



# Promoting Research Excellence Through International Cooperation

The German Research Foundation (DFG)

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# The DFG

## – Who We Are and What We Do

- ▶ **Central public funding organization** for basic research in Germany
- ▶ A **member organization** and **self-governing body** of science and research
- ▶ The **budget** in 2018: **€3.4 billion in direct research funding**, provided primarily by the federal government and the 16 German Länder
- ▶ **All branches of science and the humanities**
- ▶ **Supporting international cooperation** because scientific excellence does not know any borders.



# The DFG

## – Promotion of International Cooperation

The DFG promotes international cooperation because **science is a global enterprise:**

- ▶ Knowledge transcends national boundaries
- ▶ Certain topics are best researched within the framework of international collaborative projects
- ▶ It is essential to build capacities and engage with the “global south”



### **Internationalization@home:**

- ▶ Internationalize the German research landscape
- ▶ Facilitate cooperation between the world’s top researchers

# The DFG

## – International Strategy

### Key objectives of the DFG's international activities:

- ▶ **Advocacy** – Active participation in international research policy making
- ▶ **Outreach** – Exploring, identifying and utilizing new cooperation potential
- ▶ **Funding** - Fostering international collaboration between scientists, scientific institutions and funding organizations
- ▶ **Monitoring** - analyzing and assessing current affairs in academia and science policy



# The DFG

## – International Strategy

### 1. Advocacy

- ▶ Active participation in international research policy making and standard setting
- ▶ Institutional membership in international associations
- ▶ Representation in various scientific and science policy organisations and bodies at the European and international level
- ▶ Participation in international programmes and conferences

 **The DFG contributes to the formulation of scientific, infrastructural, ethical and legal standards in research**



# The DFG

## – International Strategy

### 2. Outreach

Exploring, identifying and utilizing new cooperation potential

- ▶ Following and assessing science and research policy developments
- ▶ Strategic activities to initiate and intensify cooperation
- ▶ Measures and events to promote Germany as a place of research ("Research in Germany")
- ▶ Science diplomacy (based on scientific criteria)

 **Identifying and utilising new cooperation potential in specific research fields or emerging research countries**



# The DFG

## – International Strategy

### 3. Funding

- ▶ Bilateral agreements with partner organizations
- ▶ Funding of joint programmes and projects with partners
- ▶ Funding for coordinated programmes with international partners
- ▶ Support for international meetings
- ▶ DFG's presence abroad helps to intensify cooperation with particular countries and regions



**➔ Fostering international collaborations between scientists, scientific institutions and funding organizations**

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

**All DFG funding programs** generally allow the integration of international components as e.g. **travel allowance, exchange of students/scientists.**

**Special programs** are:

- ▶ Funding for the initiation of international cooperation
- ▶ Individual Grants Program & Joint Calls with Partners
- ▶ International Scientific Networks and Events
- ▶ International Research Training Groups

**Mercator Fellowships as module available in most programs!**

DFG support for projects with international partners is generally based on the principle of mutual responsibility.





# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## Program: Initiation of International Cooperation

### Objective

To support the initiation of international collaboration with the modules „Bilateral Workshops“, „Trips Abroad“ and „Guest Visits “

### Type and Extent of Funding

The modules can be combined

- ▶ Trips abroad of up to three months or research stays at partner institutions. Researchers from doctoral candidates to professors may take advantage of these
- ▶ Joint workshops

Funding is available for a maximum of 1 year. The program relies on *matching funds*. Funding is applied for by the German partner university.



# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## Individual Grants Programme

### Purpose

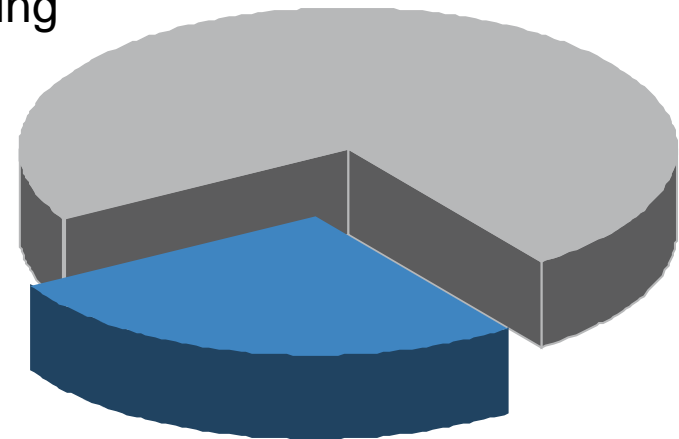
To carry out a thematically defined research project within a specific time frame

### Eligibility

Researchers from all disciplines at German research institutions who have completed their scientific training (in most cases by achieving their doctorates)

A research grant can be used to

- staff
- scientific instrumentation
- consumables
- travel and publications
- Mercator Fellow as module



Part in total funding volume: 30, 6% (2014)

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## International Programmes

### Scientific Networks

- ▶ Funding of a multi-year scientific exchange and cooperation on topics of common interest across locations within Germany as well as internationally
- ▶ The network must aim for a specific outcome, e.g. the preparation of joint research papers, a joint publication, impetus for the further development of research methods
- ▶ A network generally consists of 10-20 researchers
- ▶ Funds may be requested for travel and maintenance costs for work meetings as well as to support coordination of a meeting and publication expenses

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## International Programmes

### International Scientific Events

- ▶ The DFG provides funding to conduct scientific events in Germany (international congresses, symposia, colloquia and workshops, international scientific conferences, annual meetings)
- ▶ International Scientific Events:  
Lump sum, varies according to the number of researchers participating
- ▶ Annual meeting of a German specialist society, working group or specialist group: Allowances for travel expenses (travel and maintenance costs) for active participants from abroad

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## International Research Training Groups

### What is a Research Training Group?

- ▶ structured PhD program at a university (single-site principle)
- ▶ no “Graduate School”: small, focused unit of 5-10 PIs
- ▶ excellent, coherent research program
- ▶ specific qualification program
- ▶ innovative supervision concept
- ▶ promotion of early independence and international mobility



# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## International Research Training Groups

### What is a Research Training Group?

- ▶ aims (mainly) at the doctoral phase
- ▶ builds on an innovative and focused **research programme** as framework for excellent thesis projects
- ▶ enhances and expands doctoral researchers' competencies by a **structured qualification program**
- ▶ installs **transparent and structured supervision**  
- instead of mere “apprenticeship”
- ▶ encourages **interdisciplinarity**
- ▶ promotes and supports **international cooperation**



# Research Training Groups

## Funding is available for...

### ► People

- PhD students (10-15, maximum 3 years of funding) (fellowships) => employment position
- Postdocs (0-2)
- Research students

### ► Resources

- consumables, literature, documentation...
  - travel funds
  - costs for qualification program, visiting scientists (e.g. Mercator module)
  - support for coordination, recruitment, sabbaticals etc.,
- a maximum of 9 (=2 x 4.5) years, as block grant



# International Research Training Groups

## Taking cooperation one step further

### Idea:

symmetric international collaboration in Research Training!

### Set-Up:

- ▶ **bilateral** program - two sites
- ▶ 5-10 PIs and 10-15 doctoral students on each side
- ▶ Added value through **complementarity** of expertise and resources
- ▶ systematic **cooperation on three levels**  
Research - Qualification Program - Supervision
- ▶ **Reciprocal research stays** of PhD students (~6-12 months)
- ▶ **complementary funding** required





# International Research Training Groups

## Taking Cooperation one step further



Funded by  
DFG

- ▶ Common research interest
- ▶ Complementary expertise
- ▶ Cohesive joint research program



- ▶ Exchange of PhD students
- ▶ Exchange of faculty members
- ▶ **Joint** supervision
- ▶ **Joint** publications
- ▶ **Joint** degree (ideally...)



Funded by  
Partner  
organization  
or institution

Added value for PhD students and faculty  
Internationally trained next generation of researchers  
Scientific progress through knowledge transfer

# International Partners and Agreements

## Partnerships with North American Organizations



In order to carry out its activities in the interest of research, the DFG maintains partnerships and relations with a large number of partner organizations on all continents.

### Formal Agreements:

National Science Foundation (NSF)



National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)



National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)



But we also work together with many organizations on an ad-hoc basis to facilitate the cooperation of German researchers with their counterparts abroad!

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## Cooperation with North American Partner Organizations

### DFG—NSF Cooperation

- Discipline specific cooperation
- Research Opportunities for U.S. Early Career Researchers
- Funding opportunities within multilateral PIRE initiatives



### DFG—NSERC Cooperation

- Supporting collaboration of research teams (CREATE/IRTG)



### NEH/DFG Bilateral Digital Humanities Program

- Supporting collaborative projects designed to establish or further develop digital information infrastructures



### Trans-Atlantic Platform (T-AP)

- Funders from Latin and North America and Europe
- Addressing common challenges and emerging priorities and facilitating the formation of networks (“Digging into Data”)



# DFG Representation in North America



Washington DC



New York City



## Tasks of the North America Offices

- Advocacy
- Funding
- Monitoring
- Outreach

# DFG Office North America

## Advocacy and Funding

- follow and assess **science and research policy developments** in Canada and the United States in fields relevant to the DFG with respect to basic research
- support and expand **cooperation** with partner organizations in Canada and the USA



# DFG Office North America

## Monitoring and Outreach



- **inform** researchers based at Canadian and US institutions about Germany as a location of science and research and about opportunities for research collaboration
- maintain and extend **contacts** with current and former DFG award holders, partner PIs and alumni in Canada and the United States
- **Research Marketing**



# International Cooperation

## German Houses for Research and Innovation (DWIH)

- The five German Houses of Research and Innovation (DWIHs) are part of the German government's Strategy for the Internationalization of Science and Research
- The Federal Foreign Office is implementing this project in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and in close collaboration with the Alliance of German Science Organizations, which amongst others includes the AvH, the DAAD the DFG and the MPG
- The houses were created to:
  - Promote Germany as a research location
  - Provide a forum for international dialogue and scientific exchange
  - Provide support and services (advising for international researchers; organizing educational events; facilitating collaboration)





DFG

# Thank you very much for your attention!

## Further Information

- ▶ On DFG: <http://www.dfg.de/en/>
- ▶ On all funded projects: <http://www.dfg.de/gepris>
- ▶ On more than 17,000 German research institutions:  
[http://research-explorer.dfg.de/research\\_explorer.en.html](http://research-explorer.dfg.de/research_explorer.en.html)



# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation?

## Cooperation with the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)

### Discipline-Specific Cooperation

- Guiding principles: Facilitate cooperation, avoid “double jeopardy”, collaborative and coordinative approach to peer review
- “Lead agency” / coordinated review: physics, computer science, engineering, neurosciences (also: NeuroNex)



### PIRE-Individual Grants Cooperation

German researchers may cooperate with multilateral PIRE projects using the Individual Grants program.

- Submission of proposal concurrently with the U.S. PIRE full proposal submission to NSF or before 1 May 2017.
- The regular application guidelines, eligibility requirements and peer review procedures apply.

# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation? Research Opportunities for U.S. Early Career Researchers

NSF and DFG have agreed to encourage and facilitate research opportunities and mobility for U.S. Early Career Researchers funded in the framework of the NSF Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER).

- NSF CAREER awardees may join DFG-funded projects for single and long term (e.g., six to twelve months) or multiple short-term visits (max. visit duration: 12 months).
- CAREER awardees will continue to receive NSF funding, and salaries will be covered according to the CAREER award terms and conditions. NSF will provide support for travel expenses.
- The regular submission deadlines for the CAREER program apply as described in the NSF solicitation.



# How Does the DFG Fund International Cooperation? Research Opportunities for U.S. Early Career Researchers

Eligible DFG-funded projects to host CAREER Awardees:

- **Coordinated Programs** (e.g., Collaborative Research Centres, Research Units, Priority Programs, DFG Research Centres, Research Training Groups), **Graduate Schools** and **Clusters of Excellence** of the German Excellence Initiative, and the **Emmy Noether Program**.



The host institution will cover the following costs:

- subsistence costs on a per diem basis, or any other applicable modality, commensurate to the level of experience of the individual visiting CAREER awardee
- any other eligible costs incurred during the visit of the U.S. researchers that are directly related to the DFG project

Such costs will be covered by the then already awarded DFG grant. The maximum amount of the DFG grant may not be increased.