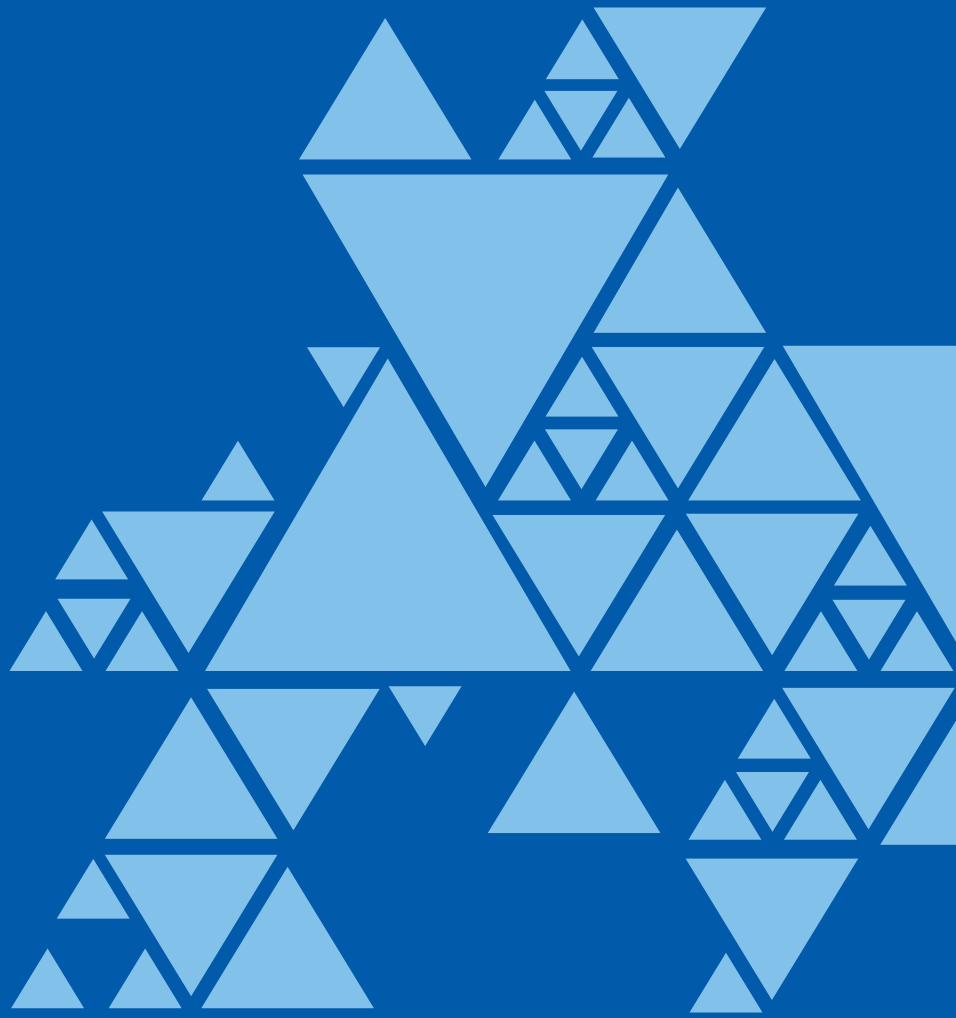
Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
German Research Foundation

LATIN AMERICA

DAAD/ VOLKER LANNERT

DFG



Summary

WELCOME

With the outbreak of the COVID-19-pandemic, the importance of academic cross-border cooperation has become greater than ever before. Yet, the need to collect data, share scientific findings and develop research agendas in international teams extends well beyond the pandemic. Challenges such as scarcity of resources and migration, loss of biodiversity, climate and environmental changes are increasingly global challenges. Thus, collaboration across national borders, cooperation between the brightest minds, the transnational operation of major research infrastructures and the diversity of cultures represented in a scientific working group offer immense potential to answer the burning questions of our time.

In fact, the internationalisation of science has become a societal, social and cultural value. It occurs at all these levels, by way of a discourse on question and problem horizons as well as through mutual examination of knowledge traditions and research practices. It is thus instrumental in enabling freedom of research across borders. For this reason, the DFG has enshrined the promotion of internationalisation in its statutes, is involved in international organisations and is represented by its offices abroad.

Cooperation with scientific institutions and research-funding agencies in Latin America has become one of the DFG's strategic priorities. This publication is intended to shed light on the wide range of successful research collaborations between Germany and Latin America and to invite for new ideas and more in-depth dialogue.

I wish you an inspiring read!

PROF. DR. KATJA BECKER
President of the DFG

Outline and perspectives for German collaboration with Latin America

"Together with our Latin American partners, we will continue our active commitment to developing strategic research collaborations"

We are delighted to provide you with this brochure, which is designed to offer a clear overview of the scientific cooperation promoted by the DFG in Latin America.

Read on to gain insights into the evolution and status of cooperation as a whole, find out which research funding organisations in Latin America are currently collaborating with the DFG and take a look at just a few of the joint projects underway between researchers from Latin America and Germany. These examples of joint initiatives serve as a small demonstration of the quality, robustness and vigour of cooperation between scientists and research institutions that has developed over the years.

The coronavirus pandemic has reinforced how important international and interdisciplinary scientific cooperation is for the development of global science. In many projects included in this publication, you will notice that scientific cooperation is not only bilateral, but multilateral. There is a long tradition of research collaboration between Latin America and Germany, which has evolved significantly since its inception. Whereas centuries and even only decades ago, interest in cooperation was still driven by an often one-sided desire of European researchers to discover the "New World", this has changed over time with the recognition that a purely Eurocentric view cannot lead to real insight, understanding and partnership between the two regions.

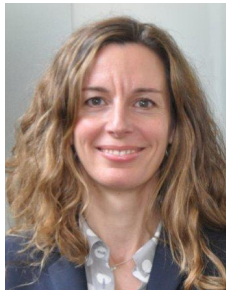
Over the last two decades, Latin America's scientific potential has grown continuously and the region has become increasingly significant at the international level. This especially applies to those Latin American countries that set up advanced research funding structures, providing an excellent basis for international collaboration.

The growing interest in cooperation between the research communities in Germany and Latin America reflects these developments. The DFG appointed liaison scientists in Brazil and Chile in 2006, and in Mexico in 2011. These efforts enabled the DFG to strengthen relations with Latin American funding organisations and to establish an office in São Paulo in 2011 to represent the DFG throughout Latin

America. It is housed at the German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH) São Paulo. It was created precisely to support communication between Latin American and German scientists and establish funding instruments together with partner agencies.

Today, quality-driven research cooperation between Germany and Latin America is possible in all fields of knowledge and takes its inspiration from a wide range of academic and cultural backgrounds. Together with our Latin American partners, we will continue our active commitment to developing strategic research collaborations and will broaden our joint initiatives to gain new knowledge inspired by both continents. ◀

DR. DIETRICH HALM
Director
International Cooperation with Latin America



DR. CHRISTINA PETERS
Director
DFG Office Latin America

Based at the German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH) São Paulo, the office serves as a central point of contact for researchers in Latin America.
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THE DFG

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) is the central self-governing research funding organisation in Germany. Its mission is to promote curiosity-driven research.

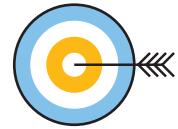
The DFG serves all branches of science, engineering and humanities by funding research projects at universities and other research institutions. It promotes excellence by selecting the best research projects through transparent, competitive processes and actively encourages interdisciplinary and international cooperation. The DFG is particularly committed to supporting researchers who are at an early stage in their career and gender equality in science and academia.

In organisational terms, the DFG is legally registered as a private association. Its members are German universities, research institutions, scientific associations and the academies of science. The DFG has an annual budget of about 3.3 billion euros, primarily from the German federal and state governments.

With offices in São Paulo, Washington DC, Moscow (2003-2022), New York, San Francisco, New Delhi and Tokyo, as well as the Sino-German Centre for Research Promotion in Beijing, the DFG has expanded its presence in other research regions around the world in recent years.

The DFG Office Latin America in São Paulo

The mission of the DFG Office Latin America is to strengthen and enhance cooperation in the region. Our main objectives and activities are:



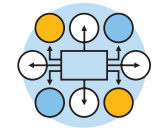
to be a contact point for researchers as well as scientific institutions and funding organisations in all Latin American and Caribbean countries;

to inform and advise local and German scientists and research institutions about research opportunities in Germany as well as possibilities for international collaboration;

to maintain and expand strategic partnerships with Latin American funding organisations and to develop instruments for international collaboration;

to initiate, organise and support measures to promote cooperation, such as international seminars, workshops or conferences;

to provide special support to early career researchers through seminars, consultation and events in close collaboration with key German and foreign stakeholders;



to monitor and analyse developments in scientific and research policy in Latin American countries, thereby stimulating the dialogue between German and Latin American researchers, as well as research and funding organisations.

FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Developing and maintaining strategic partnerships with funding organisations in Latin American countries is one of the DFG's key activities in Latin America. Our central aim here is to promote research collaborations between Latin American and German researchers on specific topics of interest with potential for cooperation. We develop our joint funding schemes in close consultation with our partner organisations. These schemes are mostly based on the principle of matching funds, which guarantees shared success and the mutual responsibility of all organisations involved.

Over recent years, the DFG has launched joint calls for the submission of research proposals in various scientific areas, developed common long-term funding schemes with specific funding organisations in Latin America and promoted research collaboration by jointly funding workshops and strategic research events.

These efforts have resulted in a wide range of bilaterally funded research projects and initiatives, ranging from support for research visits and workshops to grants for individual joint projects to the establishment of large research consortia.

By offering such flexible funding programmes for international collaboration, the DFG successfully finances research projects of scientific excellence in various fields of knowledge in cooperation with the funding organisations of a number of Latin American countries.

You can find out more about the DFG's partner organisations in Latin America and some of our projects on the following pages.

OUR PARTNERS IN LATIN AMERICA

Funding of excellent cross-national research projects in all scientific fields requires partner organizations with compatible programmes and resources.

The DFG has agreements for the co-funding of research projects and researcher mobility with the following partners:

- Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MINCIENCIAS)
- Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES)
- Universidad de Antioquia (UdeA)

- Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES)
- National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPQ)
- São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP)
- Rio de Janeiro Research Foundation (FAPERJ)
- Minas Gerais Research Foundation (FAPEMIG)

- National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET)
- Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MINCYT)

Role of γδT cells in skin homeostasis and protective immunity during experimental dermatophytosis

γδT cells are innate γδT lymphocytes that reside in skin tissues and play an important role in the action against pathogens. This international collaborative project is investigating the skin's immune responses to dermatophytosis and addresses how commensal bacteria and pathogenic fungi drive skin immune homeostasis. Many studies show that human fungal diseases continue to represent a major health problem all over the world, which mostly affect children, the elderly and immune-deficient individuals.

Dermatophytoses are skin infections caused by keratinophilic filamentous fungi. They affect approximately 25% of the world population, thereby representing the fourth most prevalent cause of human disease. Researchers in the field's understanding of the molecular pathways controlling innate fungal recognition and antifungal responses elicited by myeloid cells has significantly improved. However, there is still little knowledge about organ-specific adaptive immune responses and the cytokine networks that control fungal growth.

This project is based on strong collaboration between scientists from Argentina and Germany who had already been cooperating in this field for several years before the project was submitted. "From 2015 to 2018, some formal exchanges took place between Hannover Medical School and Argentinean universities interested in immunology. These discussions were led by Prof. Tim Sparwasser and Prof. Dr. Luciana Berod, who are now both at University Mainz in Germany", explains Prof. Prinz, the German principal investigator of the project.

Using an experimental model of an epicutaneous infection with Microsporum, the scientists will monitor the antifungal functions of specific cells, especially the role of dermal γδT cells. Furthermore, they will study the microbial and metabolic factors that modulate immune homeostasis between immune cells and pathogenic or commensal fungi of the skin.

The Argentinean research group, led by the Dr. Laura Chiapello, brings its extensive experience in the management of pathogenic fungi and experimental infections to the project. "They are the world's leading experts in the area", says Prof. Prinz. The German group, for its part, offers its combined experience in γδT cell biology and the in vivo study of immune cell dynamics.◀

Illustrative photo
© DFG/David Ausserhofer

OVERVIEW

The project investigates the skin's immune responses to dermatophytosis and addresses how commensal bacteria and pathogenic fungi drive skin immune homeostasis.

DURATION: Since 2020

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Immunology

INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS:
- Universitätsklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf
- Universidad Nacional de Córdoba

PARTNER ORGANIZATION: National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

WEBSITE: www.uke.de/english/departments-institutes/institutes/systems-immunology/research/

BRAGECRIM

4.0 smart connected manufacturing model

The Brazilian-German Collaborative Research Initiative on Smart Connected Manufacturing (CRI-SCMfg)

The Collaborative Research Initiative on Smart Connected Manufacturing (CRI-SCMfg) is a well-established German-Brazilian engineering research network. It is the successor of the former BRAGECRIM Initiative. At its Annual Meeting in Piracicaba in 2019, CRI-SCMfg was officially launched with four new projects. The main goal of this cooperation is to sustainably strengthen the industrial sector in both countries through basic and applied research and the exchange of knowledge and researchers.

Number of publications:

11

"Both the BRAGECRIM and CRI-SCMfg initiatives have had a major impact on collaboration between Germany and Brazil, starting with research and continuing with technology transfer for industries in both countries. The new CRI-SCMfg programme focuses on the digitalisation of production and industry 4.0. By doing research in these fields, we intend to improve production processes and increase the competitiveness of the manufacturing industry in Germany and Brazil", says Prof. Freitag, the German coordinator of the initiative.

This international research programme will contribute to providing new knowledge on high-tech manufacturing technologies in both countries, thereby covering different strategic demands and reinforcing existing capacities. As an expected outcome, research on such advanced production technologies will accelerate progress on innovation and strengthen local industries' ability to compete. Therefore, it will result in sustainable development not only for the industries of both countries, but for the whole society due to its positive economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts.

"Executing joint projects in the scope of BRAGECRIM and CRI-SCMfg requires several undergraduate, Master and PhD students to be actively involved. Their participation strategically supports the long-term success of the Brazilian-German research collaboration. By taking part in the joint projects, students are able to receive advanced technical training and improve other skills. For instance, I myself started participating in BRAGECRIM back in 2006 during my first year as a PhD student in Bremen", says Prof. Frazzon, the Brazilian coordinator of the CRI-SCMfg. ◀

OVERVIEW

A German-Brazilian research programme designed to generate technological knowledge that contributes to innovative solutions and thus improves the productivity, quality and sustainability of manufacturing companies' operations.

DURATION: Since 2019 (CRI-SCMfg)

SUBJECT AREAS: Production management and production engineering

INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS: Over 30 Brazilian and German universities, research institutes and industrial partners

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS: Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

WEBSITE: www.smartconnectedmanufacturing.de

Sustainable use of Brazilian biodiversity: Using linked data for natural product discovery (DINOBBIO)

The DINOBBIO project investigates the challenges of building, managing and utilizing biochemical knowledge graphs (BKG) through semantic web technologies and machine learning. It focuses on researching new nature-inspired products made from Brazilian biodiversity.

Worldwide, 67% of all approved drugs are produced from natural ingredients or derived from one. When we compare the countries that approve the most products and the amount of natural resources they possess, we find an asymmetry. The chemical diversity of the flora and fauna in Brazil, for example, is extraordinary and could be used to develop bioproducts, especially medicines. German and Brazilian scientists have joined forces to promote the sustainable use of natural resources by increasing communities' awareness of their economic value while providing small and medium enterprises the data they need to compete in a global market.

"We believe the conservation of biodiversity must be aligned with the economy. In other words, to be sustainable, it should first be economically viable for the people living in those countries and areas", says Edgard Marx, project manager on the German side.

The project was proposed and is being led by Edgard Marx (HTWK) in Germany and by Marilia Valli (UNESP) in Brazil, with the support of the main researchers and professors Dr. Thomas Riechert (HTWK), Dr. Vanderlan da Silva Bolzani (UNESP) and Dr. Adriano Defini Andricopulo (USP). In total, nine researchers are participating directly in the project.

The project is in its preliminary phase and is scheduled to be completed in 2024. For the researchers, the enthusiasm and commitment of the group has

Aerial view of Amazon rainforest, South America
© DFG/istockphoto

been fundamental in making the work easier amid the difficulties imposed by the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, both sides have extensive experience in working with their partners.

"As a student, I participated in the Ciências sem Fronteiras, a Brazilian scientific exchange programme. Our scientific exchanges with Brazil started years ago with the arrival of many Brazilian researchers in Germany to be part of the Agile Knowledge and Semantic Web (AKSW) group, of which I too was a member. Prior to this project, we had organised a workshop in Brazil financed by the DFG. At this particular event, I had the opportunity to meet some of the Brazilian researchers who worked or are working on curating natural products data, and the rest is history."◀

OVERVIEW

The chemical diversity of the flora and fauna of Brazilian biomes can be seen in the wide range of compound classes and structural types of secondary metabolites from plants, fungi, insects, marine organisms and bacteria found by this research. DINOBBIO aims to investigate the challenges of building, managing and utilizing biochemical knowledge graphs (BKG) that use semantic web technologies and machine learning. It focuses on researching new nature-inspired products developed from Brazilian biodiversity.

DURATION: Since 2021

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Information Systems, Process and Knowledge Management

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:

- São Paulo State University - UNESP
- University of São Paulo - USP
- Leipzig University of Applied Science (HTWK Leipzig)

PARTNER ORGANISATION: São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

NUMBER OF PAPERS PUBLISHED: Not yet definable

WEBSITE: dinobbio.aksw.org

EarthShape: Earth surface shaping by biota

The overarching research question of this project is how microorganisms, animals, and plants influence the shape and development of the earth's surface over time scales from the present day to the distant geologic past. These interactions control how soils form, how water flows along the land surface, how valleys are lowered and ridges rise, and what vegetation grows in different climate zones.

EARTHSHAPE

Number of doctorates:

30

Number of papers published:

71

EarthShape straddles a number of scientific disciplines and includes geoscientists, soil scientists, ecologists, and microbiologists to study this complex question from different viewpoints. Approximately 60 German and 20 Chilean researchers are involved in a diverse range of projects in this Priority Programme.

All study sites are located in the Coastal Cordillera Mountains trending north to south in Chile, South America. These sites stretch from the Atacama Desert in the north to the Araucaria forests approximately 1,300 km to the south. The site selection contains a large ecological and climate gradient ranging from very dry to humid climate conditions.

EARTHSHAPE

"The project improves our understanding of how biota influence the shape and functioning of the earth's surface. This is important because it will improve our ability to predict how each surface will respond to future vegetation changes associated with climate and global warming", explains Professor Todd Alan Ehlers, co-coordinator of the programme at the University of Tübingen.

Chilean researchers benefit from the project in a variety of ways, generating more knowledge of their own country, as well as developing new international collaborations and strengthening existing ones.

In 2019, the second phase of EarthShape started and the project will end in 2023, although a continuation of related research is likely to occur over the years to come. EarthShape continues to stimulate between Chilean and German scientist's dynamic discussions on how biological processes influence the Earth's surface. Field work is continuing in 2022 at the study sites now that travel restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic have decreased.

"EarthShape provides an exciting avenue for international collaboration between German and Chilean scientists. Over the past years, we are pleased to see the development of collaborative studies in Earth surface processes between these communities", says Professor Todd Ehlers. ◀

OVERVIEW

This initiative studies how biological processes form soil, influence topography and impact sedimentation and erosion as function of time. A diverse range of disciplines from the geo and biological sciences come together in this project in four focus areas in Chile.

DURATION: Since 2015

SCIENTIFIC AREA: Geosciences

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS: Countless, led by the University of Tübingen and the GFZ (German Research Centre for Geosciences), Germany.

DFG PROGRAMME: Priority Programme

WEBSITE: www.earthshape.net

A Philosophical Approach to Biasing Mechanisms in Scientific Research

The polarisation of ideas does not only have an impact on political, social, and cultural approaches. In the philosophy of science, recent work has led to an emerging consensus that science is not value-free, and that values, including social and political values, play different roles in the research process. It has also become clear that values can have both a positive and a negative impact on science. Sometimes, values can contribute to science's epistemic and social goals, while other times, they can have a detrimental effect on science's epistemic goals, i.e., biasing research results. The main goal of the project "A Philosophical Approach to Biasing Mechanisms in

Illustrative photo
© DFG/istockphoto

Scientific Research" is to clarify the negative roles of values in scientific research, and in particular their sometimes biasing effects. While it is well-known that biases impact scientific research results, we have a less clear understanding of the different types of biases, their mechanisms, and their scope.

This project is being developed by a partnership between researchers from the Institut für Philosophie, Leibniz Universität Hannover and Department of Philosophy, Universidad de los Andes. It is funded by the DFG and the Universidad de los Andes. Both institutions have a continuous flow cooperation agreement, in which researchers based in Germany and researchers from Universidad de los Andes can submit a proposal at any time in any research area. Prof. Manuela Fernández Pinto, Colombian principal investigator of the Project, and Prof. Torsten Wilholt, German principal investigator of the project, already knew each other's published works, but it was only at a workshop on biases at the Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy, where they both gave presentations, that they understood the large overlaps in their research interests. In addition to the two principal investigators, one Postdoctoral researcher and one graduate student will be involved in the project

The researchers submitted the proposal for this project from a perception that philosophy of science lacked a systematic examination of how bias shows up in research. They both intended to shed light on this side of the presence of values in science. "In recent decades, there has been the widespread agreement that values are indispensable in scientific practice and often even contribute constructively to the advancement of knowledge. However, we know that value attitudes can also have harmful influences by creating biases in research and obstructing the generation of knowledge."

OVERVIEW

The main purpose of this project is to provide a philosophical analysis that contributes to a better understanding of biasing mechanisms in science. The main goal is to clarify the negative roles of values in scientific research, and in particular their sometimes biasing effects. While it is well-known that biases impact scientific research results, there is a less clear understanding of the different types of biases, their mechanisms, and their scope. This project aims to fill that gap.

DURATION: Since June 2022

SUBJECT AREAS: Philosophy of science, epistemology, methodology

INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS:
- Institut für Philosophie, Leibniz Universität Hannover
- Departamento de Filosofía, Universidad de los Andes

PARTNER ORGANISATION:
Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

WEBSITE: Not yet definable

Interaction between antiphospholipid antibodies, endothelial cell-derived extracellular vesicles and monocytes in antiphospholipid syndrome

The antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) is an autoimmune disease that can cause thrombosis and gestational morbidity, but little is known about the pathophysiological mechanisms that cause these alterations. Researchers from Grupo Reproducción (School of Medicine, University of Antioquia and Bolivarian University Clinic, Medellin, Colombia) and from Placenta-Lab (Department of Obstetrics, Jena University Hospital, Germany) will investigate how antiphospholipid antibodies affect the communication

University Hospital Jena, Germany
© Dr. Diana Morales

Number of doctorates:

02

Researchers in action
© Prof. Angela Cadavid

between the mother's (endothelial and different cells of the immune system) and baby's cells (trophoblast cells) to produce these damages. They hope that explaining this will help to develop novel treatment strategies that are more effective for APS patients to give birth to healthy offspring.

This project is the result of a long-standing partnership between PD Dr. Morales Prieto and Prof. Markert (Placenta Lab) and Prof. Cadavid (Grupo Reproducción). They have previously collaborated in programs involving bilateral exchange of researchers, graduate students, and professors that have resulted in multiple joint publications.

"The Grupo Reproducción works at a high scientific level and is very engaged and cooperative. The interaction between our groups has been always very efficient and constructive. This is important for this project, as it relies on the continuous exchange of information between German and Colombian doctoral students and principal investigators. Zoom meetings as well as scientist exchanges are planned from both sides for the future", says Diana Maria Morales Prieto, the principal investigator on the German side.

The project is funded by the DFG and the University of Antioquia (UdeA). Both institutions have a continuous flow cooperation agreement, in which researchers based in Germany and researchers from UdeA can submit a proposal at any time without a specific call.

The project has been launched recently with sample collection from the different study groups (patients with different clinical manifestations of APS and control groups) in Medellin (Colombia), Barcelona (Spain) and Jena (Germany). In addition, materials and reagents are being obtained to prepare the upcoming experiments. Over the next few years, the researches expect to explain some of the mechanisms involved in APS, which may help to develop treatments aiming to reduce the risk of pregnancy complications in APS patients. ◀

OVERVIEW

For this research proposal, it is suggested that interaction between monocytes, endothelial cells, and trophoblast cells via extracellular vesicles – EVs – (a versatile mechanism of signaling) could be of interest in explaining the net of events involved in APS (antiphospholipid syndrome) pathophysiology.

DURATION: Since April 2022

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Immunology, Vascular diseases, Gynecology

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:
- Reproduction Group, School of Medicine, University of Antioquia and Bolivarian University Clinic, Medellin, Colombia
- Placenta-Lab, Department of Obstetrics, University Hospital Jena, Germany

PARTNER ORGANISATION: Universidad de Antioquia - UdeA

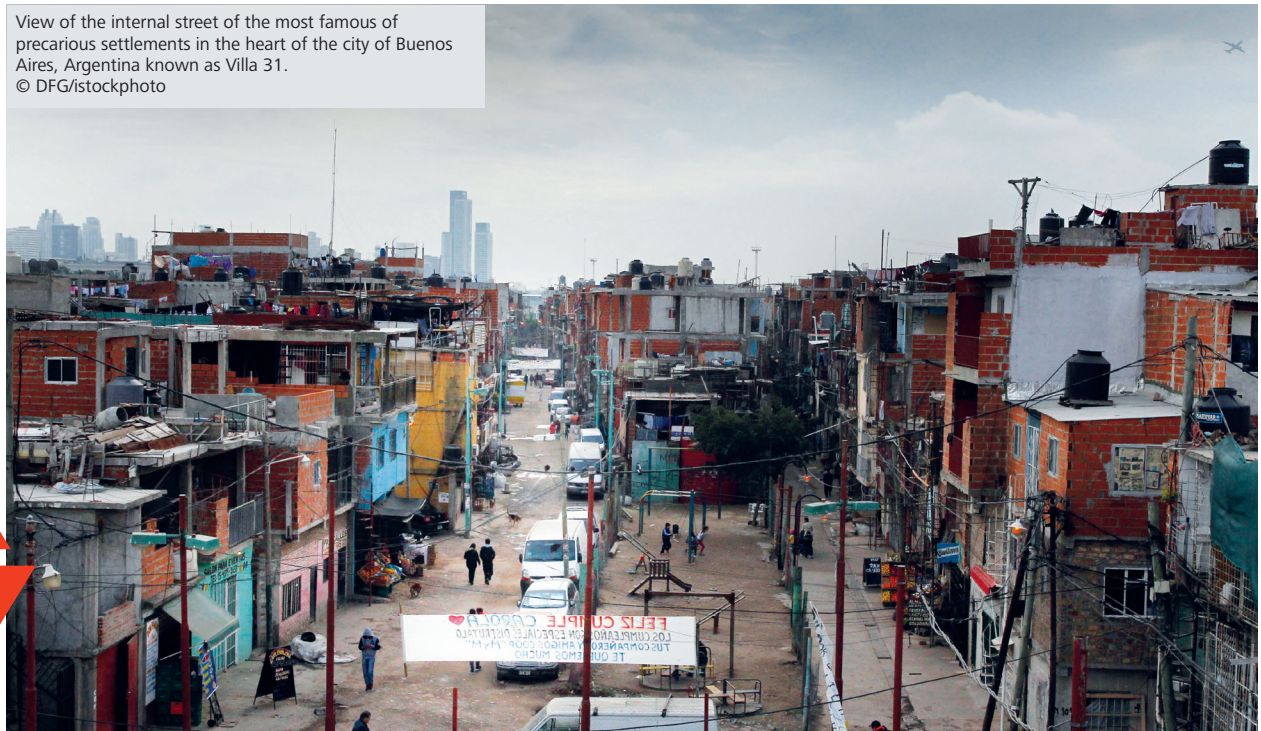
DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

NUMBER OF DOCTORATES: 2

WEBSITE: Under construction

COVID-19 in Latin America: The role of social protections for households with children

The coronavirus pandemic, a major crisis of this century, has raised concerns and questions not only with regard to health and medical aspects but also to social aspects. The vulnerability that already existed in many families in the Global South has been accentuated since 2020. This project – a collaboration between researchers from Germany and Costa Rica – is analysing the socio-economic fallout of the COVID-19



View of the internal street of the most famous of precarious settlements in the heart of the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina known as Villa 31.
© DFG/istockphoto

pandemic, and the intervening role of social protection of families with children in eight Latin American countries. The region, with high levels of inequality, labour informality, and urbanisation, has been hit particularly hard by both pandemic deaths and economic effects.

The researchers are specifically interested in investigating attitudes toward cash transfers to different groups, including children, and some potential predictors of these attitudes. "Does socio-economic status, level of education, household composition, number of children influence willingness to extend cash transfers to different groups?", "How much might ideology and specific recent experiences influence the attitudes?" are questions that they seek to understand.

"As the pandemic hit in 2020, governments implemented temporary emergency cash transfer programmes that reached households especially during the first year of the pandemic, in addition to the existing cash transfer programmes. However, the measures have still been limited in coverage, adequacy and duration. We therefore proposed to conduct representative phone surveys in seven Latin American countries, to study people's attitudes toward social protection, especially cash transfers. So far, no systematic comparative surveys on this topic exist in Latin America" says Prof. Dr. Merike Blofield

For the principal investigators "the goal of the survey is academic, but also, and very importantly, to provide systematic empirical data to influence public debate and policy design for more sustainable and inclusive social policies in the region, as countries grapple with the need to recover after two very difficult years".

This project, led by Prof. Dr. Merike Blofield (Germany) and Prof. Dr. Juliana Martínez Franzoni (Costa Rica), was contemplated in the call "Impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic in the Global South". The call, launched in 2021, is part of the COVID-19 Focus Funding. That is a DFG funding opportunity designed to enable researchers to address especially urgent research questions requiring rapid answers.

OVERVIEW

This project analyses the socio-economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the intervening role of social protection of families with children in eight Latin American countries. The region, with high levels of inequality, labour informality and urbanisation, has been hit particularly hard by both pandemic deaths and economic effects.

DURATION: Since 2021

SUBJECT AREAS: Empirical Social Research and Political Science

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:
- German Institute for Global and Area Studies
- Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien
- Universidad de Costa Rica, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants / COVID-19 Focus Funding

WEBSITE: bit.ly/3KgsnnK

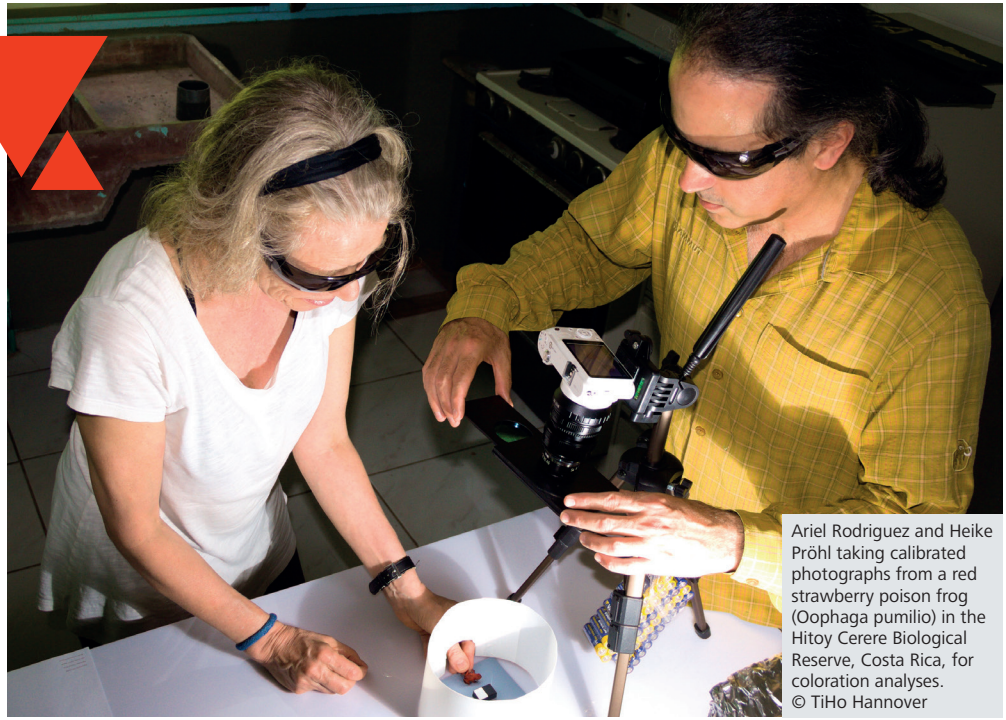
The aposematic phenotype: a geno-by phenotype perspective from poison frogs

This project will research two different anti-predators strategies that animals use to enhance survival: Aposematism and crypsis. Aposematic animals display a conspicuous warning coloration, which is associated with a high toxicity or unpalatability. Cryptic animals in contrasts are not or less toxic and avoid predation by camouflage. While the ecological aspects of both strategies are well studied, nothing is known about the chemical aspects and molecular processes involved in the generation of both strategies.

The group of sixteen researchers from Germany, Costa Rica, Panama, Switzerland and England selected red and green populations, aposematic and cryptic respectively, in three different poison frog species. The intentions are to find out whether the different populations and species converge in their chemical, physiological and genetic processes e.g. pigments content in the dermis or expression of genes involved in alkaloid/ pigment processing, for producing either the aposematic or cryptic phenotype.

With this study, they hope to improve the knowledge on biological processes that underlie aposematic diversification within and among species. This diversification is supposed to be driven by natural selection over evolutionary time scales.

Both German principal investigators have an extensive history of cooperation with Latin American countries. Prof. Dr. Heike Pröhl studied tropical biology from 1991 to 1992 at the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR) and worked as a lecturer (2003) at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA). She conducted field work for her diploma (1993) and doctoral thesis (1995-97) as well as for a postdoctoral project with frogs in Costa Rica and Panama. Since her doctoral project, she is collaborating with Costa Rican, Panamanian, but also Colombian researchers mainly on the ecology, behaviour and evolution of poison frogs. Dr. Ariel Rodriguez conducted his academic formation and first research projects in Cuba at the Institute of Ecology and systematics in Havana. In Germany, he has maintained regular collaboration with



Ariel Rodriguez and Heike Pröhl taking calibrated photographs from a red strawberry poison frog (Oophaga pumilio) in the Hitoy Cerere Biological Reserve, Costa Rica, for coloration analyses. © TiHo Hannover

researchers from Cuba, Panama and other Latin American Countries.

"The collaboration with our international partners, mainly from Costa Rica, is truly interdisciplinary in the sense that they work on a diverse set of chemical aspects of the antipredator strategies like pigment contents, alkaloid contents, toxicity assays, while we are working on the biological aspects such as coloration and visual ecology, histology, molecular processes and genetic differences", says Prof. Pröhl.

The project is in its initial phase. The researchers are starting doing field work in Costa Rica (May 2022) and Panama (June 2022). They expect the academic formation of several Costa Rican and German masters and PhD students and multiple publications with the last one, synthesizing the most important results, to be published in about 5 years.◀

OVERVIEW

The project investigates two different anti-predators strategies that animals use to enhance survival: aposematism and crypsis. In this study, the researchers relate aspects of frog coloration to aspects of the toxicity by measuring morphological, physiological and molecular traits. The main question is whether these two antipredator strategies are obtained by similar biological procedures, e.g. pigment production, in three Oophaga species in Costa Rica and Panama or whether different processes are at work.

DURATION: Since 2022

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Evolution, Zoology, Ecology and Biodiversity of Animals and Ecosystems, Organismic Interactions

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:

- University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover (Germany)
- University of Costa Rica
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (Panama)
- Université de Genève (Switzerland)
- University of Cambridge (England)

PARTNER INSTITUITONS: Costa Rican National Council of University Rectors (CONARE)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

WEBSITE: Not yet definable

Environmental changes in biodiversity hotspot ecosystems of South Ecuador: RESPonse and feedback effects (RESPECT)

This Research Unit (RU) is pursuing a long-term study of biodiversity and ecological interactions with biogeochemical cycles in the Andes of Ecuador. Research in the biodiversity hotspot ecosystems of SE-Ecuador started in the late 1990s and continued through several projects funded by the DFG. As such, over almost 20 years of research, adverse impacts of ongoing environmental change were observed for biodiversity and ecosystems. The pressing challenge is thus to calculate future projections on the direction and magnitude to which the great wealth of biodiversity and ecosystem services (such as production of water for supply and hydro-power generation) might be impacted by environmental change, and what measures could be taken to mitigate or even prevent adverse effects.

That is why the main objective of RESPECT is to reveal how ecosystem biomass production and water fluxes in the tropical mountain forest will be affected by future climate and land-use changes through alterations in response and effect traits. During the first phase of RU "RESPECT" the researchers combined a trait-based response-effect-framework with an improved land surface model to project the response of two ecosystem functions to environmental changes that are of high priority for Ecuador: biomass production and water fluxes. For this endeavour, the researchers focused on the mountain rain forest, where a plot system was implemented and abiotic drivers, biotic trait and process data for selected plant species were sampled. First results point to a complex interplay between abiotic drivers, trait diversity and biotic processes for the two ecosystem functions. Moreover, the development of the locally adapted, biodiversity informed land surface model HUMBOL-TD (Hydroatmo Unified Model of BiOtic interactions and Local Trait Diversity), which couples three models to cover the relevant compartments of the mountain rain forest, show that local functional trait and soil data substantially improve the simulations.

Number of doctorates:

66
concluded

19
ongoing

The dry forest Laipuna, where most of the research is currently done.
© Prof Dr. Nina Farwig

"The novel developments and findings of the RU 'RESPECT' can now be used to project alternative future land-use scenarios, that will be able to consider watershed rehabilitation so that supply of potable water and hydro-power services are ensured as well as to identify the best adapted and sustainable land use systems that support the long-term welfare of local farmers and the protection of biodiversity and natural ecosystem", explains Prof. Dr. Nina Farwig, the German spokeswoman of the RU.

The researchers have established deep, trusting, and vigorous cooperation with the leading local universities and their scientists, but also with non-university cooperation partners (public and private) active in the environmental sector.◀

OVERVIEW

The overall objective of RESPECT is to reveal how ecosystem biomass production and water fluxes are affected by climate and land use changes in the south Ecuadorian Andes.

DURATION: The research started in 1997 with a bundle project leading into the RU402, which lasted until 2006; continued in the project FOR816 from 2007 to 2013; then evolved into the programme PAK823-825 in 2013 and RU2730 in 2018. The second phase of FOR 2730 began in 2021 and will last until 2024.

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Biology, Geosciences and Geomodelling

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS: Numerous, led by the Conservation Ecology Group at the Department of Biology of the Philipps-Universität Marburg.

NUMBER OF PAPERS PUBLISHED: Numerous

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Unit

WEBSITE: under construction

International Research Training Group "Temporalities of Future"

Major processes, like migratory movements or economic volatility, have always shaped temporalities of the future in Latin America. However, what are the effects of the recent pandemic measures? This is one of more questions, which this research project aims to answer.

The Temporalities of Futures is an International Training Group (IRTG) that aims at a new perspective on the study of temporalities of the future in social and cultural sciences by realigning investigations towards a better understanding of the dynamics of aspirations and anticipations in Latin America, adding much-needed perspective on subaltern and non-Western agency with regard to the future.

The strength of this programme, jointly established by Mexican and German scholars, lies in the intense collaboration of two diverse academic cultures. There are currently 9 German and 10 Mexican scholars from the humanities and social sciences supervising 52 doctorates and 4 postdocs from Latin America and Europe. "The experience of the first IRTG 'Between Spaces' demonstrated that the study programme should be closely tailored to the needs of the individual students and monitored by the regular interaction between all of the involved scholars and doctoral researchers", says Prof. Stefan Rinke, German principal investigator of the project, who is coordinating its Second IRTG in partnership with Mexican scientists.

For Prof. Rinke, the collaboration with partners in Mexico is crucial to the project, offering a lively scholarly environment with regard to research and qualification open to all IRTG members. The expertise, research infrastructure and international networking of the Mexican partners are exceptional and strongly complement the capacities at the German location.

Doctoral students in this programme receive supervision and support in theoretical and methodological specialisation from both Germany and Mexico; they are also being encouraged to network with other research institutions in both countries. The first generation of doctoral students is concluding their PhD-theses, while the second generation is just starting their investigations. The second and a third generation will have concluded their PhDs by 2028. ◀

Number of doctorates:

52

Number of papers published:

45

The first meeting of the fellows of the IGK "Temporalities of Future" at the FU Berlin in May 2019.
© Freie Universität Berlin

OVERVIEW

This project seeks to contribute to the study of temporalities of future by investigating dynamics of aspirations and anticipations in Latin America through an interdisciplinary dialogue in the social sciences and humanities that includes subaltern and non-western perspectives.

DURATION: Since 2019

SCIENTIFIC AREAS: Social and Cultural Anthropology, History, Economics, Literary and Cultural Studies, Sociology, Studies of Education, Political Science

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:

- Freie Universität Berlin (Institute for Latin American Studies)
- Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Educational Sciences, Romance Studies)
- Universität Potsdam, Institute for Romance Studies
- El Colegio de México (COLMEX)
- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)
- Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS)

PARTNER ORGANISATION: National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT)

DFG PROGRAMME: International Research Training Groups (IRTG)

WEBSITE: bit.ly/3vVg37l

Diversity Components in Mosquito-borne Diseases in Face of Climate Change (DiMoc)

Climate change is the subject of many studies around the world, after all we are talking about a process that directly affects life on planet Earth as a whole. In this sense, all global efforts to understand this process are very necessary. The project Diversity Components in Mosquito-borne Diseases in Face of Climate Change (DiMoc) is a great example of the importance of worldwide scientific cooperation.

Inserted in the pan-European BiodivERsA call for transnational proposals, the project brings together four institutions from three European countries (Germany, Belgium and France) and Mexico. The demand for a comprehensive study is necessary because Mosquito-borne pathogens such as chikungunya virus and West Nile virus are an increasing threat to veterinary and public health also in Europe and in other regions. Emerging and re-emerging transmission patterns are influenced by global transport, long-distance travel, and environmental and climatic changes, while vaccination and pharmaceutical treatment is either not available or very limited. The role of biodiversity on disease transmission is becoming evident as far as introduced invasive species and habitat degradation are concerned, but on the other hand, attenuating or promoting effects on the chain of infection remain poorly understood. At the same time, a better understanding has a high potential to advance policy actions and response on the transmission of zoonotic diseases and avoid local or regional outbreaks.

Through the integration of young researchers from a broad spectrum of disciplines, e.g. entomology, virology, biogeography, human geography, ecology, anthropology, DiMoc aims to better understand the effects of biodiversity on the transmission of mosquito-borne pathogens. By analysing different organisations (hosts,

Number of papers published:

03

The Biosafety Level 3 training at the Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine in Hamburg at the end of April 2022.
© BNITM/Anna Heitmann

insects, viruses, human population), spatial (continental, regional, local, organismal) and temporal scales (current conditions / future projections), DiMOC will test differents aspects.

The idea is to be able to assess whether scenarios and models including climate, landscape diversity, and social diversity can be used to quantify the uncertainty in future trends of risks in pathogen transmission.

DiMoC has a strong communication component in order to facilitate exchanges with stakeholders and professional groups from the European continent and one overseas region to assess relative disease risks. Mutual exchange of information promotes the quality of studies and improves translation into practice. ◀

OVERVIEW

DiMoC aims to better understand the effects of biodiversity in mosquito-borne pathogens transmission in face of Climate Change impacts.

DURATION: Since 2020

SUBJECT AREAS: Ecology and Biodiversity of Plants and Ecosystems

INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS:
- University of Bayreuth
- Institute of Tropical Medicine
- University of Montpellier
- Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine
- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:
- Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen
- Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)
- The French National Research Agency
- Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen
- Research Foundation Flanders (FWO)

DFG PROGRAMME: Research Grants

WEBSITE: www.dimoc.uni-bayreuth.de

FUNDING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

The DFG enables cross-border cooperation between researchers and supports collaboration with international partners in all its funding programmes. The DFG also launches joint calls for collaborative research projects with partner organisations abroad. Learn more: www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/international_cooperation/funding

DFG's 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 through their respective partner organisations.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

Initiation of International Collaboration

In order to initiate and foster future bilateral projects, the DFG provides funding for preparatory trips, including research visits and guest stays, as well as workshops through this programme.

The researcher based in Germany may submit proposals at any time. The proposals must, however, be received no later than six months before the measures are implemented. The funding remains available for a maximum of 12 months after the approval date and the trips abroad or guest stays in Germany may last for up to 3 months.

MORE INFORMATION: bit.ly/initiation-cooperation

INDIVIDUAL GRANTS PROGRAMMES

Under these programmes, any researcher holding a doctorate is eligible to apply for funding to carry out a research project at a German institution.

Research Grants Programme

This program enables scientists to research a specific topic within a limited time period of three years, renewable for a further three years. It is the most flexible grants programme and has no proposal deadline. It may provide funding for:

- Project costs: research staff, equipment, travel and publications;
- Temporary Position for Principal Investigators: funding for the leading investigator of the project;
- Mercator Fellow: an intensive, long-term collaboration with researchers in Germany and abroad.

In many cases, the Research Grants Programme can be used to fund the German side of an international collaboration project.

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/research_grants

Walter Benjamin Programme

The Walter Benjamin programme offers researchers in their early postdoctoral training phase an opportunity to independently conduct their own research and benefit from other career-promoting conditions.

- The Walter Benjamin Position offers qualified foreign researches an opportunity to conduct research in Germany. Researchers who wish to participate in the programme will be integrated into a research environment that supports them in carrying out the project and gives them the opportunity to plan their next career steps.
- The Walter Benjamin Fellowship can only be awarded to researchers who are integrated into Germany's academic research system. This is the case if immediately prior to submitting a proposal, they have worked as a researcher in Germany for a continuous period of at least three years during their doctoral and/or postdoctoral studies.

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/walter_benjamin/en

Emmy Noether Programme

This program enables outstanding early career researchers with two to four years of postdoctoral experience to rapidly qualify for leading positions in science or for a university teaching career by heading an independent junior research group, generally for six years. Applicants from abroad are expected to continue their research careers in Germany after the funding comes to an end.

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/emmy_noether/en

Heisenberg Programme

The objective of this programme is to support outstanding researchers who are eligible for appointment to a long-term professorship to prepare for a senior academic role while continuing their research. It is intended for German researchers as well as appropriately qualified foreign researchers looking to pursue careers in Germany.

Once accepted into the Heisenberg Programme, researchers can choose from two types of funding or combine them as needed:

- A Heisenberg position covers your salary and provides flexible research funds.
- A Heisenberg temporary substitute position for clinicians covers a substitute to perform your normal duties and provides flexible research funds.
- A Heisenberg professorship provides funding for a temporary professorship (W2 or W3) at a German university as well as flexible research funds.
- The Heisenberg fellowship provides fixed funding per month that can be used to conduct research at an academic institution in Germany or another country. The rights and obligations at the selected institution must be negotiated and agreed individually.
- Funding is initially awarded for a three-year period and may be offered for another two years. Proposals may be submitted at any time and must conform to the relevant instructions.

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/individual/heisenberg

COORDINATED PROGRAMMES

These programmes offer funding for collaborative and long-term research projects involving a large group of scientists and more than one PI.

International Research Training Groups (IRTG)

International Research Training Groups are bilateral doctoral programmes run by German universities in conjunction with universities or research institutions abroad. They promote systematic cooperation through joint research and qualification programmes, joint supervision and longer-term reciprocal research stays by doctoral researchers at the respective partner institution. IRTGs are set up by 5–10 faculty members per institution and support consecutive cohorts of 10–15 doctoral researchers from each side. IRTGs are funded for up to 9 years (divided into two funding periods with the first one of five years and the second one of four years):

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/gk/en

Collaborative Research Centres (CRC)

CRCs are long-term university-based research centres, established for up to 12 years, in which researchers work together within a multidisciplinary research programme. CRCs enable researchers to pursue an outstanding research programme across discipline, institute, department and faculty boundaries, drawing together a number of individual projects. Collaborative Research Centres consist of a large number of projects. The number and scope of these projects depend on the research programme. Individual projects are led by one researcher or jointly by several researchers. The programme aims at excellent research within the group; the development of priority areas and structural development at the applicant university/universities, interdisciplinary cooperation, support of early career researchers and equal opportunity for women and men in research. Project-specific funding as well as funding for international exchange, Mercator fellowships, networking, guest scientists and other funding pertinent to the objectives may be provided.

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/sfb/en

Research Units

A Research Unit is made up of a team of researchers working together on a research project which extends beyond the funding options available under the Individual Grants Programme in terms of thematic focus, duration and finances. Research Units provide the staff and material resources required for carrying out intensive, medium-term cooperative projects (generally for eight years) and often contribute to establishing new research directions. Funding opportunities for Research Units are subject to the same principles as research grants, and a budget for setting up the research group as well as national and international networking is also provided.

A Research Unit consists of various programme modules combined in accordance with the requirements of the subject matter. This allows the research network to be designed in a relatively flexible way, providing o**pportunities for junior research groups and strengthening collaboration with partners outside universities or abroad.**

MORE INFORMATION: www.dfg.de/for/en

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

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

Find more: www.dfg.de/en/research_funding

- To find a German counterpart, access the GERIT database, where you will find information on over 30,000 research institutes in Germany: www.gerit.org/de
- Apart from carrying out a research project in collaboration with researchers based in Germany through a bilateral project, for example, foreign researchers may also apply for positions in existing projects at German institutions. Check whether a position is available in a project of interest to you at: gepris.dfg.de/en

RESEARCH MARKETING AND PROMOTION

In addition to its liaison activities and the promotion of scientific collaboration between German and Latin American researchers, our office in São Paulo also fosters awareness of research opportunities in Germany. This includes the communication of particularly interesting outcomes of projects funded by the DFG and information on funding opportunities for collaboration with German researchers.

PROMOTING COLLABORATION

The DFG Office Latin America regularly participates in national and international conferences and accompanies activities associated with funded projects in various fields of research. It organises and promotes information events and workshops presenting research and funding opportunities in Germany, while collaborating extensively with German and foreign research and funding organisations in the process. The establishment of strategic scientific events is another important avenue for discovering potential and promoting new and promising research collaborations.

LEIBNIZ LECTURES

Since 2009, the DFG has been presenting international lectures to foster dialogue between laureates of Germany's most prestigious science award – the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize – the scientific community and the public in general. Since 2014, the DFG Office in São Paulo has regularly invited Leibniz Prize laureates to give lectures and participate in related events in Latin America:

- **2018 –** Prof. Dr. Gerhard Wörner, from Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, lectured on volcanism in Buenos Aires and Santiago.
- **2018 –** Prof. Dr. Michael Brecht, from the Bernstein Centre for Computational Neuroscience Berlin and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, presented lectures on neurophysiology and cellular neuroscience in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.
- **2016 –** Prof. Dr. Frank Allgöwer, director of the Institute for Systems Theory and Automatic Control of the Universität Stuttgart and Vice-President of the DFG, lectured on cybernetics, smart energy distribution and Industry 4.0 in São Paulo.
- **2015 –** Prof. Dr. Frank Kirchhoff, from the Universität Ulm, gave a lecture on virology and the AIDS pandemic in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.
- **2014 –** Prof. Dr. Günter M. Ziegler, from the Freie Universität Berlin, presented a lecture on geometry and physics in São Paulo.
- **2014 –** Prof. Dr. Onur Güntürkün, from Ruhr-Universität Bochum, lectured on neuroscience in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

RESEARCH IN GERMANY

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-Gesellschaft, the DFG conducts a wide range of activities, many of them subject-specific, in Germany and around the world. This includes participation in international conferences, organisation of information events and workshops, and development and distribution of information material for a variety of target groups. These measures are designed to:

- showcase the German research landscape;
- increase the international visibility of cutting-edge research in Germany;
- increase interest in international mobility and encourage collaboration;
- improve and unlock potential for innovation.

More information:
www.research-in-germany.org

RESEARCH IN GERMANY


DFG

Leibniz Lecture with neuroscientist Prof. Michael Brecht


MARCOS ISSA/ARGOSFOTO

Leibniz Lecture with mathematician Prof. Günter M. Ziegler

LIAISON SCIENTISTS IN LATIN AMERICA

The DFG Office Latin America, based in São Paulo, also collaborates with liaison scientists located in Mexico and Chile. They serve as contact persons and representatives for the DFG, thereby connecting it with the major local research institutions and partner organisations. They provide information about our funding activities and support the DFG in identifying the most outstanding research groups and early career researchers.

Prof. Christina Siebe

Our Liaison Scientist in Mexico

PROF. DR. CHRISTINA SIEBE has been a faculty member of the Geological Institute of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) since 1993. The daughter of German parents who emigrated to Mexico in the late 1950s, she was born there and attended a German school. After graduation, she went to Stuttgart to study Agricultural Sciences at the Universität Hohenheim, where she had her first experience with international collaboration, carrying out the fieldwork for her thesis in Mexico and laboratory analysis in Germany.

"While I was doing my thesis, I really enjoyed the research. So six years later, when I got my degree, I wanted to continue researching, and completed a doctorate, which I also did partly in Mexico and partly in Germany. After that, I came back to Mexico to work at UNAM, where I've mainly been researching soil and pollution, and began to arrange student exchanges with the professors I'd met in Stuttgart", Prof. Siebe explains. Through these exchange experiences, she established connections with researchers at other German universities, which led them to form a group and propose a bilateral project to the DFG and the CONACYT in 2009.

The project "Environmental dissemination and accumulation of antibiotic pharmaceuticals, pathogens, and resistance determinants as caused by wastewater irrigation" was accepted and began in 2010. "In the same year, I was invited by the DFG to become a Liaison Scientist", says Prof. Siebe. Since then, she has been providing advice to local researchers interested in collaborating with German partners, maintaining contacts with local DFG partner organisations and coordinating scientific events. Through these activities, Prof. Siebe helps increase Mexico's awareness of Germany as an excellent research location. ◀

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Prof. Gudrun Kausel

Our Liaison Scientist in Chile

PROF. DR. GUDRUN KAUSEL is an associate professor at the Institute of Biochemistry and Microbiology of the Universidad Austral de Chile (UACh) in the city of Valdivia, on Isla Teja, a fluvial island surrounded by the Calle-Calle and Cruces rivers. In 2006, she took up her post as the first DFG Liaison Scientist in Chile. Born in Germany, Prof. Kausel completed a degree in biology and earned her doctorate at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. She then started out on her international academic career by researching and teaching in Botswana, Belgium, Germany and France, before moving to Chile. In her research projects at the UACh, she is particularly interested in studying the effects of environmental changes on gene expression.

"Being a Liaison Scientist is a fascinating adventure. It makes me learn about very diverse areas with research in geology, the ocean, or astronomy, the latter increasingly important for Chile and making the country known worldwide. Truly, Chile is a natural laboratory for those studies, because it spans for more than 4,200 km across different climate zones. Indeed, research in Chile contributes importantly to address global challenges such as climate change", says Prof. Kausel.

"In my work for the DFG, I also focus a great deal on early career scientists. In my experience, a most powerful tool to support them internationally are Summer Schools. Lots of incredible projects and collaborations have been conceived at these encounters", she explains.

The UACh is located in an area colonised by German immigrants in 1850. That is one of the reasons why the university's connection with Germany is so strong; today it encompasses agreements with 49 German institutions and double-degree Magisters and PhD programmes. The German influence is also strong in the local community: Chile's first brewery was established in Valdivia in 1851. Nowadays, beer has also become a subject of academic research in a project coordinated by Prof. Kausel and Dr. Anita Behn, which seeks to foster sustainable development of the local value chain for beer production.

Another of the UACh's bilateral projects is the Research Center for Dynamics of High Latitude Marine Ecosystems (IDEAL). In collaboration with the Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI) in Bremerhaven, UACh researchers are investigating and measuring the impact of global changes on the Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic region. ◀

CONTACT

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