

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE DEUTSCHE FORSCHUNGSGEMEINSCHAFT (DFG)
GERMANY
AND
THE NATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL (NSC)
TAIWAN
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TRAINING
GROUPS (IRTG)**

1. Background

DFG and NSC hereinafter referred to as “the Parties” consider international collaboration to be an essential feature of scientific progress and encourage exchange and co-operation between scientists from Germany and Taiwan and their colleagues abroad. Accordingly, both organizations offer a range of schemes to facilitate international contacts.

The Parties feel that it is useful and desirable to add to these existing means by creating a special focus on relations between researchers from both Germany and Taiwan.

Cooperation between the Parties can offer practical and effective opportunities to combine forces, for example in relation to the study of issues of mutual interest, the development and expansion of high quality research centers, and the training of future research talent.

Therefore, the Parties are prepared to make resources available for programmatic cooperation between research groups in Germany and in Taiwan. In order to enhance well structured and long-term partnerships, this funding scheme will focus on:

- Cooperation between research groups forming a Research Training Group in Germany and in Taiwan, aimed at the training of doctoral students in both countries;

- Such cooperation may be initiated jointly by German-Taiwanese partners.

2. Outline of German-Taiwanese International Research Training Groups

2.1. Strategic Aim

The aim of the scheme is to cooperate in the training of doctoral students in both countries, within the framework of a research programme which is jointly established and implemented by researchers in both countries and which offers doctoral students in both countries excellent opportunities to develop their talents in the context of a joint doctoral training programme.

2.2. Forms of Cooperation

- a. The German and Taiwanese partners should jointly formulate a high quality research and training programme to be implemented by researchers of either Party;
- b. the programme should provide for regular exchanges of academic staff and doctoral students for the purpose of joint research and joint training;
- c. during their PhD-project doctoral students should spend at least six months all together in the other country for research and training;
- d. doctoral students should have both a German and a Taiwanese supervisor;
- e. theses should be assessed by a joint doctoral board, before the award of the doctorate proceeds in accordance with the respective national/university regulations;
- f. The Parties will provide financial means for:
 - doctoral students
 - post-docs
 - visiting researchers
 - workshops
 - summer schools
 - conferences
 - specific additional research costs
- g. The duration of graduate studies in the partner country usually lasts six months to one year.
- h. Joint IRTG may be funded for a maximum of 9 years. The funding periods for joint IRTG are 4.5 years by DFG and 3 years by NSC. Extensions may be granted when considered appropriate.

3. Criteria

- The research groups on both sides should possess a high international reputation;
- the proposed research programme in which the groups wish to cooperate should be of the highest quality;
- the participation of both groups should be of such significance – in terms of both content and size – that the joint programme can be expected to develop into a German-Taiwanese Center of Excellence of the highest academic quality.

4. Research Areas

In principle, any research area is eligible. However, either party, DFG or NSC, may also suggest specific research topics of common interest to the other Party for future IRTGs.

5. Participants

Germany:

- Group of researchers (min. 5), doctoral students and post-docs at a German university,

Taiwan:

- Group of researchers (min. 5), doctoral students and post-docs at a Taiwanese university and/or research institution with a postgraduate programme.

- Non-university institutions from either Party may participate as associates.

6. Support Mechanism

It is mutually understood that the respective host party takes the responsibility for funding the accommodation of instructing/teaching researchers and post-docs (academic staff) from the partner institution for short-term visits, lectures or workshops in the partner country, whereas the international travel costs are covered by the sending party – given the availability of funds on both sides.

It is also mutually understood that each party takes the responsibility for providing supplementary fellowships to its doctoral students for the duration of their stay at the partner institution in order to enable them to conduct the research work for the cooperative program in the partner country. The international travel costs are also covered by the sending party – given the availability of funds on both Parties.

7. Proposal Evaluation

The pre-proposal for the establishment of an IRTG will be submitted to and evaluated by DFG. After a positive review of the preliminary proposal, the applicants are invited to submit a full proposal.

The full proposal is a joint application regarding the research and study programme and includes separate budget requests for DFG and NSC. The German coordinator submits the proposal to DFG, the Taiwanese coordinator submits the proposal to NSC.

Both Parties will independently organize scientific reviews according to their normal procedures. They will share the results of the evaluations and support IRTG approved by both Parties.

8. Budget

It is understood by both Parties that each is working to a budget determined annually

in advance and that any variation in their budgets can affect the volume of exchange activity covered by this Memorandum of Understanding. DFG and NSC agree to consult each other if such variations arise.

9. Final Provisions

This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into effect upon its signature and be valid for a period of five years and shall subsequently extend thereafter annually, unless a written notice of termination has been given by either Party six months in advance. Termination of this Memorandum of Understanding will not affect activities already approved jointly or in progress under the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding may be amended by mutual written agreement of the Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective competent authorities, have signed this Memorandum of Understanding.

Done in Taipei on July 13, 2011 in two original copies in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
(DFG)


Germany



Matthias Kleiner
President

For the National Science Council
(NSC)

Taiwan



Lou-Chuang Lee
Minister