Postdoctoral Researchers International Mobility Experience
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P.R.I.M.E. 2016

Objective

By the P.R.I.M.E. programme, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provides support for the international mobility of postdocs. The programme is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the European Union.[1]
Postdoctoral researchers of all nationalities, who see their long-term career perspectives in Germany, will be given the opportunity to combine employment at a German university with a research stay abroad.
DAAD support measures and the possibility of continuous coordination with the German host institution shall ensure an efficient reintegration following the research stay abroad.

Duration

The support is provided for 18 months, of which the first 12 months have to be spent abroad and the remaining six months in Germany (reintegration phase).[2]

Support

Funding is provided through an 18-month temporary job position at the selected German university. The position will be remunerated according to the appropriate rate for postdoctoral researchers at the respective university (usually according to the German pay scale "TV-L E13"). DAAD will provide the respective universities with a grant agreement to cover the costs for the regular salary and an additional expatriate allowance for the 12-month research stay abroad.[3]
An additional lump sum travel allowance in accordance with DAAD rates for the selected candidate and accompanying spouse or partner (within the meaning of the German law on civil partnerships) and children will be paid directly by DAAD.
Successful applicants will be invited to an information seminar before the start of the fellowship, together with current fellows, alumni and representatives from science and business. The seminar will presumably take place in Bonn on July 17-19, 2016. Applicants are asked to save the date but not to make any travel arrangements before receiving a letter of acceptance.

Application Conditions

➢ Applications may be made by persons of all nationalities.
➢ Applications may be submitted before completion of the PhD. However, the PhD must be completed before the start of the funding period.
➢ There are no restrictions as to the country of destination as long as the applicant has not stayed in the respective country for more than 12 months in total during the three years preceding the application deadline of 1 February 2016.
➢ Appropriate host institutions in Germany and abroad must have been identified at the time of application. The contact with these institutions and the agreement on modalities are the responsibility of the applicant.
➢ The host institution in Germany has to be a university.

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[1] People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under REA grant agreement n° 605728.
[2] Due to social security stipulations it may not always be possible to start the research stay abroad at the very beginning of the funding period. Alternatively, the option of 1 month in Germany followed by 12 months abroad and 5 months in Germany (total funding duration 18 months) may be chosen.
[3] The position at the German host institution will be financed through DAAD project funding. Additional benefits during the stay abroad will be covered up to a maximum amount dependent on the salary and country.

> The German host university must confirm in writing that the postdoc will be employed for the whole funding period, should the application be successful.[4] The necessary means will be made available to the university through separate DAAD project funding. The university will appoint a mentor/scientific host, who will inform the P.R.I.M.E. scholar during his/her stay abroad about developments at the institution and answer his/her queries so as to ensure a successful reintegration at the end of the period abroad. It is expected that the German university indicates at the time of application the possibilities for longer-term research perspectives at the institution following DAAD funding. On its website DAAD offers a list of P.R.I.M.E. contacts at German universities who can answer questions from potential applicants concerning their institution. Universities that did not specifically nominate a P.R.I.M.E. contact person are equally eligible as hosts.

> The foreign host institution shall be selected according to the scientific preferences/needs of the applicant and the research project. It can be a university, a non-university research institute, or an industrial research entity. It must be willing to support the postdoc in the realization of her/his research project. The type of support (office space, access to instruments, laboratories, libraries etc.) has to be defined and a mentor/scientific host appointed at the foreign host institution, who may be contacted if necessary. DAAD cannot make funding available to the foreign host institution.

> The regular starting date is 1 September 2016. A postponement has to be approved by DAAD.

> The "Rules of good scientific practice" and the ethical guidelines of the programme must be accepted.

> The reintegration phase is mandatory.[5]

Application Documents

The application form will be available at the application portal. To get to the portal please click on Stipendiendatenbank für Deutsche, fill in "Fachrichtung" (subject of your research), "Zielland" (country of the period abroad) and Status "Promovierte" (position) and select the programme.
Please mind the instructions on registering on the portal, choose **English** as portal language and activate, if necessary, the compatibility view of your browser.

Once the application form has been completed, all other application documents (except the letters of recommendation) can be uploaded. All documents for upload must be in pdf format. If not stated otherwise, all documents must be submitted **in English** as the selection process will be conducted by an international commission.

The following documents have to be submitted:

1. completed **application form**;

2. **curriculum vitae** with no chronological gaps and in tabular form in accordance with **EU standards** http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae;

3. **short summary** of the research project with a clearly recognizable working title and an indication of keywords. The summary should enable the assignment to a specific subject area and be suitable for use as preliminary information for potential reviewers. The length of the summary should not exceed 2,000 characters (including spaces);

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[4] If for legal reasons the prospective German host institution is not able to maintain the employment status during the period abroad, this period may be covered by providing benefits in line with DAAD's regular postdoc scholarship programme.
[5] Exceptions are only possible in individual cases, in agreement with the German host university and with the approval of DAAD and the funding providers (BMBF and EU). They may be accompanied by a demand for repayment of funding.

4. a detailed and independently prepared **research proposal** upon which both the German and foreign host institutions have agreed. In the evaluation of the proposal particular emphasis will be placed on the quality of the research plan. It should detail the preliminary work undertaken and the relevance of the topic for research, and explain why the chosen institutions are especially suitable for the realization of the planned project. The strategy for the investigation of the scientific problem should be readily understandable and the choice of methods and work equipment be adequately established. Please provide a precise description and a clear presentation. The total length of the research proposal should not exceed 20,000 characters (including spaces, but not bibliographical references). Bibliographical references may be included as an annex;

5. **time schedule** for the realization of the planned work abroad and in Germany;

6. **invitation letter from the German host**. This letter should detail why the university is particularly suitable for the execution of the research project, the support to be provided, the name(s) of the mentor/scientific host and the perspectives for longer term employment at the institution. The scientific host and the mentor may also be the same person;

7. **binding declaration from the German host university** (**form 1**), to provide a temporary position for the funding period at the rate appropriate for postdocs at the institution within the framework of project funding from the DAAD, should the application be successful;

8. **invitation letter from the foreign host**. This letter should detail why the institution is particularly suitable for the execution of the research project, the support to be provided and the name(s) of the mentor/scientific host. The scientific host and the mentor may also be the same person;

9. certificate of the most recent **academic degree** (usually the PhD). If the document is not available in English or German, it must be translated. If the PhD has not yet been completed, the certificate of the master's degree (or an equivalent document, e.g. diploma) must be submitted and an additional statement by the supervisor is required, stating when successful completion of the PhD is expected;

10. **publication list** categorized according to (a) publications in peer review journals, (b) specialist books, and (c) conference proceedings and indicating the type of publication (original paper, review etc.). For each publication the state of publication (submitted, accepted, in print, published) and complete bibliographical information (including the first and last page number) must be provided. Where available, please include electronic links. Please mark with a cross those publications which will be uploaded as part of the application;

11. the most important **publications** (maximum of three). Uploading is not required if the publications are available online; in such cases the electronic link must be provided;

12. **statement on publications**. Please give reasons for the selection of the most important publications (importance of the scientific results, significance for the research project, new methodological approach etc., up to 3.000 characters including spaces). Please comment on your specific contribution if several authors are involved;

13. **short summary of the doctoral thesis** (up to 7.000 characters including spaces);

14. **supplementary information** (if applicable) on other scientific, professional and social activities which might be relevant for the assessment of the proposal. The selection criteria listed below may be used for guidance;

15. completed and signed **form 2** (**Ethical-Issues-Table**)[6] for checking whether ethical standards for scientific research might be violated through the planned research project; This document is a mandatory self-declaration and has to be submitted by every applicant .

16. **language certificate for the period abroad;**
the language skills must be sufficient to successfully conduct the research project at the host institute. In general, proof is required for all languages relevant to the research project unless one of the following exceptions applies:
i) the applicant is a native speaker of the language in question
ii) the applicant has studied in the respective language (this must be confirmed by adequate documents);
iii) since the beginning of studies the applicant has lived for at least six months without interruption in a country where the respective language is the official language.
iv) since the beginning of studies the applicant has worked for at least one year without interruption in a working/research environment in which the respective language has been the regular working language (this must be confirmed by adequate documents).

It is not sufficient that the doctoral thesis or publications have been written in the respective language or that the language was used at international conferences;

An official language certificate for the respective language will be accepted (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS or DAAD-Sprachzeugnis for English). It should not be over three years old and rate all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing)[7]. Certificates of participation in language courses will not be accepted, if no rating for the above mentioned language skills is indicated.

If the language at the host institute is not the official language of the host country, a certificate for the language at the institute is sufficient. In this case the host must confirm the language at the institute.

17. **A certificate for the knowledge of German**[8] is required unless one of the following exceptions applies:
i) the applicant comes from a country where German is the official language;
ii) the applicant has lived for at least one year since the beginning of studies in a German-speaking country;
iii) the German host confirms that knowledge of English is sufficient to realize the planned project. In this case a certificate for English is necessary unless one of the exceptions applies as listed under section 16. (see above).

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[6] If the Ethical Issues Table or the reviewing process indicate that ethical rules set by the EU or mandatory in Germany or the host country could be violated, the following procedure will apply: even projects otherwise positively assessed will only receive funding, if compliance with these rules can be achieved through minor modification. If ethical aspects are not satisfactorily detailed in an otherwise positively assessed proposal, the commitment for funding will be postponed, and can only take place where an adequate explanation is provided by the specified deadline.
[7] One possibility is the submission of the "Sprachzeugnis für deutsche Bewerber", which is available at https://www.daad.de/medien/ausland/dokumente/daad-sprachnachweis_deutsche.pdf. The assessments are conducted by the lectors at the respective language seminar of the German university. Information shall be available through the international office of the institution. Native speakers, who are not lectors for the respective language, are not authorized to issue the language certificate.
[8] Further information is available at: https://www.daad.de/deutschland/nach-deutschland/voraussetzungen/en/6221-german-language/.

18. two recent **letters of recommendation** that should in particular refer to the applicant's personal and scientific suitability for the planned project. Where possible, one letter of recommendation should be submitted by the supervisor of the doctoral thesis. Following registration in the portal applicants must generate and download the respective form in the section "Personal Funding" → "Gutachten anfordern". Applicants must send this form to their referees. The letters of recommendation consist of the generated form <u>and</u> a freely-worded letter of reference. They must be sent by post in a sealed envelope to DAAD (Section ST43/P.R.I.M.E.), either by the referee or the applicant.

With the exception of the letters of recommendation (see section 18.) all documents have to be uploaded in pdf format in the application portal. The letters of recommendation have to be sent by post to DAAD:

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)
Section ST43 / P.R.I.M.E.
Kennedyallee 50
53175 Bonn
Germany

DAAD reserves the right not to consider incomplete applications. The responsibility for submitting a complete application by the end of the deadline lies with the applicants.

Selection Criteria

The performance based assessment will take into account:
1. the **achievements of the applicant to date** (scientific and other qualifications, and particular conditions which have influenced the academic progress); and
2. the **quality of the proposed project** and the **consistency with long-term career planning**.

Both points will be judged separately and both scores contribute equally to the final rating. The assessment will focus in particular on the following aspects of the application:

1. **Achievements to date**:
   a. academic performance:
      - grades, study duration;
      - number and quality of publications[9];
      - other achievements (patents, conference invitations, prizes, supervision, teaching etc.);
      - the recommendations from the application's referees;
   b. overall impression of the applicant in consideration of e.g.:
      - additional scientific/practical/management experience;
      - transnational mobility;
      - intersectoral mobility;
      - social commitment;
      - unavoidable delays in academic development (e.g. due to illness, voluntary work in the social sector or childcare).

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[9] From the reviewer's perspective the hitherto research achievements as documented in publications is of central importance. In addition to the number of publications, the applicant's own contribution (if several authors are involved), and also the quality of the journal and scientific publisher are important criteria. This will be viewed in the context of the duration of the research activities and the specific discipline culture.

2. **Project quality and long-term career perspectives**:
   a. research project[10]:
      - quality;
      - originality;
      - topicality/ relevance;
      - planned implementation (time and work schedule);
      - significance for the research field;
   b. suitability of the German host institution and the support provided there (scientific mentoring, technical/administrative support);
   c. suitability of the foreign host institution and the support provided there (scientific mentoring, technical/administrative support);
   d. appropriateness of the research project with regard to the long-term career plans (scientific qualification and acquisition of complementary skills).

All information relevant to these selection criteria should be included in the application. This should be considered in particular when preparing the curriculum vitae, research and time schedules and supplementary information.

Selection Process

Deadline for applications: 1 February 2016
Selection committee meeting: June 2016
Planned start of the funding period: 1 September 2016 (or by prior agreement)

After the deadline has past, applicants will receive confirmation of the receipt of their application and information on the outcome of the formal eligibility check.
All applications will be reviewed independently by two external experts (scientists from the respective subject area).
The final rating will be made by an interdisciplinary selection committee on the basis of the external reviews and assessment of the committee members.

For both main criteria

1. achievements of the applicant to date (scientific and other qualifications, and particular conditions which have influenced the academic progress); and
2. the quality of the proposed project and its consistency with long-term career planning

the rating will be according to the following scale (from 1 to 10): 1-2: very weak, 3-4: weak, 5-6: acceptable, 7-9: good, 10: very good.

The final rating will be the average of both single scores. It will result in a ranking list, according to which successful and reserve candidates will be identified, taking into account the available funding. The commission will determine a cut-off point below which funding is not possible.

Rejected applicants will receive feedback summarizing the reviewers' most important criticisms of their application.
Successful applicants will receive information on further procedures including the invitation to an information seminar. Reserve candidates will receive a provisional notification.

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[10] From the reviewer's perspective the applicant's scientific independence is of crucial importance. This should be demonstrated by choosing or having chosen a new research focus and a new research environment, either after the PhD or in connection with the planned project. In case these conditions are not fulfilled we recommend commenting on the reasons for this in the "supplementary information".

The German host institutions of the successful candidates will be notified by DAAD. They will then resolve any remaining open issues with the applicants and apply for project funding to finance their positions. Following the approval by DAAD funding can start on 1 September 2016.