

## Press Release

# Creating perspectives through education

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## Preparing young leaders from Syria for their future responsibilities

Bonn, 24/11/2015. In the 2015/16 winter semester, 271 Syrian students with a DAAD scholarship started their studies at a German university. The Federal Foreign Office and the DAAD welcomed the scholarship holders, who discussed their first experiences, their expectations of studying in Germany as well as the opportunities for an academic reconstruction of Syria with representatives of politics and academia. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) invited applications to the “Leadership for Syria” scholarship programme funded by the Federal Foreign Office back in October 2014. The federal states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg provided additional scholarships.

“We place great hope in the talented young people, whom we want to offer a perspective to help rebuild Syria through studying in Germany. At the same time, our German higher education institutions benefit from their enormous knowledge of the region and their cultural background,” explains DAAD President Prof. Margret Wintermantel.

The event is focussed on a welcome address by Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and a panel discussion on the subject of “No lost generation in Syria – integration, prospects, zero hour”. Participants include DAAD President Prof. Margret Wintermantel, Dr. Andreas Görge (Director-General for Culture and Communication at the Federal Foreign Office), Svenja Schulze (Minister of Innovation, Science and Research, North Rhine-Westphalia) and Dr. Simone Schwanitz (Director of the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts, Baden-

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Württemberg).

“The latest occurrences show that we must seek a dialogue with talented young professionals from the region to identify solutions for the future together. We are delighted that North Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg have made further scholarships and places available at their universities,” said DAAD Secretary General Dr. Dorothea Rüländ in her welcome address.

## **Background**

Last year, the DAAD received over 5,000 applications for the “Leadership for Syria” scholarship programme funded by the Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt, AA). 200 scholarship holders were chosen following selection interviews in Beirut, Istanbul, Amman, Cairo and Erbil. They commenced their studies at various universities across Germany in the winter semester. All scholarship holders completed an intensive four-month German language course and attend seminars on the subject of good governance during their studies.

A further 50 scholarships are financed by the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the state of Baden-Württemberg and yet another 21 scholarships are provided by the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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