

# EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package - Higher Education Programme (SCOPE-HE)



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## Grants for EU- ASEAN Higher Education Institution clusters fostering academic connectivity (2025-2027)

<p><b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b></p>	<p><b>1</b> This funding is made available by the EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package – Higher Education Programme (SCOPE-HE), which is funded by the European Union and aims to enhance exchange and connectivity in higher education, research, and technical vocational education and training (TVET). This programme is implemented by the Dutch Organisation for internationalisation in education (Nuffic) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).</p> <p>The SCOPE-HE Academic Connectivity Grant, as part of SCOPE-HE, is open to higher education institutions (HEIs) from member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU). A cluster lead will coordinate a cluster of four to six institutions, and jointly design and implement cross-regional academic connectivity activities (e.g., researchers’, staff’s and PhD students’ mobility; curriculum revision; networking events; and publications). There are three focus areas: Green Transition, Digital Transformation and Blue Economy.</p> <p><b>Funding Details</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of available grants: 3</li> <li>• Maximum amount per grant: €545,000</li> <li>• Funding period: January 2025 to December 2027</li> <li>• Focus areas: Green Transition, Digital Transformation, Blue Economy</li> </ul> <p><b>Who can apply</b></p> <p>HEIs from the member states of ASEAN and the EU with a prior track record of academic cooperation with multiple associates based in Europe and/or Southeast Asia.</p>
<p><b>BACKGROUND</b></p>	<p><b>2</b> The DAAD implements the <b>EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package Higher Education Programme</b>, as an associate partner of Nuffic. This project is funded by the EU.</p> <p>Sustainable connectivity has become one of the key priority areas for EU cooperation with ASEAN and Southeast Asia. Higher education systems play a vital role in establishing stronger connectivity through EU-ASEAN cross-regional HEI clusters.</p>

		<p>These clusters strengthen academic cooperation, foster research collaboration and address global challenges. By bringing together HEIs from both regions and promoting research and technological connectivity with the focus areas of <b>Green Transition, Digital Transformation and Blue Economy</b>, such clusters create opportunities for joint research projects, knowledge exchange, innovation and improved teaching practices.</p>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>Funding is available for establishing and carrying out partnerships between European HEIs and those in the ASEAN member states.</p> <p>Each cluster will be led by one HEI that is based either in ASEAN or the EU. <b>The Cluster Lead will be responsible for establishing the cluster, selecting the members, submitting the proposal in response to this call and reporting about the implementation of the funded activities to the DAAD.</b></p> <p>Each cluster can comprise four to six HEIs, including the Cluster Lead. Cluster members will cooperate with research, academia and other relevant stakeholders to foster further research cooperation, improve teaching practices, and disseminate research and results beyond the core clusters.</p> <p>Through these collaborative efforts, the clusters aim to enhance the practical orientation of higher education and promote the application of research findings in real-world contexts. By pooling together resources, expertise and perspectives, the clusters can achieve greater impact and contribute significantly to addressing global challenges. The funding provided to the selected clusters will support their <b>activities over three years</b>, enabling them to achieve their objectives and make meaningful progress in their research and collaborative endeavours.</p>
<b>FOCUS AREAS</b>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>The HEI clusters can select one of three focus areas: <b>Green Transition, Digital Transformation, and Blue Economy</b>. These areas are increasingly critical in advancing research and promoting sustainable practices. SCOPE-HE is committed to addressing these themes as they play a fundamental role in shaping future advancements.</p> <p><b>Green Transition</b>  The Green Transition, a crucial movement in the field of sustainable development, refers to the adoption of sustainable practices that aim to reduce environmental impact and promote ecological balance. This involves embracing renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and principles of a circular economy. Green Transition is particularly important for addressing climate change and resource depletion. Ongoing research in this field not only drives innovation but also informs policies, providing solutions to global challenges such as carbon emissions</p>

		<p>and waste management, and making it an essential component for a sustainable future.</p> <p><b>Digital Transformation</b> Digital transformation involves integrating digital technologies into all aspects of an organisation, changing how it operates and delivers value. In research, this shift is essential as it enhances data collection, analysis and dissemination, enabling more efficient and innovative outcomes. By leveraging big data, artificial intelligence and advanced analytics, digital transformation drives progress and improves research precision.</p> <p><b>Blue Economy</b> The blue economy entails the sustainable use of ocean resources to drive economic growth, create jobs and maintain ecosystem health. It is gaining importance in research as it tackles global challenges such as food security, climate change and biodiversity loss. Through advocating for sustainable practices, the blue economy aims to harmonise development with environmental conservation, guaranteeing the preservation of ocean resources for future generations.</p>
<p><b>COMMITMENTS</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p>The cooperation between European HEIs and partners in ASEAN should be a key medium- and long-term objective of proposals. In line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, collaborations should make a significant contribution to the sustainable development of higher education and society. Hence, partnerships that allow for long-term connections between institutions and a sustainable collaboration between HEIs from the EU and ASEAN, as well as promote dialogue and communication, are considered particularly worthy of funding.</p> <p><b>Ecological sustainability</b> SCOPE-HE contributes to the implementation of SDG 13 pertaining to climate change by addressing critical environmental issues. These include the three focus areas of Green Transition, Digital Transformation and Blue Economy. More specifically, SCOPE-HE aims to achieve SDG 13.3: improving education, awareness-raising, and human and institutional capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. SCOPE-HE partners should strive to plan and implement projects in a way that conserves resources, the climate, and the environment. This applies to travel, procurement, event management, marketing and public relations.</p> <p><b>Diversity</b> In conjunction with SDG 4—ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all—SCOPE-HE aims to promote diversity and inclusivity through multinational cooperation and collaboration via research and education. SCOPE-HE also contributes to SDG 4.7: to ensure that, by</p>

		2030, all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development. Funded partners are expected to promote diversity and provide equal opportunities for all.
<b>CLUSTER OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>6</b>	<p>The overall objective (impact) of SCOPE-HE is to improve sustainable connectivity between the EU and Southeast Asia and enhance regional capacity in higher education as part of lifelong learning as well as cross-regional cooperation.</p> <p>In the long term, this initiative contributes (impact) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Structural strengthening of research production, research management and research-informed teaching at the HEI cluster members.</li> <li>B. Building and consolidating links for the creation of new knowledge and curriculum development within ASEAN and between ASEAN and the EU.</li> <li>C. Further internationalisation of EU-ASEAN and intra-ASEAN research and higher education.</li> </ul> <p>In order to achieve these long-term impacts, the programme pursues the following <b>objectives (outcomes)</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improvement of educational and training structures at partner institutions within the cluster.</li> <li>2. Partner HEIs offer study and qualification programmes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tailored to local contexts and the latest scientific advancements.</li> <li>3. Establishment of mechanisms for transferring teaching materials and curriculum components to interested HEIs.</li> <li>4. Increased participation of researchers in Horizon Europe calls related to key thematic areas.</li> <li>5. Integration of SDG-related research topics and outcomes into the teaching practices at the cluster's partner institutions.</li> <li>6. Promotion and strengthening of regional cooperation for research mobility.</li> <li>7. Enhancement of SDG-related research priorities within the cluster's partner institutions.</li> <li>8. Establishment of procedures for the dissemination and transfer of research results and knowledge.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED RESULTS OF CLUSTER</b>	<b>7</b>	<p>The objectives should be achieved by the following <b>direct results (outputs)</b> of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Curricula and teaching materials relevant to the cluster's research focus are collaboratively developed and further refined.</li> <li>2. Improved practices for disseminating knowledge, teaching programmes and research outcomes are effectively implemented.</li> </ul>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. HEIs outside the cluster express interest in adopting the revised or newly developed teaching programmes.</li> <li>4. Researchers receive training in advanced research methodologies and Horizon Europe processes.</li> <li>5. Research collaborations between cluster members, including non-HEI stakeholders, are established, resulting in joint outputs such as events and publications.</li> <li>6. Research outputs are disseminated through scholarly publications.</li> <li>7. Non-HEI stakeholders are actively involved in the cluster’s research activities.</li> <li>8. Other stakeholders, beyond the cluster, contribute to the dissemination of research results.</li> </ol> <p>For more information on the funding logic and results (outputs), objectives (outcomes) and longer-term effects (impacts) of the funding programme, see the impact structure in <b>Annexe 5</b> (Guide to Results-oriented Project Planning and Monitoring).</p> <p><b>Proposals are required to provide a workplan addressing all the outputs listed above.</b></p> <p>While there is some room for flexibility when it comes to wording objectives and the ways to achieve them, the proposal objectives must be in line with this call’s objectives. These objectives must be specified based on the programme’s results framework. Measurable goals and results as well as corresponding indicators must be defined, as well as outlined in the proposal and in the project planning overview. Regarding the instructions for results-oriented project planning, the results framework, and the list of indicators, please refer to Annexe 5 (Guide to Results-oriented Project Planning and Monitoring).</p>
<p><b>ELIGIBILITY OF ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Activities eligible for funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and revision of teaching/learning materials relevant to project implementation.</li> <li>• Partial funding of PhD positions, aimed at supporting the involvement of early-career researchers in collaborative research projects.</li> <li>• Organisation of events.</li> <li>• Carrying out further and advanced training.</li> <li>• Implementation of project-related stays and mobilities (e.g., research, specialised course/workshop, summer schools, internship, study, teaching).</li> <li>• Realisation of target group-oriented public relations work.</li> <li>• Research in one focus area.</li> </ul> <p>For sustainability reasons, it should first be ascertained whether a digital format might be suitable and possible before deciding the form in which individual measures are realised.</p>

		<p><b>Activities ineligible for funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative trips without academic interests, and excursions.</li> <li>• Extended (more than 50 days) research stays of researchers, staff and PhD students.</li> <li>• Trips for the purpose of contract initiation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUB-GRANTING</b></p>	<p>9</p>	<p>The Cluster Lead is authorised to sub-grant a portion of the grant funds to third parties such as Cluster Members for the execution of specific activities necessary for achieving the objectives outlined in Section 5 (Cluster Objectives) above. Such sub-granting shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable rules under the European Union’s Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions (<a href="#">ePRAG</a>).</p> <p><b>1. Sub-grant Agreement</b></p> <p>The Cluster Lead shall enter into a written agreement with each Sub-grantee. The Sub-grant Agreement shall specify the amount of the sub-grant, activities to be performed by the Sub-grantee, reporting requirements and obligations of the Sub-grantee to comply with the terms of the agreement between the Cluster Lead and the DAAD.</p> <p><b>2. Compliance and Monitoring</b></p> <p>The Cluster Lead shall ensure that Sub-grantees comply with all applicable EU regulations, including but not limited to financial management, procurement and reporting standards as prescribed by <a href="#">ePRAG</a>. The Cluster Lead shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to oversee the activities of the Sub-grantees, ensuring that funds are used efficiently and for the purposes intended. The Cluster Lead shall report on the activities of the Sub-grantees in accordance with the reporting schedule outlined in the agreement between the Cluster Lead and the DAAD.</p> <p><b>3. Audit and Access to Information</b></p> <p>The DAAD and any authorised representatives shall have the right to audit the accounts, records and documents of the Cluster Lead and the Sub-grantees related to the project. The Cluster Lead shall ensure that Sub-grantees provide full access to all relevant documentation and cooperate fully with any audits or inspections.</p>
<p><b>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</b></p>	<p>10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible Cluster Leads are state or state-recognised HEIs from the EU and ASEAN member states. They are recognised as non-profit entities and conduct independent research and teaching at the tertiary level.</li> <li>• The Cluster Lead submits the application on behalf of the entire cluster. The cluster consist of four to six HEIs from the EU and ASEAN member states (with a minimum of one institution each from ASEAN and the EU).</li> </ul>

<b>APPLICATION PROCESS</b>	<b>11</b>	<p>The proposal for project funding in English must be submitted on time and in complete form to the following email addresses: <a href="mailto:scope-he@daad.de">scope-he@daad.de</a></p> <p>In addition, the following documents must be sent in one email, <b>in PDF format</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project description (refer to Annexe 1).</li> <li>2. Detailed budget for all implementation years (see Annexe 2).</li> <li>3. Project planning overview (refer to Annexe 3).</li> <li>4. Endorsement by the university management (see Annexe 4).</li> <li>5. If sub-granting: project description and financing plan of the Sub-grantee (if known at the time of application, otherwise to submit information as soon as it is available).</li> <li>6. Dedicated justification of the own interest in the project on the part of the partner institution</li> <li>7. Signed cooperation agreement(s) on the partnership between the participating EU and ASEAN Cluster Members, otherwise to provide justification if this is submitted after the conclusion of the contract.</li> <li>8. Short curriculum vitae and a list of the <u>five</u> most relevant publications of the project leaders and partners on both sides.</li> </ol> <p>After the application deadline, <b>changes to the financing plan, the project description as well as subsequently submitted or amended documents can no longer be considered</b>. Incomplete applications will be excluded from the selection process.</p> <p>In deviation from this, signed cooperation agreements on the partnership/partnerships between Cluster Members can be submitted later until the contract is concluded, but this must be justified in the timely application</p>
<b>APPLICATION DEADLINE</b>	<b>12</b>	<p>The deadline for submitting proposals is <b>15 November 2024, 12.00am (GMT +2)</b>.</p>
<b>SELECTION CRITERIA</b>	<b>13</b>	<p><b>Selection process for project funding</b></p> <p>The DAAD will decide on funding based on the evaluation of the applications by an international selection committee.</p> <p>There will be a two-step selection process, starting with an initial review of the submitted proposals. Candidates who are shortlisted will be invited to participate in an online interview to further discuss and clarify their proposals.</p> <p><b>SELECTION CRITERIA</b></p> <p>(1) Relation of the project to programme objectives (according to the impact structure) as impact-oriented planning with indicators that meet the SMART criteria (see Annexe 5) <b>(20%)</b>.</p>

		<p>(2) Concrete contribution to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals <b>(20%)</b>.</p> <p>(3) Discipline-specific relevance and quality of the project <b>(25%)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand for the project and its benefits are clearly recognisable.</li> <li>• Discipline-specific expertise of the applicants.</li> <li>• Experience of the project coordinator gained from past projects in developing or emerging countries or with target groups from developing or emerging countries.</li> <li>• Experience of the project managers in the management of international projects.</li> <li>• Balanced project concept that adequately addresses the fields of activity listed above in line with the respective focus areas.</li> <li>• Appropriate and balanced calculation.</li> </ul> <p>(4) Balance of cooperation measures <b>(15%)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and cooperation of the partners involved.</li> <li>• Contributions by EU and ASEAN HEIs/partners.</li> <li>• Integration and exchange of students, academics and researchers on both sides.</li> </ul> <p>(5) The project's relevance to EU and ASEAN strategies <b>(10%)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributions to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.</li> <li>• Consideration of the principles of development cooperation: planning, conceptualisation and implementation are based on the requirements of the partner university/universities and are carried out jointly.</li> <li>• Plausible explanation; how the project's discipline-specific and regional focus contributes to the development of the partner institution and/or partner country in general.</li> </ul> <p>(6) Sustainability of the intended impacts <b>(10%)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking with further HEIs/partners and stakeholders in the region.</li> <li>• Creation of sustainable cooperation structures that will outlast the funding period.</li> </ul>
ANNEXES	14	<p><b>Annexe 1:</b> Project Description <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p> <p><b>Annexe 2:</b> Budget Template <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p> <p><b>Annexe 3:</b> Project Planning Overview <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p> <p><b>Annexe 4:</b> Endorsement of Project Application for Submission to the DAAD <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p> <p><b>Annexe 5:</b> Guide to Results-Oriented Project Planning and Monitoring <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p> <p><b>Annexe 6:</b> Expenditure Guidelines for Proposal Budgeting: Eligible and Ineligible Costs <a href="#">[DOWNLOAD HERE]</a></p>

<b>CONTACT</b>	<p data-bbox="367 392 446 470"><b>15</b></p> <p data-bbox="454 403 1468 481">For more information about this call for proposal, please address your questions to:</p> <p data-bbox="454 515 1292 694">German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Section P32- Partnership Programmes, Alumni Projects and Higher Education Management in Developing Cooperation Kennedyallee 50 53175 Bonn</p> <p data-bbox="454 728 742 772"><b>Project management</b></p> <p data-bbox="454 772 1109 806">Ms Polixeni Georgiadou (Bonn) - <a href="mailto:scope-he@daad.de">scope-he@daad.de</a></p> <p data-bbox="454 806 1077 840">Ms Olivia Deskarina (Jakarta) - <a href="mailto:scope-he@daad.de">scope-he@daad.de</a></p>
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