Building Links to Academic Research in Germany

Funding Opportunities for International Cooperation
The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) is the largest self-governing funding organisation for basic research in Germany and in Europe.

With an annual budget of roughly 3.2 billion euros, provided primarily by the German federal and state governments, the DFG promotes the advancement of science and the humanities by funding research projects and facilitating cooperation among researchers. The DFG supports approximately 21,000 individual and coordinated research projects that have been selected through a rigorous peer-review process.

The DFG’s mandate also includes encouraging the advancement of early career researchers, promoting gender equality in the German scientific and academic communities, providing scientific policy advice, and fostering relations with the private sector and between scientists and academics in Germany and abroad. The DFG’s member organisations include research universities, major non-university research institutions, such as the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer Society, and the Leibniz Association, the Academies of Sciences and Humanities, and a number of scientific associations.

**International Representation of the DFG**

New York
Washington
Moscow
Beijing
Tokyo
São Paulo
New Delhi

German Centres for Research and Innovation (DWIH)

The DFG is a member of German Centres for Research and Innovation (DWIH) board of trustees. The DWIH increase the visibility of German innovation leaders around the world, raise awareness of the German science, research and innovation landscape, advise scientists in Germany and the host countries, and connect actors at the local level. DFG is highly engaged in all five DWIH, i.e. in New York, São Paulo, Moscow, New Delhi and Tokyo.
The DFG enables cross-border cooperation between researchers and supports collaboration with international partners throughout the complete DFG funding portfolio. The DFG also has many joint calls for cooperative research projects with partner organisations in Europe and beyond.

DFG support for projects with international partners is generally based on the principle of mutual responsibility. Researchers working in Germany apply to the DFG, while their partners abroad apply for funding at their respective partner organisations.

The DFG offers funding for both individual and collaborative research projects. Approximately 35 percent of all DFG funds are allocated to the Individual Research Grants Programme. Under this programme, any researcher holding a doctorate is eligible to apply for funding for a proposed research project to be carried out at a German university.

The DFG’s coordinated programmes involve more than one principal investigator and promote cooperation through national and international collaboration by concentrating resources and integrating partners from outside the university.

The programmes outlined in this brochure are just a few of the DFG’s many funding opportunities.

Special Programmes
- Initiation of International Collaboration
- Scientific Networks

Project Proposals by Individuals
- Research Grants Programme/
  Temporary Position Module
- Mercator Fellows
- Emmy Noether Programme
- Heisenberg Programme

Collaborative Institutional Proposals
- International Research Training Groups (IRTG)
- Collaborative Research Centres (CRC)

Finding Cooperation Possibilities in Germany
- GEPRIS
- GERiT
- Research in Germany
Initiation of International Collaboration

In order to initiate international cooperative projects or joint proposals, the DFG provides funding for preparatory trips and/or workshops through this programme. Applications are submitted by the German partner.

Support
► Funding for incoming and/or outgoing short research visits
► Funding for costs related to a workshop
► Cost categories may be co-financed by a foreign partner organisation if an appropriate agreement exists

Duration
► Max. 3 months for research visits; all activities, such as joint workshops, must take place within a 12-month period

More information
► Proposals may be submitted at any time. We recommend to apply for funds no later than six months before the planned start of the project.
► [www.dfg.de/international](http://www.dfg.de/international)

Scientific Networks

Scientific Networks generally consist of 10 to 20 researchers who seek to engage in multi-year scientific exchange and cooperation on a research topic of their choice across locations with a specific objective. The programme is open to researchers at all career stages and promotes national and international networking.

Members of the network (10–20 individuals) must not all belong to the same research institution. Up to half of the members may be based in research systems outside Germany.

Who can apply
► Researchers in Germany, or those working at a German research institution abroad

Support
► Funding may include travel costs, publication expenses, support for meetings and coordination

Duration
► 3 years

More information
► [www.dfg.de/scientific_networks](http://www.dfg.de/scientific_networks)

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Additional funding to enable cooperative research projects with scientists in developing countries can be applied for in all DFG programmes.
► [www.dfg.de/coop_developing_countries](http://www.dfg.de/coop_developing_countries)
Project Proposals by Individuals

The DFG offers funding for both individual and collaborative research projects. Approximately 35 percent of all DFG funds are allocated to the Individual Research Grants Programme. Under this programme, any researcher holding a doctorate is eligible to apply for funding for a proposed research project to be carried out at a German university.

Research Grants Programme

The research grant enables scientists and academics to carry out a research project on a specifically defined topic within a limited time period. It is the most flexible grant programme and it has no submission deadline. In many cases, this programme can be used to fund the German side of an international collaborative project.

Support

► Funding may include for example staff, consumables, lab equipment, publication costs and travel expenses
► Special conditions apply for researchers at non-university institutions

Duration

► Up to 6 years (e.g. 2 x 3 years)

More information

► www.dfg.de/research_grants

Temporary Position Module

Special case: Research Grants with Temporary Position for Principal Investigator

This module includes funding for a position (i.e. a salary) for foreign researchers to come to Germany for a self-structured research project. It offers a special option for researchers as they can apply for this programme from inside or outside Germany. Projects funded within this programme line must be located at German (host) institutions. The support and commitment of these institutions is mandatory for a proposal.

Mercator Fellows

Fellowships enable intensive, long-term, project-based collaboration between researchers from both domestic and foreign institutions. German researchers apply for the Mercator Module to include their foreign partners. Although Mercator Fellows are on-site for only part of the project, they remain in contact with the project team members once their research stay is over. Foreign Mercator Fellowship holders are awarded the title of Mercator Fellows in recognition of their dedication.

Mercator Fellowships can be applied for within the following programmes:

► Research Grants
► The Emmy Noether Programme
► Research Training Groups
► Collaborative Research Centres
► Further programmes – see www.dfg.de/en

Support

► In addition to an allowance to cover travel expenses, fellows may receive a salary for their work. The amount depends on the fellows’ qualifications; it may not exceed the level of the personnel cost category for professors.

Duration

► Usually between 6 to 12 months
Emmy Noether Programme

The Emmy Noether Programme enables outstanding early career researchers to rapidly qualify for leading positions in science and research or for a university teaching career by heading an independent junior research group and assuming relevant teaching duties.

Who can apply
► Excellent early career researchers from all disciplines with postdoctoral experience of at least 2 years and up to 4 years (medical researchers: up to 6 years) and with substantial international research experience
► Foreign applicants are eligible if they intend to continue their scientific career in Germany

Support
► Funding for an independent junior research group including expenses for personnel and consumables

Duration
► 6 years

More information
► www.dfg.de/emmy_noether/en

Heisenberg Programme

The Heisenberg Programme enables advanced researchers to carry on with high-quality research at an institution of choice to prepare for a future senior academic role and continue building an academic reputation. Under the Heisenberg Programme, applicants can select between the following four funding types or combine them during a five-year funding period:
► Heisenberg Position
► Heisenberg Temporary Substitute for Clinicians
► Heisenberg Professorship
► Heisenberg Fellowship

Who can apply
► Outstanding researchers who qualify for a professorship by holding a habilitation or equivalent qualification
► Tenured faculty members are not eligible to apply

Support
► Fellowship: Fellowship grant, travel allowances and, where applicable, allowances for accommodation abroad, publication funding
► Professorship: Salary equivalent to the assistant professor level in Germany
► Position: Salary equivalent to a junior research group leader position

Duration
► Max. 5 years

More information
► www.dfg.de/heisenberg/en
Collaborative Institutional Proposals

The DFG’s coordinated programmes involve more than one PI and promote cooperation through national and international collaboration by concentrating resources and integrating partners from outside the university.

International Research Training Groups (IRTG)

IRTG provide opportunities for joint doctoral training programmes between German universities and universities abroad.

Who can apply
► To establish an IRTG, 5–10 faculty members are needed on each side (Germany, abroad) who want to collaborate on an interdisciplinary research focus with a joint programme
► Once the IRTG is established, doctoral researchers and postdocs apply directly to the programme

Support
► IRTG offer funding to doctoral researchers, postdocs, visiting researchers, and research students, and cover expenses for travel, workshops, small equipment, consumables, coordination, etc.

Duration
► Two 4.5-year cycles (max. 9 years) for Research Training Groups
► 3-year terms for doctoral positions, including 6-months stay at partner institutions

(Cont. next page)

Preparatory Workshops
► Prior consultation with DFG Head Office recommended
► Funding for a preparatory workshop can be applied for

More information
► www.dfg.de/gk/en

Collaborative Research Centres (CRC)

CRC are established at universities for a period of up to 12 years and enable researchers to pursue an outstanding research programme, crossing the boundaries of disciplines, institutes, departments and faculties.

Who can apply
► Up to three German universities submit a proposal to establish a long-term university-based research institution
► Once the CRC is established, doctoral researchers, postdocs and senior researchers can apply directly to the programme

Support
► Travel, colloquia and Mercator Fellowships for the purposes of maintaining international contacts and presenting findings to an international audience
► Additional funding to develop project-like collaborative structures, including long-term cooperation projects with comparable centres abroad
► Scientists and academics can also lead projects within the CRC abroad; funding is usually provided by an international partner organisation

Duration
► Max. 12 years (three 4-year funding periods) for Collaborative Research Centres

More information
► www.dfg.de/sfb/en

IRTG by partner country

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Looking for general information and guidelines for DFG funding programmes?
► www.dfg.de/en/research_funding

Interested in finding out more about our peer review and selection process?
► www.dfg.de/proposal_process

Looking to find current DFG-funded projects within your field of interest?
► www.dfg.de/en/gepris

GEPRIS (German Project Information System) is an online database made available by the DFG to provide information on current DFG-funded research projects.

Looking for partners to cooperate with in Germany?
► www.gerit.org/en

GERiT is an information portal on German research institutions provided by the DFG in partnership with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors’ Conference (HRK).

Interested in further information about the German Research Landscape?
► www.research-in-germany.org

The initiative “Research in Germany – Land of Ideas” was launched by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in 2006 to promote Germany worldwide as an outstanding research location. Together with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Fraunhofer Society, the DFG is conducting a wide range of activities in Germany and around the world, including the participation in international conferences, the organisation of information events and workshops, as well as the development and distribution of information material for a variety of target groups.
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