; food technology)
- Data science and computer science
- Socioeconomics/Social Sciences
- Geography

In addition, the [BMEL research plan](#) and the BMEL's thematic priorities on transformation processes towards site-adapted, sustainable and resilient food systems must be observed in order to contribute to global food security (see <https://www.bmel.de/DE/themen/internationales/agenda-2030/globale-ernaehrungssicherung.html>); in the case of breeding projects, the development of genetically modified (including genome-edited) organisms for commercial use as food or animal feed is not eligible for funding.

TARGET GROUP

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Doctoral candidates, (junior) scientists and researchers

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

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Eligible applicants are state and state-recognised German universities as well as non-university research institutions based in Germany that are recognised as non-profit organisations and conduct their own research.

A prerequisite for applying is a partnership with one or more partner higher education institutions in South Africa, including at least one of the following institutions: 'Historically Disadvantaged Institutions' (HDIs), i.e. previously disadvantaged higher education institutions, Universities of Technology (UoTs), 'emerging' universities, "newly emerging" institutions (see **Annex 6**) or an existing network of partners (also) from among these institutions. A university from another sub-Saharan African country must also be included. The size of the university network should be limited to four (with possible associated partners up to a maximum of five) institutions.

Collaboration with already established Centres of African Excellence, DAAD projects (e.g. Global Centres, etc.), research institutions, projects of the participating departments and relevant departmental research institutes as well as political decision-makers is expressly desired. Appropriate stakeholder involvement,

also within the framework of the transfer cycle approach, is essential and must be part of the concept of the applying higher education institutions.

APPLICATION

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The application for project funding must be submitted in English, in full and on time exclusively via the DAAD portal (www.mydaad.de). In addition, the following documents must be uploaded in the "Attachments" tab:

- Project description, see **form template** (attachment type: project description)
- Project planning overview, see **form template** (attachment type: project description)
- Cooperation agreement of the participating university/universities (Annex type: Contracts/agreements)
- Endorsement by the university management, see **form template** (attachment type: programme-specific attachments)

After the application deadline, changes to the financing plan, the project description and subsequently submitted or amended documents will no longer be considered.

Each university or research institution eligible to apply must apply for each funding line (A, B and C).

APPLICATION DEADLINE

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The application deadline is 20 June 2024.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

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Selection of applications for project funding

The DAAD decides on funding based on the evaluation of the applications by a selection committee.

A personal or, if necessary, virtual presentation of the project outline to the selection committee is welcome. The BMEL (and/or a body commissioned by the BMEL) is expected to attend the selection meeting as observer.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- (1) Subject-specific and substantive quality of the project in relation to the achievement of the project and programme objectives (weighting: 60%)
- (2) Quality and stringency of project planning (weighting: 15 %)
- (3) Impact of the project on the individual target groups and addressed areas beyond the funding period of the project (weighting: 5 %)
- (4) Consideration of diversity (weighting: 5 %)
- (5) Climate-sensitive project organisation (weighting: 5 %)

- (6) Scope and quality of the planned links to lines A and B and to the planned NRF-funded chair; relation of the project to the thematic interfaces and focal points of both ministries involved, BMBF and BMEL, as well as description of interdepartmental synergies (weighting: 10 %)

SCHOLARSHIP AND POSTDOC SELECTION PROCESS

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Selection for scholarships and postdoctoral funding

The grant recipient decides on the awarding of scholarships on the basis of a selection committee appointed by the grant recipient.

- Public announcement of the scholarship or funding offer: The call for applications for doctoral scholarships/postdoctoral funding must be published, stating the scholarship benefits, application requirements and with reference to the funding provider (Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture) (at least on the website of the respective centre; it is recommended to also use channels beyond this, such as DIGI-FACE or the relevant regional offices and information centres of the DAAD. The requirements for the external presentation of financial support from the BMEL and the DAAD must be adhered to. The necessary files will be sent by e-mail at the start of the project. At the time of application, doctoral candidates should generally have completed their last academic degree no more than six years ago. For postdoctoral researchers, the doctorate should generally not have been awarded more than four years ago. Any deviations from this rule must be agreed with the DAAD in advance.
- Composition of the selection committee: The selection of applicants is carried out by the project partners. An agreement on this should be made in the project-specific cooperation agreements. The contractual partners undertake to ensure a transparent selection procedure in accordance with DAAD guidelines, taking into account professional and personal criteria. An appropriate proportion of women must also be taken into account in the selection process. A committee consisting of at least two professors (ideally three) from the respective partner universities must be formed for the selection. External experts (other stakeholders relevant to the centre of excellence) may act in an advisory (non-decisive) capacity. A representative of the DAAD must be involved in an advisory capacity. Participation by the BMEL (and/or a body commissioned by the BMEL) in an observer status must be provided for. Exceptions are only possible after prior consultation with the DAAD. If possible, selection dates should take place at fixed annual intervals and the DAAD should be notified at least 3 months in advance. The list of applicants selected for interview (ranked "short list") should be made available to the DAAD at least 2 weeks before the selection, including details of the most recent academic degree and date of birth as well as other necessary documents (score sheets, composition of the selection committee, etc.).

Application documents: The application documents should include a letter of motivation, an independent expert reference and a proposal on the proposed research topic. The thematically relevant areas depend on the general objective of the overall project (see Annex 1) as well as on the priorities and requirements of the funding body BMEL.

The following restriction must be taken into account: In the case of breeding projects, the development of genetically modified (including genome-edited) organisms for commercial use as food or animal feed is not eligible for funding.

- Selection criteria: The selection must be made based on quality, social and regional aspects as well as on the personal suitability of the applicants. The selection of (post)doctoral candidates should, if possible, be carried out by means of a personal interview with the applicants who may have been pre-selected on paper. Alternatively, for reasons of efficiency and sustainability, interviews can be conducted by video conference. A selection protocol must be drawn up documenting the composition of the commission and the basis for the decision. This protocol must be submitted with the annual report at the latest.

- Award of the doctoral scholarship:

- › per scholarship agreement

Doctoral scholarships are awarded to African graduates by the project partners using the Letter of Award and Declaration of Acceptance provided by the DAAD. As a rule, doctoral scholarships can be awarded for 36 months and can be extended by a maximum of 6 months up to a maximum of 42 months. The extension of the scholarship period (doctoral candidates) takes place at the request of the scholarship holder with a short interim report (including further time planning) and on the basis of a decision by the supervising university lecturer. The DAAD must be informed of this at the latest as part of the monitoring report. Scholarships or positions/funding can only be extended within the contract period. If the scholarship is cancelled prematurely for reasons for which the scholarship holder is responsible, the scholarship received to date must be reclaimed. The Centre of Excellence may suspend or terminate its financial payments to scholarship holders if and for as long as the scholarship holders fail to fulfil their obligations under the scholarship agreement. The DAAD must be informed immediately of any such action.

- › Handing-over of a scholarship certificate

The following information must be included in the scholarship certificate: Reference to the DAAD, the funding institution with appropriate use of logo, specific description of the scholarship benefits and their amount.

- Research data management: It is to be expected that the funding of (post)doctoral students will lead to relevant research results for the overall project of the research centre, which should be documented in detail. It is

therefore the applicant university's responsibility to implement a careful research data management system as part of the supervision of (post)doctoral students, which takes into account the planning, collection, processing, storage and publication of research data. The status of research data management must be submitted with the annual monitoring report at the latest.

The selection procedure must be described in the project description.

ATTACHMENTS

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1. Programme description
2. Concept "African-German Centre of Excellence for Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems and Applied Agricultural and Food Data Science"
3. Guide to RoM - Line C (incl. Results framework, catalogue of indicators)
4. Honoraries fee table
5. Mobility lump sums for Funded Individuals
6. List of Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs), i.e. previously disadvantaged Universities of Technology (UoTs) and 'emerging' universities, "newly emerging" institutions

FORM TEMPLATES

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- Project description
- Project description (english)
- Project planning overview
- Project planning overview (english)
- Endorsement of project application
- Endorsement of project application (English)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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- Leaflet "Information on mobility with disabilities and chronic illness"
- Handout "Implementation of climate-sensitive DAAD-funded projects"
- Handout "Diversity and equal opportunities DAAD-funded projects"

CONTACT

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SUPPORTED BY

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