

Our activities in development cooperation



The DAAD contributes to development cooperation in numerous ways and with a broad range of scholarships, partnership programmes and advising services. We strive to achieve our development policy goals with an approach that is based on partnership, sustainability and transparency. The most important funding body in the field of development cooperation is the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The majority of the projects are implemented by universities in Germany and the developing countries.

Our approach

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly and representatives from developing and industrialised countries jointly issued the [Development Agenda 2030/“Sustainable Development Goals“](#) (PDF, 0.4 MB)

[\https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf

The agenda places a stronger emphasis on the principle of partnership in order to find a joint solution to problems which equally affect the South and North. The funding approach and instruments of the DAAD are especially suited to meeting the requirements associated with international cooperation. Southern and Northern partners in the academic sector channel their expertise and experience into collaborative projects and work at eye level toward addressing the global problems of the future. The fact that the participating partners are motivated by their own academic interests encourages them to assume more responsibility and helps create sustainable structures and international innovation networks even after public funding has concluded.

At the same time, partnerships between higher education institutions in Germany and their counterparts in developing countries complement development cooperation policies at the governmental level. Especially when political relations are strained, such projects can create alternative opportunities for German development cooperation beyond bilaterally negotiated agreements.

In addition to partnership and sustainability, transparency and quality are central characteristics of our funding activities. German universities have a say in deciding which partnerships and academics the DAAD should support. An independent selection committee

comprised of German professors representing a variety of disciplines makes the funding decisions on the basis of transparent and academically substantiated criteria. German professors are also involved in the selection process of co-financed projects and take part in international selection panels in partner countries.

Our goals

Higher education and science have become increasingly important in the area of development cooperation. And for good reason, as the lack of well-trained professionals and widespread inaccessibility to global knowledge production are hindering many developing countries from overcoming poverty. Universities in many countries in the South are underfinanced and overcrowded. Especially the rapidly expanding higher education systems in Africa are facing an enormous lack of highly qualified university instructors and professionally relevant degree programmes. Internationally recognised research only takes place at a handful of Excellence Centres in Africa.

Our funding programmes in the area of development cooperation aim to improve this situation.

We are committed to achieving Goal 4 of the SDG Agenda which calls for an equitable, high-quality education for all. We also recognise the impact of higher education and science for achieving numerous development policy goals beyond the higher education sector, for example, in the areas of good governance, resource conservation, health and climate change.

Broadening access

In accordance with the [BMZ Education Strategy \(PDF, 0.3 MB\)](#) [http://www.bmz.de/en/publications/type_of_publication/strategies/Strategiepapier355a_07_2015.pdf], the DAAD strives to ensure equal opportunity and access to higher education and science for everyone. In many countries in the Global South, access to higher education is limited and inequitably distributed. We want to change this situation, for example, by specifically supporting women in science, removing academic barriers for the poorest in developing countries, and promoting open and distance learning (ODL).

Improving quality

Broader access to academic programmes can only lead to success if compliance with minimum quality standards is ensured. For this reason we are focusing our efforts on improving the quality of higher education and research in developing countries. Effective and transparent university structures, as well as quality instruction, are crucial for achieving this goal.

Raising relevance

We also aim to increase the relevance of higher education and research for development purposes. To this end, we enable universities to act as drivers of entrepreneurial development and to expand their partnerships in business, politics and civil society. This enhances the professional and practical relevance of the universities' degree programmes. By carefully coordinating individual and institutional capacity development, we can respond better to the needs of our partners and funding recipients. We are constantly working to increase the practical relevance of our programmes and funding concepts.

In order to achieve the goals we have set, we have designed our funding instruments specifically to address the needs of developing and emerging countries. A results-based monitoring system helps us to continually monitor the effectiveness of our programmes and improve the quality and transparency of our work.

Our fields of activity

The DAAD strives to achieve the development policy goals mentioned above using the means of academic exchange in three fields of activity as defined in the [DAAD Strategy 2020](#) [<https://www.daad.de/der-daad/ueber-den-daad/portrait/en/29146-strategy/>]. We do this by building on the expertise and experience gained from years of cooperating with developing and emerging countries.

Educating professionals and leaders of tomorrow

In funding programmes aimed to advance the development agenda, the DAAD provides academic opportunities to scholarship holders from developing and emerging countries. These scholarship holders become tomorrow's professionals, business leaders and "change agents" who bring about long-term political, economic and social transformation. Our funding recipients and alumni not only help address local and global problems with innovative solutions. They also become Germany's cooperation partners in our partner countries.

Building strong universities

Through project funding, the DAAD contributes to strengthening universities in developing and emerging countries. Our portfolio of funding instruments ranges from providing alumni support to helping universities develop modern curricula. We support university partnerships which establish joint degree programmes and build international research networks that focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. Such cooperation projects are born of mutual interests and are implemented on equal terms by universities in Germany and in developing countries.

Expertise for academic cooperation

The DAAD possesses extensive knowledge about the structures of higher education cooperation and scientific systems worldwide. Not only do we draw on the experience of our staff, but also on a global network of regional offices, information centres and DAAD Lektors. These are engaged in ongoing dialogue with university representatives in the partner countries which carry out development projects. We cultivate intensive contacts to foreign education and research ministries, university rectors' conferences and regional associations of higher education, all of which provide us with first-hand information.

We also tap the knowledge and expertise of German universities by funding for example the "exceed" centres which promote excellence in higher education in developing countries. These countries require reliable research, local know-how and innovative ideas in order to successfully implement comprehensive education policies. The DAAD bundles this knowledge and makes it available to the partner countries, for example, through the programme "Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES)", financed in part by the [German Rectors' Conference \(HRK\)](http://www.hrk.de/home/) [http://www.hrk.de/home/], which aims to install quality assurance systems in the developing countries.

Our partners

Our involvement in development cooperation is supported by a number of partners. The resulting synergies strengthen the political impact of our development cooperation measures.

All partnerships benefit from the resources and competence which German universities contribute, thereby creating a driving force for sustainable development, as outlined by the [statement by the DAAD Board of Trustees \(PDF, 0.1 MB\) \[/medien/der-daad/unsere-mission/standpunkte/final_standpunkt_ez-eng.pdf\]](#). In order to achieve success, however, it is essential that their partners in the developing countries also actively support the collaboration.

A large share of allocated funding in 2015 – about 45 million euros – was provided by the [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development \(BMZ\)](http://www.bmz.de/en/) [http://www.bmz.de/en/]. The DAAD received additional funding for selected projects from the [Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit \(GIZ\)](https://www.giz.de/en/html/index.html) [https://www.giz.de/en/html/index.html].

In the DIES University Management Programme, the DAAD offers various demand-oriented funding programmes to enable universities in developing countries to adapt their degree programmes to international quality standards, enhance their research capacities and develop more competitive organisational structures. The funded universities also benefit from the support of the [German Rectors' Conference \(HRK\)](http://www.hrk.de/home/) [http://www.hrk.de/home/].

Economic partners and universities work together to establish contacts between university graduates and prospective employers. This helps take the demands of the job market into account and prevents unemployment and brain drain. [University-business-partnerships](#) and

DIES partnership programmes are targeted at establishing and deepening relations with the business sector.

By collaborating with stakeholders of bilateral development cooperation, we create synergies and increase the coherence and efficacy of our joint efforts. For example, the DAAD is involved in a joint programme with the GIZ and the [Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau \(KfW\)](https://www.kfw.de/kfw.de-2.html) [<https://www.kfw.de/kfw.de-2.html>] at the [Pan-African University \(PAU\)](https://www.daad.de/hochschulen/hochschulprojekte-ausland/gruendung/en/29464-pan-african-university-institute-of-water-and-energy-sciences-incl-climate-change-pauwes/) [<https://www.daad.de/hochschulen/hochschulprojekte-ausland/gruendung/en/29464-pan-african-university-institute-of-water-and-energy-sciences-incl-climate-change-pauwes/>].

Cooperating with international organisations like [UNESCO](http://en.unesco.org/) [<http://en.unesco.org/>] and the [World Bank](http://www.worldbank.org/) [<http://www.worldbank.org/>], the DAAD can use their systemic know-how or combine their infrastructural measures with funds for maintenance and training of technical personnel to take full advantage of new equipment. Such joint efforts play a prominent role in the new World Bank programme to build “African Centres of Excellence”.

In order to further increase the relevance of higher education and research for development policy, the DAAD aims to strengthen existing collaborations with our partners in business, politics and civil society, and continue to promote universities as drivers of entrepreneurial development.