

## Postdoctoral Researchers International Mobility Experience (P.R.I.M.E.)

### Objective

With this new programme and funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the European Union<sup>1</sup> the DAAD provides support for international mobility for postdocs.

Postdoctoral researchers of all nationalities, who see their long-term career in Germany, will be given the opportunity to combine the association with a German university with a research stay abroad.

DAAD support measures and the possibility of continuous coordination with the German host institution shall ensure smooth re-integration following the research stay abroad.

### Duration

The support is for 18 months, of which the first 12 months should be spent abroad (period abroad) and the remaining six months in Germany (reintegration phase).<sup>2</sup>

### Support

The funding is made up of a lump sum travel allowance for the selected candidate and accompanying spouse or partner within the meaning of the law on civil partnerships and children in accordance with the set DAAD rates and the commitment for the employment at the selected German host university for the whole funding period.<sup>3</sup>

Successful applicants will be invited to an information seminar before the start of the funding, together with scholars at the end of their period abroad, alumni and representatives from the research field and business.

A health/accident/private liability insurance package for the period abroad may be taken out via the DAAD.

### Application Conditions

- Applications may be made by persons of all nationalities.
- Applications may be submitted before completion of the PhD. The PhD must, however, be completed before the start of the funding period.
- There are no restrictions as to the country of destination as long as the applicant has not stayed in the respective country for more than 12 months in total during the three years up to 31 March 2014.
- Appropriate host institutions in Germany and abroad must have been identified at the time of application. The contact with these institutions and the agreement on modalities are the responsibility of the applicant.
- The German host institution must confirm in writing that the postdoc will be employed for the whole funding period, should the application be successful.<sup>4</sup> The necessary means

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<sup>1</sup> People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under REA grant agreement n° 605728

<sup>2</sup> As due to insurance stipulations it may not always be possible to start the period abroad at the very beginning of the support period, the option of approximately 1 month in Germany followed by 12 months abroad and 5 months in Germany (total funding duration 18 months) may be chosen.

<sup>3</sup> The position at the German host institution will be financed through project funding from the DAAD. This will cover the remuneration at the rate appropriate for postdoctoral researchers at the respective university. Should the institution provide additional benefits during the stay abroad these are covered up to a country specific maximum value.

<sup>4</sup> If for legal reasons the prospective German host institution is not able to maintain the employment status during the period abroad, this period may be covered by providing benefits in line with the regular postdoc fellowship program

will be made available to the German host institution through separate project funding. The university will appoint a mentor, who will inform the P.R.I.M.E. scholar during his/her stay abroad about developments at the institution and answer his/her queries so as to ensure successful reintegration at the end of the period abroad. It is expected that the German university shall indicate at the time of application the possibilities for the provision of longer-term perspectives for research at the institution following the DAAD funding. The DAAD offers a list of P.R.I.M.E. contacts at German universities on its website, who can answer questions from potential applicants concerning their institution.

- The foreign host institution must be willing to support the postdoc in the realization of her/his research project. The type of support (office space, access to instruments, libraries etc.) has to be defined and a mentor appointed at the foreign host institution, who may be contacted should problems arise.
- Starting date is 1 September 2014. Due to the late publication of this year's call for applications a later starting date may be possible in exceptional cases.
- The "Rules of good scientific practice" and ethical guidelines of the program must be accepted.
- The reintegration phase is mandatory.<sup>5</sup>

## Application Documents

The application form will be available from March 1st 2014 at the application portal. To get to the portal please click on Stipendiendatenbank für Deutsche, fill in Fachrichtung (subject of your research), Zielland (country of the period abroad) and Status „Promovierte“ (position) and select the programme.

Please mind the instructions on registering on the portal, choose English as portal language and activate, if necessary, the compatibility view of your browser.

Once the application form has been completed, all other application documents, if not stated otherwise, can be uploaded. All documents for upload must be in pdf format. If not stated otherwise, all documents must be submitted in English as the selection process will be conducted by an international commission.

The following documents must be submitted:

1. completed **application form**;
2. **curriculum vitae** with no chronological gaps and in tabular form in accordance with EU standards <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae>;
3. **detailed research plan** which has been developed independently and agreed with both the German and foreign host institutions. In the evaluation of the proposal particular emphasis will be placed on a clear and comprehensive statement of the reasons for the research project. This statement should include information on the preliminary work undertaken and the relevance of the topic for German research, and explain why the chosen institutions are especially suited for the realization of the planned project (maximum 16.000 characters including spaces, approx. 5 pages). Bibliographical references may be included as an annex;
4. **time schedule** for the realization of the planned work abroad and in Germany;
5. **invitation letter from the German host**. This letter should detail why the institution is particularly suitable for the execution of the research project, the support to be provided, the name of the mentor and the perspectives for longer term employment at the institution. The scientific host and the mentor may also be the same person;
6. **binding declaration from the German host institution (form 1)**, that every effort will be made to provide a post for the funding period at the rate appropriate for postdocs at

<sup>5</sup> Exceptions are only possible in individual cases, in agreement with the German institution of higher education and with the approval of the DAAD and the sponsor (BMBF). They may be accompanied by a demand for repayment of funding.

- the institution within the framework of project funding from the DAAD, should the application be successful;
7. **invitation letter from the foreign host.** This letter should detail why the institution is particularly suitable for the execution of the research project, the support to be provided and the name of the mentor. The scientific host and the mentor may also be the same person;
  8. two recent **letters of recommendation.** Following registration in the portal applicants must generate and download the respective form in the section "Personal Funding" => "Gutachten anfordern". This form must be sent by applicants to their referees. The letters of recommendation must be sent by post in a sealed envelope to the DAAD (Section 521) in Germany, either by the referee or the applicant.  
The letters of recommendation should in particular refer to the applicant's personal and scientific suitability for the planned project. Where possible, one letter of recommendation should be submitted by the supervisor of the doctoral thesis;
  9. certificate of the most recent **academic degree** (usually the PhD). The document must be certified by a competent authority, translated into German or English and sent by post. If the PhD has not been completed, a statement by the supervisor is required, stating when successful completion is expected;
  10. **publication list** categorized according to (a) publications in peer review journals, (b) specialist books, and (c) conference proceedings and indicating the type of publication (original paper, review etc.). For each publication the state of publication (submitted, accepted, in print, published) and complete bibliographical information (including the first and last page number) must be provided. Where available, please include electronic links. Please mark with a cross those publications which will be submitted and uploaded as part of the application;
  11. the most important **publications** (maximum of three). Please give reasons for the selection of these publications (importance of the scientific results, significance for the research project, new methodological approach etc., up to 3.000 characters including spaces). Please comment on your specific contribution if a number of authors are involved. Uploading is not required if the publications are available online; in such cases the electronic link must be provided.
  12. **short summary of the doctoral thesis** (up to 7.000 characters including spaces). The doctoral thesis itself should only be submitted if it is the only publication during the PhD study period to date. In this case please upload the doctoral thesis;
  13. **supplementary information** may be provided on other scientific, professional and social activities which might be relevant for the assessment of the proposal. The selection criteria listed below may be used for guidance;
  14. completed **form 2** for checking whether ethical standards for scientific research could be violated through the planned research (**Ethical-Issues-Table**)<sup>6</sup>;
  15. **language certificate for the period abroad** as confirmation of knowledge of the language of the host country and at the host institute, respectively.  
An official language certificate for the respective language will be accepted (e.g. the TOEFL test or DAAD-Sprachzeugnis for English). It should not be over three years old and rate all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing)<sup>7</sup>.  
Certificates of participation in language courses will not be accepted.

<sup>6</sup> If the Ethical IssuesTable or the reviewing process indicates that ethical rules set by the EU or mandatory in Germany or the host country could be violated, the following procedure will apply: even projects otherwise positively assessed will only receive funding, if compliance with these rules can be achieved through minor modification. If ethical aspects are not satisfactorily detailed in an otherwise positively assessed proposal, the commitment for funding will be postponed, and can only take place where an adequate explanation is provided by the specified deadline.

<sup>7</sup> One possibility is the submission of the "Sprachzeugnis für deutsche Bewerber", which is available at [https://www.daad.de/medien/ausland/dokumente/vd2\\_sprachzeugnis\\_deutsche.pdf](https://www.daad.de/medien/ausland/dokumente/vd2_sprachzeugnis_deutsche.pdf). The assessments are conducted by the lecturers (LektorInnen) at the respective language seminar of the German institution of higher education. Information is available from the international office of the institution. Native speakers, who are not lecturers for the respective language, are not authorized to issue the language certificate.

If the language at the institute is not the official language of the host country, a certificate for the language at the institute is sufficient. In this case the host must confirm the language at the institute (with letterhead and signature).

In the following cases a language certificate is not required: *i)* the applicant has studied in the respective language (this must be confirmed by adequate documents); *ii)* since the beginning of studies the applicant has lived for at least one year without interruption in a country where the respective language is the official language. It is not sufficient that the doctoral thesis or publications have been written in the respective language or that the language was used at international conferences;

16. **A certificate for the knowledge of German<sup>8</sup>** is required unless one of the following conditions is fulfilled: *i)* the applicant comes from a country where German is the official language; *ii)* he/she has lived for at least one year since the beginning of studies in such a country; *iii)* the German host confirms (with letterhead and signature) that knowledge of English is sufficient to realize the planned project.

DAAD reserves the right not to consider incomplete applications. The responsibility for the completeness of the application and submission by the deadline lies with the applicants.

## Selection Criteria and Process

### Selection Criteria

The performance based assessment will take into account:

1. **the achievements of the applicant to date** (scientific and other qualifications, and particular conditions which have influenced the academic progress); and
2. **the quality of the proposed project and the consistency with long-term career planning.**

Both points will be judged separately and both scores contribute equally to the final rating. The assessment will focus in particular on the following aspects of the application:

#### 1. Achievements to date:

- a. academic performance:
  - grades, study duration;
  - number and quality of publications<sup>9</sup>;
  - other achievements (patents, conference invitations, prizes, supervision, teaching etc.);
  - the recommendations from the applications' referees;
- b. overall impression of the applicant in consideration of e.g.:
  - additional scientific/practical/management experience;
  - transnational mobility;
  - intersectoral mobility;
  - social commitment;
  - unavoidable delays in academic development (e.g. due to illness, voluntary work in the social sector or childcare);

#### 2. Project quality and long-term career perspectives:

- a. research project<sup>10</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup> Further information is available at: <https://www.daad.de/deutschland/nach-deutschland/voraussetzungen/en/6221-german-language/>.

<sup>9</sup> From the reviewer's perspective the documentation of the hitherto research achievements in publications is of central importance. In addition to the number of publications and - if several authors are involved – the own contribution, also the quality of the journal and scientific publisher are important criteria. This will be viewed in the context of the duration of the research activities and the specific discipline culture.

<sup>10</sup> From the reviewer's perspective the applicant's scientific independence is of crucial importance. This should be demonstrated by choosing or having chosen a new research focus and a new research environment, either after

- quality;
  - originality;
  - topicality/ relevance;
  - planned implementation(time and work schedule);
  - significance for the research field;
- b. suitability of the German host institution and the support provided there (scientific mentoring, technical/administrative support);
  - c. suitability of the foreign host institution and the support provided there (scientific mentoring, technical/administrative support);
  - d. appropriateness of the research project with regard to the long-term career plans (scientific qualification and acquisition of complementary skills).

All information relevant to these selection criteria should be included in the application. This should be considered in particular when preparing the curriculum vitae, research and time schedules and supplementary information.

### Selection Process

Deadline for applications: 31 March  
Selection committee meeting: June  
Planned start of the funding period: 01 September (or by prior agreement)

After the deadline has past, applicants will receive confirmation of the receipt of their application and information on the outcome of the formal eligibility check.

All applications will be reviewed independently by two external experts (scientists from the respective subject area).

The final rating will be made by an interdisciplinary selection committee on the basis of the external reviews and assessment of the committee members.

For both main criteria

1. achievements of the applicant to date (scientific and other qualifications, and particular conditions which have influenced the academic progress); and
2. The quality of the proposed project and the consistency with long-term career planning

The rating will be according to the following scale (from 1 to 10): 1-2: very weak, 3-4: weak, 5-6: acceptable, 7-9: good, 10: very good.

The final rating will be the average of both single scores. It will result in a ranking list, according to which successful and reserve candidates will be identified, taking into account the available funding. The commission will decide on the cut-off point below which funding is not possible.

Rejected applicants will receive feedback summarizing the most important strengths and weaknesses of their application.

Successful applicants will receive information on further procedures including the invitation to an information seminar. Reserve candidates will receive an interim reply.

The German host institutions of the successful candidates will be notified by the DAAD. They will then resolve the remaining open issues with the applicants and apply for project funding to finance their positions. Following the approval by the DAAD funding can start, 1 September 2014 being the envisaged start date.

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the PhD or in connection with the planned project. In case these conditions are not fulfilled we recommend commenting on the reasons for this in the "supplementary information".



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