The German Research Foundation
Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG

International Research Training Groups for Indo-German collaboration

Dr. Franziska Langer, International Affairs
Dr. Martin Roatsch, Research Careers
The German Research landscape

Projects

People

Mobility

Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung/Foundation

DAAD

DFG
The DFG – About Us

► The DFG is the largest independent and self-governing research funding organisation in Germany.

► It is an association under German private law and its member organisations include German universities, non-university research institutions, academies of sciences and humanities, and scientific associations.

► It serves all branches of science and the humanities by funding research projects.
The DFG’s mission Statement

The DFG

► fosters **scientific excellence** through competition

► supports **international cooperation** in research

► advises political and social decision-makers

► supports the **transfer of knowledge** between science and industry

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Funding in 2020, by scientific discipline

- No Subject
  - Classification
  - €143.4 million
  - (4.3%)

- Humanities and Social Sciences
  - €526.3 million
  - (15.9%)

- Life Sciences
  - €1,215.9 million
  - (36.8%)

- Natural Sciences
  - €757.5 million
  - (22.9%)

- Engineering Sciences
  - €665.0 million
  - (20.1%)

- Life Sciences
  - €1,215.9 million
  - (36.8%)
The Division of International Affairs

- International strategy
- Improvement of framework conditions for international cooperation
- Representation of the DFG internationally
The DFG fosters international cooperation in all funding programmes.

Additionally, the following programs specifically aim at supporting international cooperation:

- initial funding for bilateral cooperation
- **International Research Training Groups**
- joint calls for proposals with partner organisations
- fellowships abroad for postdoctoral researchers
- international scientific events
- Mercator Fellows

**International modules**, such as additional travel expenses, personnel exchanges, etc., may be applied in all DFG funding programmes.
DFG’s Funding Programmes for International Cooperation
from initiation to larger-scale coordinated programmes

- **Initiation of International Cooperation**
- **Fostering of Young Scientists (Lindau programme)**
- **Joint Calls**
- **Cooperative networks**
- **Priority Programmes**
- **Research Units**
- **Joint Trans-Regional Collaborative Research Centres Participation in national CRCs**
- **International Research Training Groups Participation in national IRTGs**

Tea plantation near Munnar, Kerala, India
Public Domain
International Research Training Groups for Indo-German collaboration

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Research Training Groups (RTGs, “Graduiertenkollegs”)

► Structured doctoral research and training programs

- established at German universities for a total duration of 9 years
- Promote early-career researchers (30 – 45 doctoral researchers, postdocs)
- Qualification of doctoral researchers within the framework of a focused research programme and a structured training strategy
  - Scientific excellence
  - Internationalization
  - Early scientific independence
- Program exists for >30 years

► Team of 5-12 experienced researchers (professor/junior group leader)

- Research Component: innovative, focused, and coherent research program for doctoral researchers, added value of collaboration within the RTG
- Qualification Component: training program, double or team supervision
What is an International Research Training Group (IRTG)?

- **Bilateral doctoral research and training program**
  - of a German university and a partner university/institution abroad

  - **Team** of 5-12 experienced researchers on each side (professor/junior group leader)

  - **Research Component**: innovative, focused, and coherent research program for doctoral researchers, added value of collaboration within IRTG and across borders

  - **Qualification Component**: Joint training program, joint supervision and reciprocal research stays of doctoral researchers at partner site (6-12 months)

**Benefits:**

- Research synergies through complementary resources
- Early integration of doctoral researchers into the international research community
- Better qualification for careers in- and outside of academia
- Building block for sustainable individual and institutional cooperation
International Research Training Groups
World-wide program for next generation researchers

► Total budget for IRTGs and RTGs: ~220 M€ (2019)
► Open to all fields of science & humanities
► Bottom-up: no IRTG quota, no priorities for topics or countries!

► 30 IRTGs = 13% of 228 RTGs, partners in 14 countries worldwide

► In total to date: 136 IRTGs granted with partners in 30 countries worldwide

► Currently, no IRTG with India
► New cooperation agreement with DST exists and enables parallel application and funding
What is an International Research Training Group (IRTG)?
DFG Funding is available for...

- Up to 9 years (two funding periods: 5 + 4 years)
- People
  - 3 consecutive/overlapping generations of 10-15 PhD students each (funding for up to 48 months)
  - Postdocs (1-2)
  - Participating undergraduates
- Resources
  - Direct research cost: consumables, literature, documentation etc.
  - Qualification and mobility: research stays, curricular activities, joint workshops, guests….
  - Support funds: e.g. for coordination, recruitment, gender equality measures…

➔ Indian partner needs complementary funding!  ➔ Cooperation Agreement with DST
What is an International Research Training Group (IRTG)?
Complementary funding has to...

- Support the (+/-) same number of doctoral candidates as on German side (fellowships/positions)
- Cover the research cost of doctoral candidates (e.g. consumables)
- Provide travel funds for doctoral mobility and allowances for the research stay in Germany
- Include means for all joint training activities
- Be available throughout the whole funding period
- Can be provided by a DFG partner institution (DST) or university's own funds
International Research Training Groups
2-stage application and decision process

Draft proposal

2-5 written reviews

DFG review board meeting

evaluates, recommends invitation/rejection

Senate Committee on Research Training Groups

decision

Invitation/rejection

Full proposal

Submission in parallel to DFG and DST

"On-site" review: review panel

recommends funding/rejection, funding level

Senate and Grants Committee on Research Training Groups

decides on approval/rejection and budget

Funding

Submission in parallel to DFG and DST

7-9 months

8 months
International Research Training Groups
Review Criteria

► Transparent on the DFG website: www.dfg.de/gk/en

► Participating Researchers and Institutions
  ● Individual academic qualification, supervisory experience, excellence
  ● Group composition, internal collaboration
  ● Quality and suitability of host institutions and equipment

► Research Programme
  ● Quality, Originality, Coherence, Focus
  ● Disciplinary and interdisciplinary added value
  ● Appropriateness regarding the aims of the IRTG program
  ● For International RTGs: complementarity

► Supervision and Training Strategy
  ● Recruiting strategy, supervision strategy, gender equality & equal opportunities
  ● Training and Qualification programme

► University Integration & Environment
Consultation & advice

- All relevant documents, templates are online: www.dfg.de/gk/en
- Advice from the DFG Head Office
- Advice from the DST Head Office
- Advice from central entities within university: research support centre
- Advice from previously successful applicants

- Consultation Meetings based on a concept paper / draft proposal

- Preparatory Workshops
Thank you!

For more information

- About the DFG: [https://www.dfg.de/en](https://www.dfg.de/en)
- About RTG/IRTG: [https://www.dfg.de/gk/en](https://www.dfg.de/gk/en)
- About German research institutions: [https://research-explorer.de](https://research-explorer.de)

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