PROJECT FUNDING

THE GERMAN VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT SHALL BE LEGALLY BINDING

FUNDING FRAMEWORK

Centre of African Excellence for Applied and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (Kenya)

Line A – Capacity Building, Education and Knowledge Transfer (2027–2031)

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

1

The German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst - DAAD) supports the establishment of a "Centre of Excellence for Applied and Responsible Artificial Intelligence" in Kenya under its Centres of African Excellence programme.

The cross-departmental initiative comprises two funding lines:

- Line A – Capacity Building, Education and Knowledge Transfer (funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, AA)
- Line B – Funding for German and Kenyan Doctoral Candidates and Postdoctoral Researchers (funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space, BMFTR)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is regarded as a key enabling technology with significant potential for societal innovation and development. Its fields of application are expanding rapidly, driving profound transformations across all areas of life and work. At the same time, the responsible handling of data, the safeguarding of transparent decision-making processes, and ethical and legal considerations present new challenges for academia, policymakers and society at large.

In order to harness the full potential of AI for the benefit of society, human-centred, practice-oriented and context-sensitive applications are required. Simultaneously, the demand for qualified professionals and experts capable of deploying AI in a responsible and common-good-oriented manner is increasing. It is therefore essential to integrate AI into research and teaching – both within established disciplines and in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary contexts – at higher education institutions and research organisations, while further strengthening data literacy, ethical reflection and IT security.

Against this backdrop, the German-Kenyan higher education cooperation aims to systematically expand teaching and research capacities in common-good-oriented AI in Kenya, to further develop interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary AI solutions in key fields of innovation, and to make AI more effectively usable as a driver of inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development.

Guided by the objectives of the High-Tech Agenda Germany –particularly with regard to expanding international cooperation in research and innovation, as well as fostering ethical reflection, promoting early-career researchers, and building expertise in the field of AI – the programme creates a space for

collaboration in which German and Kenyan innovation capabilities are brought together. The initiative combines capacity building, research and knowledge transfer, promotes early-career researchers, and strengthens the long-term institutional partnership between German and Kenyan higher education institutions. Through collaboration with stakeholders from politics, the private sector, and civil society, the programme seeks to generate common-good-driven impetus for key transformation agendas in both countries.

Information on the background, strategic positioning, and thematic focus of the Centre of African Excellence can be found in **Annex 1**.

Under Funding Line A, the development of the Centre's structures is supported. The focus is on capacity building, the development of practice-oriented teaching programmes and flexible (training) modules, the education and further training of professionals and future decision-makers, as well as networking and knowledge transfer activities.

The objectives of Funding Line A are:

1: Master's students, academic teaching staff, and graduates are (further) qualified in subject-specific, interdisciplinary, and methodological aspects of applied and responsible AI.
2: Teaching and supervision, particularly at the master's level, have been strengthened at the participating partner institutions.
3: Strategic approaches to securing the Centre's financial, personnel, and structural sustainability, as well as to supporting innovative AI applications in teaching, research, and knowledge transfer, have been implemented.
4: The Centre cooperates in networks with relevant Kenyan, German, and international stakeholders from politics, the private sector, civil society, and the academic sector.

Regarding the funding logic and the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts of the funding programme, see the results framework (**Annex 2**) and the catalogue of indicators (**Annex 3**).

Project outcomes must be defined for all programme outcomes. For results-oriented project planning, see **Important Information Guide to Results-Oriented Project Planning and Monitoring (ROM)**.

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 way that preserves resources, the climate and the environment. This applies in particular to mobility/travelling and, depending on the type and scope of the project, can also relate to procurement and allocation, event management or marketing and public relations. Further information on climate-sensitive implementation of international university cooperation in DAAD project funding can be 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. Thus, talented people should be given the opportunity to contribute their diversity and different perspectives in the context of project funding. Projects must be planned and realised with this cross-cutting objective into account. 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 can be found in the handout.

2 ELIGIBLE MEASURES

Eligible measures are:

- Study stays of Kenyan master's students in Germany and Kenya
- Short-term stays of German master's students in Kenya as well as Kenyan master's students in Germany
- Research and/or teaching stays of (experienced) Kenyan researchers and professors/university lecturers in Germany and Kenya
- (Further) development of (digital) curricula/modules and/or continuing education and training, including micro-degrees, as well as the development of teaching, learning and qualification materials
  - Development of curricula and/or flexible modules that can be implemented in established study programmes in Kenya and in case of digital offers throughout Africa respectively
  - Development and implementation of accompanying capacity building offers, i.e. practice-oriented training modules (promotion of academic and non-academic skills) for graduates and teachers (including train-the-trainer)
- (Further) development and implementation of concepts/strategies for the financial and institutional sustainability of the Centre and for innovative AI support in teaching, research, and knowledge transfer
- Establishment, expansion, and further development of (existing) IT structures
- Organisation of and participation in (digital) events, including trainings and continuing education (e.g., conferences, workshops, training courses, and short-term programmes such as summer schools or transfer formats) for master's students, researchers, professors/university lecturers, administration staff, and alumni of the Centre, as well as relevant stakeholders
- Language course for learning German

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 associates (project coordination, administration)

- research assistants
- student assistants
- other personnel

Personnel expenditure includes the gross salary paid by the employer. Annual bonus payments under collective agreements are only eligible for funding during the approval period and only insofar 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 issued a regulation to this effect and communicated it.

Personnel expenses for personnel abroad within the scope of a forwarding include the gross employer remuneration at the local rate.

Note:
When filling the coordination positions, care should be taken to ensure that the candidates have sufficient experience in project management and project administration. It is recommended that staff resources for project administration also be allocated at the participating partner institutions in Kenya.

Material resources

HONORARIES (not for own staff)

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

- Expenses for travel/flights can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the federal travel expenses act (BRKG)/state travel expenses act (LRKG); in deviation from this, train journeys only second class and flights only in economy class.
- For the personnel of the foreign recipient of the forwarding travel/flight expenses can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality.

STAY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

- Expenses for the stay (accommodation and meals) can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the federal travel expenses act (BRKG)/state travel expenses act (LRKG).
- For the personnel of the foreign recipient of the forwarding, expenses for the stay (accommodation and meals) can be applied for and claimed in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality.

MATERIAL RESOURCES DOMESTIC/ABROAD

- Consumables (e.g. paper, pens, postage, laboratory materials)
- Assets (e.g. laboratory equipment, computers, laptops, projectors, software licences)

- Rent (e.g. rent for conference rooms)
- Printing/ publications/ advertising and public relations activities (e.g. flyers, brochures, posters, academic publications, publication fees)
- External services (e.g. catering - please note the upper limit for hospitality of 32 euros/gross per meal and person -, transport, website creation and maintenance, IT services)
- Other expenditure (e.g. fees for money transfers abroad, bank charges, visa, insurances, vaccination, language course fees to learn the German language)

Funded persons

MOBILITY OF FUNDED PERSONS

- Mobility allowance (Germany ↔ Kenya; Kenya ↔ Germany)
  - For **German and Kenyan master's students as well as for Kenyan (experienced) researchers and professors/ university lecturers** a mobility allowance of **1,188 euros** can be applied for and claimed for travel/ flights from Germany to Kenya and Kenya to Germany respectively as part of short-term measures (e.g. participation in events, training- or summer schools) as well as for study visits, and for residence for research or teaching.
  - The mobility allowance arises from the first day of the trip and must be evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants. This must be submitted with the interim report/evidence of use. The mobility allowance covers all expenses associated with the trip (including travel and flights as well as expenses for visas, vaccinations, excess baggage, baggage insurance, etc.).

- Expenses for mobility within Kenya and, in limited and justified cases, also within the East African Community (EAC) and worldwide (e.g., to attend conferences) can be applied for and claimed by **Kenyan and German master's students as well as by (experienced) Kenyan researchers and professors/university lecturers** in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality on the basis of receipts.

RESIDENCE OF FUNDED PERSONS

- Sur-Place scholarships
  for **Kenyan master's students** studying at the Kenyan partner institute, amounting to **400 euros/month**; in addition to the Sur-Place scholarship, the following subsidies can be applied for and claimed:
  - Flat-rate rent subsidy of 30 euros/month to compensate for higher rents for students who cannot live on campus or in dormitories
  - Tuition fees grant of up to 2,500 euros/academic year if no fee waiver could be obtained at the Kenyan partner institution. The DAAD must be contacted in advance regarding the reimbursement of tuition fees.

  The Sur-Place-scholarship, the rent subsidy and the grant for tuition fees must be included as a benefit in the scholarship agreement.

- Residence scholarships
  - für **Kenyan master's students** for study, research, and internship stays at the German partner institution (see **Table 2**)
  - Subsidy for health insurance up to the amount of the DAAD insurance rates
    Note: Information on DAAD insurance is available at https://www.daad.de/en/the-daad/what-we-do/insurance/. There is no obligation to take out DAAD insurance.

  The residence scholarship as well as, if applicable, the health insurance subsidy must be included as a benefit in the scholarship agreement.

- Accommodation allowance
  - For their stay in Kenya and as part of short-term measures (e.g. participation in events, training- or summer schools), **German master's students** can apply for and claim an accommodation allowance (see **Table 1**).
  - **Kenyan master's students as well as (experienced) Kenyan researchers and professors/university lecturers** can apply for and claim an accommodation allowance for their stay in Germany as part of short-term measures (e.g. participation in relevant events, training courses or summer schools) and as part of research and teaching stays (see **Table 2**).
  - The accommodation allowance arises on the first day of the stay and must be evidenced by a list of participants signed by the participants (this must be submitted with the interim report/evidence of use). The accommodation allowance covers the costs of accommodation and meals as well as health, accident and liability insurance.

Table 1: Germans to Kenya

Accommodation allowance	Monthly rate (from the 23rd day) (euros)	Daily rate (total stay up to 22 days) (euros)	Daily rate (in the last incomplete month of a several-month-long stay) (euros)
Master's students	1,450	65	48

Table 2: Kenyans to Germany

Accommodation allowance/residency scholarship	Monthly rate (from the 23rd day) (euros)	Daily rate (total stay up to 22 days) (euros)	Daily rate (in the last incomplete month of a several-month-long stay) (euros)
Master's students	992	45	33
Experienced researchers with independent research profiles (comparable to postdoctoral lecturers in Germany)	2,150	96	72
Professors or academics in comparable positions (comparable to university professors in Germany)	2,300	103	77

- Expenses for stays within Kenya as part of short-term measures (e.g., participation in relevant events or summer schools) or research and teaching stays, as well as in limited and justified cases within the East African Community (EAC) and worldwide (e.g., to participate in conferences) can be applied for and claimed by **Kenyan and German master's students as well as by (experienced) Kenyan researchers and professors/university lecturers** in accordance with the principles of economic efficiency and frugality on the basis of receipts

4 FORWARDING

The (partial) forwarding of the grant for project funding is possible if this is necessary to achieve the purpose of the grant.

The forwarding of the grant requires that the recipient has its own agency to examine/oversee the forwarding, the necessary knowledge for forwarding the grant, and that proper implementation is ensured at all times.

The **project description** must cover the entire project, so the measures and associated objectives of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) must be presented transparently in addition to the applicant's own measures and objectives.

The **financing plan** must show the expenditure of the whole project, including the items of expenditure of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level); this must be labelled separately from the recipient's own expenditure items (e.g. with "WE X (2nd level)" or "WE Name (2nd level).

Notes:

The project description and financing plan of the sub- grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) must be available but **only** needs to be submitted to the DAAD **upon request**.

If, in exceptional cases, it is not yet known at the time of the application for project funding who of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) will carry out part of the project, the measures, objectives, and expenditures relating to this part of the project must first be presented in the project description as separate measures and objectives and in the financing plan as separate expenditures.

As soon as the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) and the part of the project to be carried out by them are known, a change application for project funding (adaptation of the project description and financing plan) must be submitted to the DAAD.

Forwarding (2nd level) takes place on the basis of a forwarding agreement.

The **substantive report** must present the implementation of the entire project in a transparent manner, i.e., it must cover not only one's own project but also the project part of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level).

In the **numerical evidence** the expenditure items of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) must be marked separately (e.g., "Expenditure WE X (2nd level)" or "WE Name (2nd level)").

In addition, both the audit note on the interim report/evidence of use and the interim report/evidence of use (substantive report and numerical evidence including list of receipts) of the sub-grant recipient(s) of the forwarding (2nd level) must be attached to one's own interim report/evidence of use to the DAAD.

Upon request by the DAAD, all documents related to the forwarding must be submitted.

5 TYPE OF FINANCING

Funding is provided by way of fixed-sum funding.

The grant is subject to the condition that own funds, third-party funds and other funds are contributed 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.

6 FUNDING PERIOD

The funding period begins at the earliest on 01.01.2027 and ends at the latest on 31.12.2031.

Subject to the availability of appropriate funds, follow-up funding for a further five-year consolidation phase may be applied for after a successful evaluation of the first funding phase.

GRANT AMOUNT

7

A grant of up to 2,250,000 euros can be applied for, divided between the financial years in the approval period as follows:

2027: 450,000 euros
2028: 450,000 euros
2029: 450,000 euros
2030: 450,000 euros
2031: 450,000 euros

DISCIPLINES

8

The programme is open to disciplines related to application-oriented and responsible artificial intelligence. The thematic focus areas listed in **Annex 1** must be taken into account.

TARGET GROUP

9

German and Kenyan master's students as well as (experienced) Kenyan researchers and professors/ university lecturers.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

10

Eligible applicants are state and state-recognised German higher education institutions as well as non-university research institutions based in Germany which are recognised as non-profit organisations and conduct their own research, that have a partnership or an existing network with one or more partner higher education institutions in Kenya. The size of the university network should be limited to a maximum of four (with possible associated partners up to a maximum of five) institutions.

Cooperation with established Centres of African Excellence, the digital teaching, learning, and collaboration platform DIGI-FACE (Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence), and other DAAD-funded projects (e.g., Global Centres), relevant research institutions, and funding initiatives of the participating ministries is explicitly encouraged. The applicant universities are expected to appropriately involve stakeholders from politics, private sector, and civil society in the project design and implementation to ensure practical relevance and effective knowledge transfer.

SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION

11

The application for project funding consists of an application in Funding Line A and an application in Funding Line B and must be submitted in complete form and in due time exclusively via the DAAD portal (www.mydaad.de) in English.

The comprehensive overall concept must be presented in the application for Funding Line A.

In addition, the following documents must be uploaded in the “Attachments” tab:

- Project description, see **form template** (attachment type: project description/Projektbeschreibung)
- Cooperation agreement of the participating university/universities (attachment type: contracts/agreements/Verträge/Vereinbarungen)
- Endorsement by the university management, see **form template** (attachment type: programme-specific attachments/programmspezifische Anlagen)

The application should be prepared jointly with the foreign and (if applicable) domestic partner(s).

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

Note on export law requirements:

Due to the technical nature of the funding program, special legal (especially with regard to the Dual-Use Regulation) and security-related requirements must be observed. In application-oriented AI research, in addition to material goods, newly emerging findings, methods, software, or models may also be relevant under export control law as intangible goods and be subject to special licensing requirements.

Further information and guidance on export control issues in academia is provided by the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) as the competent federal authority. In addition, applicant universities can refer to the DAAD-KIWI-Checklist the DLR Project Management Agency’s guide to due diligence in science and the Recommendations of the Joint Committee on the Handling of Security-Relevant Research (DFG/Leopoldina) for internal guidance and awareness-raising. In the project description, applicants must indicate whether and to what extent export control requirements, in line with the BAFA considerations for the higher education sector, are relevant to the project. If this is the case, a description must be provided of how the relevant responsibilities, procedures and the necessary export control expertise will be ensured or developed during the course of the project.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

12 Application deadline is the 30. Juni 2026.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

13 Selection of applications for project funding

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

SELECTION CRITERIA

(1) The subject-specific and overall quality of the project in terms of its ability to achieve the project and programme objectives (weighting: 60%)
(2) Quality and rigour of project planning (weighting: 15 %)
(3) Impact of the project on the individual target groups and areas addressed beyond the funding period of the project (weighting: 5 %)
(4) Consideration of diversity (weighting: 5 %)
(5) Climate-sensitive project organisation (weighting: 5 %)
(6) Responsible AI development and use: Clear presentation of how ethical, legal, regulatory, and security-related dimensions are addressed in the project (weighting: 10 %)

SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION PROCEDURE

14 Selection for scholarships

For the German target group, the group of people eligible to apply is based on the DAAD scholarship guidelines for Germans (see “Application requirements” at www.daad.de/de/im-ausland-studieren-forschen-lehren/stipendien-finanzierung/wichtige-hinweise-zu-daad-stipendien/#voraussetzungen). For the Kenyan target group, the local application requirements apply in consultation with the project partners.

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

- Public announcement of the scholarship and funding offer: The call for applications for master’s scholarships/scholarships for micro-degrees must be published, stating the scholarship benefits, application requirements, and with reference to the funding body (German Federal Foreign Office) (at least on the website of the respective Centre; it is recommended to also use other channels, such as DIGI-FACE or the relevant DAAD offices and information centres). The guidelines for external communication regarding financial support from the German Federal Foreign Office and the DAAD must be observed. The necessary files will be sent by email at the start of the project. At the time of application, the last academic degree should generally not have been obtained more than six years ago.
- Selection procedure and selection committee:
  - The selection of applicants is carried out by the project partners. An agreement to this effect should be included in the project-specific cooperation agreements. The contracting parties undertake to ensure a transparent selection procedure in accordance with DAAD guidelines, taking into account professional and personal criteria. Application documents should include a letter of motivation and a letter of reference. An appropriate proportion of women must be taken into account in the selection process.
  - A committee consisting of at least two professors (ideally three) from the respective partner universities should be formed for the selection

process. External experts (and other stakeholders relevant to the Centre) may be consulted in an advisory (non-decision-making) capacity. A representative of the DAAD should be consulted in an advisory capacity. Selection dates should, if possible, take place at fixed intervals each year and be communicated to the DAAD at least three months in advance. The list of applicants selected for interview (short list with ranking) should be made available to the DAAD at least two weeks before the selection, including information on the applicant's most recent degree and date of birth, as well as other necessary documents (score sheets, composition of the selection committee, etc).

- Selection criteria: The selection must be based on quality, taking into account social and regional aspects as well as the personal suitability of the applicants.
- Award of the scholarship:
  - The scholarship is awarded by the project partners using the scholarship certificate/letter of award and declaration of acceptance provided by the DAAD. As a rule, scholarships can be awarded for a maximum period of 24 months (depending on the planned duration of study). If the scholarship is terminated prematurely for reasons for which the scholarship holder is responsible, the scholarship received to date must be reclaimed. The Centre of African Excellence may suspend or terminate its financial support to scholarship holders if and for as long as the obligations under the scholarship agreement are not fulfilled by the scholarship holders. The DAAD must be informed immediately of any such developments.
  - The following information must be included when drawing up the scholarship certificate/letter of award: mention of the DAAD, the funding body with the corresponding logo, specific description of the scholarship benefits and their amount.

The selection procedure must be described in the project description.

ANNEX

15

1. Background and thematic focus
2. Results framework
3. Catalogue of indicators
4. Fee schedule for projects abroad

FORM TEMPLATES

16

- Project description (German and English)
- Endorsement by university management (German and English)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

17

- Guide to Results-Oriented Project Planning and Monitoring (ROM)
- Information sheet “Information on Mobility with Disability or Chronic Illness”

- Handout “Climate-Sensitive Implementation of International Higher Education Cooperation in DAAD Project Funding”
- Handout “Strengthening Equal Opportunities and Diversity in DAAD Projects”

Information meeting on the application process:
A web seminar on the application process will take place on April 28, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (CET). The seminar will focus in particular on the funding concept, the application process, and results-oriented project planning. The webinar will be held via Webex. If you are interested in attending, please register by emailing p31@daad.de by April 23, 2026 at the latest.

18 CONTACT

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