Definition, benefits and forms of strategic partnership - best practice:
TU Darmstadt – Tongji University Shanghai

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Theory I: Categorisation of international partnerships

[Diagram showing levels of university, department, professor, and individual cooperation with arrows and icons representing partnerships at each level]
A strategic partnership is a formal alliance between two or more higher education institutions developed through an intentional process whereby the partners share resources and leverage complementary strengths to achieve **defined (common) objectives**.

Strategic cooperation is tied to the strategic goals and objectives of an academic unit, college, or the university as a whole. It indicates a multidimensional engagement between the involved institutions and implies the joint undertaking of a diverse range of activities with the aim of the parties’ **mutual benefit**.

Matthias Kuder, 2014
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Our definition of a strategic partnership
A strategic partnership ...

- is a broad, stable and trustful partnership
- covers many departments and various levels
- is developed top down from existing successful university partnerships
- covers a structural level of cooperation as well
- ideally is financially supported (at least seed funded) by the government or national agencies
- should focus activities strategically within the universities
- indicates multidimensional engagement between all involved institutions
- joint undertaking of a diverse range of activities in research, teaching and administration
- aim: the parties` mutual benefit
- thereby: professional exchange between the partner universities is spurred on and the multidisciplinary within the universities is strengthened through an interdisciplinary approach
- is a substantial part of the universities` strategy of internationalisation
Selection criteria: Why Tongji and TU Darmstadt chose each other as strategic partners (History I)

- Long-standing partnership
- First contacts back in the 1930’s

- General agreement to promote science in research and teaching signed in 1980
- From selective cooperation into a broad and trusted partnership
Why Tongji and TU Darmstadt chose each other as strategic partners
(History II: Start of the Strategic Partnership)

- Both universities officially became a strategic partner in 2010
- Since 2013 supported by the DAAD “Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks” with means from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- Complemented by a multilateral thematic network “Clean Water China & Southeast Asia”
Why Tongji and TU Darmstadt chose each other as strategic partners?

- long established partnership (see history)
- from selective cooperation to a broad and trusted partnership
- DAAD call for proposal as starting point
- comprises today many departments and includes all levels of the scientific career
- regular and high number of student exchange
- structural cooperation
- a number of promising joint projects in the pipeline
Theory III: Forms of strategic partnerships

- **bilateral partnership**: few partners, partners from different countries/continents, a strong thematic priority
- **trilateral partnership**: several partners, a strong regional focus
- **multilateral partnership**: partners from only one other country/continent, one partner
- **a strong partnership**: partners from different countries/continents, a strong thematic priority
Model of our bilateral strategic partnership
Objectives of the our strategic partnership (benefits)

- Institutionalization and continuity of the partnership
- Intensification of collaboration in teaching and learning
- Enhanced research collaboration
- International visibility of the partnership
Characteristics of our strategic partnership

- Commissioners of the partnership in both countries
- Agency office in Germany
- Liaison office in China
Characteristics of our strategic partnership

- TU Da Liaison Office at Tongji
  - Head of Liaison office
  - Opening
  - Location
  - Objective

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Characteristics of our strategic partnership

- Commissioners of the partnership in both countries
- Agency office in Germany
- Liaison office in China
- Scientific Advisory Board in Germany
- Tongji Visiting Chair
- TU- /Tongji Days at TU Darmstadt and at Tongji
- Financial support by both governments and companies
- President Prömel is going to be member of the Tongji Governing Board
Thank you for your attention!

Questions? Comments?

or contact us

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References


Goals of the Partnership (I)

1) Broadening

- Perpetuating established cooperations
- Promoting new cooperations
- Increase of the students’ exchange rate

2) Deepening

- Quality improvement
- Recruitment of high-skilled students and graduates for master and doctoral studies
Goals of the Partnership (II)

3) Continuation

- Building and institutionalising cooperation structures
- Ensuring the continuation of cooperations
- Acquiring third-party-funding
Example of Cooperation - „Semizentral: Clean Water China & South East Asia“

- Multilateral thematic network
- Goal: developing water supply and waste management systems
- Since 2013: support by the DAAD
- Opening of worldwide first semicentralized Supply and Treatment Center in Qingdao
Cooperation (TU Da-Departments)

Research

- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Economic Sciences
- Materials Sciences
- Mechanical Engineering
- Architecture
- Social Sciences
- Human Sciences
- Electrical Engineering and Information Technology