PROJECT FUNDING

FUNDING FRAMEWORK

SDG-Partnerships (2026-2029)

PURPOSE AND GOAL

1

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supports the "**SDG-Partnerships**" funding programme with funds from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The programme supports the establishment of partnerships between German universities and universities in countries of the Global South. The focus is on the planning, development, and implementation of a university partnership and, as a result, the sustainable strengthening of structures at partner universities in the countries of the Global South, both in teaching and in research as well as in university and science management.

The programme is intended to contribute to the following long-term (**impact**) goals:

- The programme contributes to the development and consolidation of cooperation structures between the participating universities and institutions.
- German universities have acquired expertise in global contexts and challenges as well as in countries of the Global South.
- The programme contributes to the internationalisation of the participating universities.
- The programme contributes to the structural strengthening of teaching and research at the partner universities.

In order to achieve these long-term effects (impacts), the programme pursues the following **programme objectives (outcomes)**:

Teaching field of action

1: The structures for graduate education have been improved at the partner universities (Bachelor's and above all Master's programmes or equivalent)
2: Students from the countries of the Global South are prepared for a professional career in these partner countries.
3: The partner universities offer SDG-related study and qualification programmes that are in line with the local context and the state of the art.
4: Procedures for transferring teaching programmes to other universities are established.

Field of action Research

5: Research findings on topics relating to global contexts and challenges are integrated into the teaching of the participating institutions.
6: Topics relating to global contexts and challenges are established as research priorities in the participating institutions.
7: Procedures for the dissemination and transfer of knowledge as well as research results have been established.

Field of action university management

8: The organisational structures at the partner universities have been strengthened, expanded, or established.

9: The central governance and management structures at the partner university have been improved.

10: Procedures for implementing the third mission of the partner universities have been created in the area of university management.

These programme objectives are to be achieved through the following direct **results (outputs)** of the measures / activities:

Teaching field of action

- Curricula/teaching modules related to the SDGs that correspond to the local context and the state of the art are (further) developed jointly.
- Teaching staff at the partner universities are professionally and didactically (further) qualified.
- Structural prerequisites for degree programmes have been created.
- Non-university stakeholders are actively involved in the development of teaching and learning.
- Other (non-)university stakeholders engage in the partnership.
- Procedures for the dissemination of teaching programmes have been created.

Field of action Research

- Scientists are trained in research methods.
- Scientists have realised research projects on topics relating to global contexts and challenges.
- Non-university stakeholders are involved in research activities.
- Structural conditions for research at the partner universities are improved.
- Other (non-)university stakeholders are involved in the partnership.
- Procedures for the dissemination of knowledge and research results have been created.

Field of action university management

- Administrative staff at the partner universities are (further) qualified.
- Processes and structures for improved university management have been created.
- Processes and structures for communication and knowledge transfer to society have been established.

With regard to the funding logic and the results (outputs), programme objectives (outcomes) and longer-term effects (impacts) of the funding programme, see the impact structure in the Result-oriented-Monitoring (RoM) handout (see **Annex 1)**.

Different priorities can be set in each project and project objectives do not have to be defined for all programme objectives. **However, at least one project objective must**

be defined for each of the programme objectives in the teaching field of action or in the university management field of action.

There is room for manoeuvre formulating the **project objectives** and the ways in which they are to be achieved. The universities are requested to develop their projects based on the programme impact structure, the programme indicators and to **formulate measurable project objectives and associated indicators**. These must be presented in the application and in the project planning overview; the project objectives must be consistent with the programme objectives (see **Annex 1** "Handreichung WoM" with instructions for impact-oriented project planning, the impact structure and indicator catalogue).

The combinability of the fields of action opens up the possibility of a flexible strategy, depending on the requirements and boundary conditions of the project; smaller projects that relate to a specific study programme in the partner country, for example, are just as eligible for funding as larger projects that can be an extension of already established partnerships. **Smaller projects expressly do not refer to collaborations that are still being established; the DAAD offers the Fact Finding Missions programme for this purpose**.

Depending on the objectives of the project and the combination of fields of action, administrators/multipliers relevant to the university management sector and/or other participants such as political decision-makers can also be involved.

It should also be noted that, in accordance with the impacts formulated above, a key medium and long-term goal the cooperation of German universities with partners in the countries of the Global South. This cooperation should make a substantial contribution to sustainable development not only for universities, but also for society, in line with the 2030 Agenda. This also means that partnerships that allow for a longer-term relationship between the institutions and enable the continuation of South-South contacts, dialogue and understanding are particularly worthy of funding. In this context, the use of further funding instruments for university cooperation with the countries of the Global South is sensible and desirable in order to create synergies (e.g. alumni and material resources programme). Depending on the combinability of the fields of action, different priorities can be set in each project.

For impact-orientated project planning, see **Appendix** 1**.**

Ecological sustainability

The DAAD has set itself the goal of further reducing its ecological footprint as an organisation and funding body. In the context of project funding, efforts should be made to plan and implement projects in a resource-, climate- and environmentally friendly manner. This applies in particular to mobility/travel and, depending on the type and scope of the project, can also relate to procurement and awarding, event management or marketing and public relations. Further information on the climate-sensitive implementation of international university cooperation in DAAD project funding found in the handout.

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

2 ELIGIBLE MEASURES

Eligible measures are:

- Development and revision of teaching/learning materials relevant to the implementation of the project;
- Participation in/realisation of events and workshops;
- Participation in/realisation of further education and training;
- Planning/set-up/implementation of project-related stays (research, specialised course/workshop, internship, study, teaching);
- Realisation of target group-oriented public relations work;
- Planning/implementation of SDG-relevant research;
- Design, development and implementation of digital teaching and learning programmes.

Not eligible for funding:

- Applications aimed exclusively at research funding;
- Projects that are already funded by other organisations (e.g. DFG, BMZ, GIZ) are being funded;
- Representative trips without a technical focus and excursions;
- Applications with a funding volume of less than 10,000 euros per year;
- Longer (i.e. more than five months) study and research visits by academics and students (for such visits, please refer to the general scholarship and research funding programmes).
  the general scholarship and research funding programmes)
- Travelling for contract initiation. For the initiation of collaborations, please refer to the Fact Finding Missions programme with its own call for tenders.

3 ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

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

Personnel resources for project implementation and support:

- Research
  Note: When filling the coordination position, sufficient experience in project management and project administration should be taken into account.
- research assistant
- student assistant
- Other personnel

Personnel expenses are appropriate up to a maximum of 30% of the total expenditure applied for.

Personnel expenses include the gross salary of the employer. Collectively agreed annual special payments are only eligible for funding for the approval period and only as far as the payment date falls within this period. Other individual and collectively agreed one-off payments are only eligible for funding if the DAAD has made a provision to this effect and provides information about it.

Only expenditure for persons who have an employment relationship with the grant recipient may be recognised under personnel funds. A contract for work and services does not constitute an employment relationship. Therefore, expenditure for work contracts must be reported under material resources.

Expenses for personnel abroad are possible within the framework of a forwarding agreement.

MATERIAL RESOURCES INLAND / ABROAD

(not for own staff, not for staff of domestic or foreign partner universities/institutions named in the application)

- for external experts and service providers up to 250 euros/day (not for employees of the funding recipient or the partner universities involved in the project) for lectures or workshops, not for curriculum development;
- for auxiliary staff (e.g. for auxiliary work at conferences, workshops);
- for translations of teaching or project-related teaching and learning materials, flyers, brochures etc.

Expenses for mobility and, if applicable, accommodation can also be applied for and in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and economy. These expenses, which do not relate to the fee itself, must be included in the fee agreement.

MOBILITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

- Expenses for travelling/flights can be applied for and claimed in accordance with BRKG/LRKG
  in accordance with BRKG/LRKG; however, rail travel only second class
  and flights only in economy class.

- Expenses for travel and flights for employees of the foreign partner university(-ies) (onward transfer recipients) must be claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and economy.

STAY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

- Expenses for the stay of employees of the German university (accommodation and meals) at the venue can be applied for and claimed in accordance with BRKG/LRKG.
- Residence allowances for employees of the foreign partner university/universities:
  - For stays in Germany, see **table on page 8.**
  - For short stays in other partner countries (South-South exchange), **see Annex 2.**
  - For long-term stays, **see Annex 4 (SPDL rates)**.

  The flat-rate accommodation fee is payable on the first day of the stay and must be evidenced in a suitable manner, e.g. by a hotel bill. The flat rate for the stay covers all expenses associated with the stay.

MATERIAL RESOURCES INLAND/ABROAD

- Consumables (expenses for printing and duplication, toner, inks, etc.)
- Economic goods (expenditure on software, licences, small equipment for better equipping the foreign partner university) are eligible for funding up to EUR 5,000 (per total duration); in justified exceptional cases for South-South partnerships and particularly financially weak partner universities up to EUR 10,000 (per total duration)
- Printing/publications/advertising and public relations (expenditure for flyers, brochures, posters, etc.; in the online area, e.g. for the development, establishment and maintenance of communication and learning platforms, websites, e-journals, online libraries)
- External services (companies that are commissioned by contract to provide services in accordance with the procurement guidelines, e.g. for translations, website creation, setting up and maintaining communication and learning platforms, websites, e-journals, online libraries, catering).

- Other: *Expenditure for*
  - Teaching and learning materials, textbooks, reference books, specialised media, etc.
  - Visa fees;
  - Necessary vaccinations and malaria prophylaxis;
  - Fees for money transfers abroad;
  - Specialist excursions
  - **Participant flat rate (70 euros/day/participant)** for the organisation of events (workshops and conferences etc.).
    The participant fee is payable on the first day of the event and is evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants. The participant fee covers the costs of technical equipment, room hire and, if applicable,

coffee breaks.

Internal accounts of the grant recipient (e.g. expenses for printing documents in an in-house print shop, expenses for internal event rooms) must be justified at the time of application with regard to unavoidability, proportionality, efficiency and economy.

Sponsored persons:

MOBILITY OF SPONSORED PERSONS

From the funding recipient to the foreign partner university/ institutions (and vice versa).

Expenses for travel/flights can be applied for and claimed in ***accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and economy***.

If trips are organised in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner, the necessary costs incurred as a result shall be reimbursed as long as they are in reasonable proportion to the objectives of environmental compatibility and sustainability.
In the interests of ecological sustainability, rail journeys should be chosen instead of air travel wherever possible for distances of less than 800 km (one way).

From partner university to partner university (South-South)
Expenses for travel and flights are to be claimed in accordance with the principles of economy and thrift; train journeys (regardless of their duration) only second class and flights only in economy class.

Within the partner
Expenses for travelling and flights can be applied for and claimed in exceptional cases. The approval of the DAAD must be obtained separately in each case.

RESIDENCE OF SPONSORED PERSONS

Lump-sum allowances for **foreign scholarship holders in Germany** to participate in the following activities: research, specialised course/workshop, internship, study, teaching etc.
Students/graduates, doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers, experienced researchers, and professors can apply for and claim a lump sum for their stay (accommodation and meals) in Germany.

Status	**Daily rate** for short stays (up to 22 days) (in Euro)	**Monthly instalment** for study and research visits lasting several months (max. 6) (in Euro)
Students and doctoral candidates	98	Students: 992 Doctoral students: 1,300 **In the last (incomplete) month of a stay lasting several months, the**

		monthly flat rate/30 is to be applied as a daily rate.
Postdocs/scientists/professors	121	Postdocs: 2,000 Experienced scientists: 2,150 Professors or scientists in comparable positions: 2,300 **In the last (incomplete) month of a stay lasting several months, the monthly flat rate/30 is to be applied as a daily rate.**

The accommodation allowance is payable on the first day of the stay and must evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants (this must be submitted with the interim/utilisation report). The accommodation allowance covers the costs of accommodation and meals as well as health, accident, and liability insurance.

Residence allowances **in the partner country** for **sponsored persons from Germany** to participate in the following project-related activities: Research, specialised course/workshop, internship, study, teaching etc.
Students/graduates, doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers, experienced researchers and professors can apply for and claim a lump-sum allowance for their stay (accommodation and meals) in the partner country **in accordance with Annex 2 Lump-sum allowance_abroad_one month** (short-term stays) **and Annex 3 Lump-sum allowance_abroad_long** (long-term stays).

Lump-sum subsistence allowances **in the partner country** for **sponsored persons in the South-South exchange programme** for participation in the following project-related activities:
Research, specialised course/workshop, internship, studies, teaching etc.
Students/graduates, doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers, experienced researchers, and professors can apply for and claim a lump sum for their stay (accommodation and meals) in the South-South exchange programme **in accordance with Annex 2 (see above) and Annex 4 SPDL rates** (long-term stays).

Arrival and departure days may each be claimed as one day.

Note:
Foreign participants should urgently be made aware of the need for adequate insurance cover. If it is not possible to take out international health insurance in their home country, they should ensure that they are insured as soon as they arrive in Germany.

FORWARDING

4

The transfer of the grant for project funding (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 on-lending recipient(s) in addition to the project's own measures and objectives. The entire project must therefore be addressed (including the forwarding level).

In the **financing plan**, the expenditure items of the on-lending recipient(s) must be labelled separately from the recipient's own expenditure items (e.g. with "WL"). This means that the expenditure of the entire project (including the on-lending level) must be shown in the financing plan.

If the intended onward transfer (recipient, 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 onward transfer recipient must first be shown in the financing plan as own expenses and their necessity must be justified in the project description. As soon as the actual onward transfer 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 based on a forwarding agreement.

The audit certificate on the proof of utilisation of funds by the on-lending recipient must be attached to the proof of utilisation of funds by the funding recipient, which must be submitted to the DAAD.

TYPE OF FINANCING

5

Funding is provided by way of **shortfall 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 in the form of income/expenditure that cannot be documented, these must be plausibly presented in the financing plan and project description.

FUNDING PERIOD

6

The **funding period** begins on **1 February 2026** at the earliest and ends on **31 December 2029** at the latest**.**

AMOUNT OF GRANT

7

A grant of **up to 293,750 euros** can be applied for, divided over the fiscal years in the authorisation period as follows:

2026: 68,750 euros
2027: 75,000 euros
2028: 75,000 euros
2029: 75,000 euros

In the case of multilateral co-operation (one German and two or more universities, usually from different partner countries), the DAAD grant can be increased by up to 25,000 euros per year for South-South exchange.

SPECIALISATIONS

8

A distinction is made between two funding lines in terms of specialisations:

Funding line I
is open ***to all disciplines with a clear SDG connection*** (including interdisciplinary applications), with the exception of applications that take into account the approaches specified in funding line II.
Funding line II
Will consider applications that a significant contribution to the **topic of sustainable agricultural and food systems (agriculture, food, and forestry)**, including interdisciplinary applications.

Applications must be allocated to one of the two funding lines when submitted. **Applications that are allocated to funding line II must be justified accordingly (see project description).**

TARGET GROUP

9

Bachelor's students, Master's students, doctoral students, academics, and administrative staff at the universities.

APPLICANTS AUTHORISED

10

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

APPLICATION

11

Note:
Due to Russia's attack on Ukraine, the DAAD has suspended all institutional forms of cooperation with partners in Belarus until further notice. Against this background, no applications for project funding with partner institutions in Belarus are possible.

The application for project funding in German or English must be submitted 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 planning overview),
- If forwarding: Project description and financing plan of the forwarding recipient(s) (if known at the time of application, otherwise submit later as soon as known) (attachment type: Supplementary financial information),

- signed cooperation agreement(s) on the partnership between the participating German and foreign university(ies) or a justification as to why this is not possible and a confirmation that this will be submitted by the time the contract is concluded (attachment type: contracts/agreements),
- Endorsement by the university management, see **form template** (attachment type: programme-specific attachments),
- Short CV and a list of the 5 most important relevant publications of the project leaders and partners on both sides. (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.

In deviation from this, signed cooperation agreements on the partnership/partnerships between the participating German and foreign universities can be submitted later until the contract is concluded, but this must be justified in the timely application (attachment type: contracts/agreements).

APPLICATION DEADLINE

12 The application deadline is **30 June 2025**

SELECTION PROCEDURE

13 **Selection of applications for project funding**

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

(1) Technical and substantive quality of the project in relation to the achievement of the project and programme objectives (60%):

- Relation of the project to the programme objectives (in accordance with the impact structure) and impact-oriented planning with indicators that meet the SMART criteria (see Annex 1),
- Concrete contribution to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals,
- Technical relevance and quality of the project
    - Demand and added value are clearly evident,
    - Expertise of the applicants,
    - Development policy relevance of the project,
    - Consideration of the principles of development co-operation: Planning, conception and implementation are oriented towards the needs of the partner university/ies,
    - Plausible justification of how the project contributes to the development of the partner institution and/or the partner country in general through its technical and regional focus.

(2) Quality and rigour of project planning and implementation (15%):

- Balanced project conception, which refers appropriately to the above-mentioned fields of action depending on the focus,
- Clear, realistic, and comprehensible elaboration of how the activities will lead to measurable (SMART criteria) results and how the results will be used in the short term,
- Reasonable and balanced calculation,
- Previous experience of the German project managers in the management of international projects and with target groups from developing and newly industrialising countries.

(3) Impact of the project on the individual target groups and addressed areas beyond the funding period of the project (5%):
- Suitability of the planned activities and timetable in line with the institutional and scientific needs and requirements of the partners involved,
- Networking with other universities/partners and stakeholders in the region, South-South partnerships,
- Creation of sustainable cooperation structures that last beyond the funding period.

(4) Diversity (5%):
- Planning the project considering the cross-cutting objective of diversity (diversity, equal opportunities, inclusion).

(5) Climate sensitivity (5%):
- Resource, climate and environmentally friendly planning and implementation of the requested measures/activities, especially with regard to mobility/travelling, event format(s) and event management, procurement, awarding, marketing, etc.

(6) Balance of co-operation measures (10%):
- Coordination and cooperation between the partners involved: planning, conception and implementation are conducted jointly,
- Own contribution of the German and foreign universities/partners:
    - Integration and exchange of students and academics on both sides Balanced project conception which, depending on the focus, makes appropriate reference to the above-mentioned fields of action,
    - Reasonable and balanced calculation.

    - Plausible justification of how the project contributes to the development of the partner institution and/or the partner country in general through its technical and regional focus.

ATTACHMENTS

14

1. Handout on impact-oriented monitoring (RoM, incl. impact structure, indicator catalogue)

2. Residence allowance_abroad_one
3. Residence allowance_abroad_long
4. SPDL_Rates

FORM TEMPLATES

15

- Project description
- Project planning overview
- Endorsement of the German university management

IMPORTANT IMPORTANT INFORMATION

16

- Leaflet "Information on mobility with disabilities and chronic illness"
- Handout "Climate-sensitive implementation of international university cooperation in DAAD project funding"
- Handout "Diversity and equal opportunities in DAAD-funded projects"
- OECD DAC list
- Completion aid for financing plan

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SUPPORTED BY

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Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung