»I made lots of new contacts with potential collaboration partners during the summer school and the trade fair. One possible partnership project has emerged with a German researcher.«

Zayre González Acevedo, Center for Scientific Research and Higher Education at Ensenada, Mexico

»Germany alumni often hold important positions in their home countries. We maintain regular contact with them based on close bonds with Germany and joint visits to major trade fairs. The Alumni Special Projects invigorate the scientific collaborations and business relations between developing countries and Germany.«

Rüdiger Heidelbrecht, German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste (DWA), Head of Department for Education and International Cooperation

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Science meets business
Networking with Experts from Developing Countries
Alumni Special Projects
The Programme

They are decision-makers in their home countries and, due to their close bonds with Germany, important contacts: scientists and executives from developing countries who have researched or studied in Germany, so-called Germany alumni.

The DAAD supports these experts with the programme Alumni Special Projects: they receive further training at a German university and are subsequently given the chance to connect with companies at a trade fair or specialist conference.

The three main aims:
- The alumni update their specialist knowledge as part of a group.
- They get to know scientists and entrepreneurs and can extend their networks.
- Scientists and entrepreneurs make contact with potential research and business partners from developing countries.

Thanks to their new contacts and improved technical knowledge the alumni contribute to economic development in their own countries.

The Activities

The programme starts off with a seminar lasting up to a week which is devised and organised by a German university. The theme chosen relates to the UN’s Millennium Development Goals, specifically:

- Water
- Food Security
- Medicine / Health Management
- Renewable Energies
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Biodiversity

The alumni then attend an international trade fair or specialist conference that directly relates to these themes. For example, projects are announced in the context of the following events:

- Hannover Messe
- Tropentag
- Intersolar Europe
- Agritechnica
- IFAT (Munich, Shanghai und Mumbai)
- BIOFACH
- MEDICA

At the trade fairs and conferences, the participants familiarise themselves with new product developments and technologies and have the chance to converse with exhibitors, entrepreneurs and other experts. This is an opportunity for both sides to make important contacts and initiate collaborations.

The Funding

In connection with major international trade fairs and specialist conferences, the DAAD announces seminars every year which German universities can apply to host. Each of the summer schools and expert seminars receives funding of up to 50,000 euros.

Current announcements: www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects

To participate in the seminars and events, Germany alumni from developing countries apply directly to the universities selected to host the projects.

»The visit to the Hannover Messe was one of my most important professional experiences. I had the chance to examine cutting-edge developments in technology and learned that sustainability is playing an increasingly important role in worldwide industry.«

Paulo Irineu Koltermann, Professor, Lectures and Projects on Electrical Machines, Renewable Energy, Distributed Generation, Brazil