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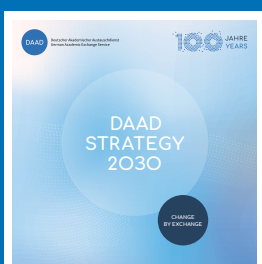
2025 Annual Report

The DAAD is

- the world's largest funding organisation for international academic and scientific exchange.
- a member organisation of German universities and student organisations.
- an intermediary organisation of foreign policy concerning cultural relations and education and a stakeholder in international academic policy and science diplomacy.
- an academic institution in Europe and a National Agency for Erasmus+.

The DAAD is committed to strengthening

- the positive development of Germany as a location for academia, science, innovation and economic activity.
- the development of sustainable solutions to global challenges.
- the use and shaping of science diplomacy in the context of a multipolar world order.
- democracy and social cohesion in Germany, Europe and around the world.



DAAD Strategy 2030 provides a compass to set the course for internationalisation and academic exchange. Find out more about the DAAD, its strategic goals and the story behind its motto, 'Change by exchange' at www.daad.de/strategy-2030

DAAD offices around the world



ound the world



- DAAD Headquarters Bonn und Berlin Office
- 21 Regional Offices
- 6 German Centres for Research and Innovation (DWIH)
- 35 Information Centres (IC)
- 304 DAAD Lecturers
- 44 Long-term lecturers and German Studies teachers



As of: December 2025

Current information on the
DAAD's presence around the
world can be found a
www.daad.de/networkmap

2025

Annual Report

Key Themes

For the DAAD, 2025 was both an opportunity to look back and to look forward: The centenary of the German Academic Exchange Service's foundation invited reflection and retrospective, while geopolitical upheavals called for a forward-looking approach. In the course of the year, the following themes were of particular importance.



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REFLECTING ON THE PAST – STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT FOR THE FUTURE

A century of change by exchange: Ceremonies and celebrations in Berlin, Bonn and New York underline the importance of the DAAD in its role as the largest organisation for international academic exchange (p. 12). At the same time, the DAAD reflects on the work of its current alumni, and looks back at its history. On the whole, however, the organisation is looking towards the future. With its Strategy 2030, the DAAD has set concrete objectives for the next five years (p. 10 and p. 33).

MAINTAINING DIALOGUE WITH THE USA

Despite the complex challenges of relations and exchange with the USA, transatlantic links are part of the DAAD's DNA. The DAAD is committed to maintaining open channels of communication and collaboration, while at the same time extending its provision of advice and consultancy both for stays in the US and for those coming to Germany (p. 50).

CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In the face of espionage, cyber attacks, disinformation and leaks of sensitive data, new threat scenarios call for greater awareness of the need to protect research data and scientific infrastructure – especially in the context of international collaborations. To help higher education institutions respond to these challenges, the DAAD significantly expands the support it provides to higher education institutions in 2025 (p. 58). The Knowledge Security Checklist provides an additional mechanism to improve risk assessments of international collaborations (p. 64).

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ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL TALENT

Germany needs qualified, skilled professionals in industry and academia, and the DAAD is making a major contribution to attracting international talent which plays a decisive role in strengthening Germany's economy (p. 62). Through targeted programmes such as FIT and *Profi plus*, the DAAD is helping higher education institutions to support international students, from enrolment on study programmes through to entry into the German labour market. These programmes have already delivered concrete successes (p. 34).

BOLSTERING EUROPEAN COHESION

The issue of European cohesion is more relevant than ever in the light of ongoing geopolitical tensions. Through its work to strengthen Europe as a space for higher education and research, the DAAD is making a substantive contribution to this challenge. In 2025, the DAAD marked ten years of the worldwide Erasmus+ programme (p. 10) and is awarded a record budget for the successful scheme (p. 14). In addition to this, the European Commission awards the DAAD the PACA status, which authorises it to implement projects independently (p. 16).

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Dear readers,

One might say that these are tough times for academic exchange. Countries such as the USA – which rank among the most important partners and drivers of international academic cooperation – are tightening rules around providing visas to international students. The ongoing escalation of the situation in the Middle East is not only putting a great strain on academic exchange with Israel, but across the entire region. Concerns about knowledge drain and unintended use of research outcomes for military purposes are presenting challenges to international cooperation. So one might ask oneself whether it is naive to cling to a belief in the power of international cooperation. As more policymakers place their own interests above the rules-based international order and even instrumentalise academia in their efforts to isolate themselves from international mobility, exploiting knowledge generated through collaboration for their own purposes and influencing academic and scientific agendas, the DAAD is facing questions of increasingly fundamental importance. What can the international space for academic cooperation offer in these times of geopolitical upheaval, in an age in which the rules-based order is being displaced by the belief that might is right? And where are the limits on what academic cooperation can achieve?

Seen in these terms, it is a fortunate coincidence that the hundredth birthday of the DAAD should fall at such a time, for it has given us an opportunity to become more aware of our strengths and to adjust our priorities. Both the DAAD Strategy

2030, which we presented at the beginning of the year, and our consolidation process, which enables us to achieve our objectives despite shrinking budgets, are facilitating our realignment in these troubled times. But our centenary year was also an opportunity to take a retrospective view. After all, the DAAD was founded in the years after the First World War, a period of similar geopolitical turbulence. We have also reflected on the many people who we have supported over our 100-year history, and it is clear that DAAD funding has shaped individuals who in turn have shaped their own societies – and continue to do so today. International academic exchange is just as powerful today as it was one hundred years ago, and it is no less important. Believing in the power of international exchange is by no means naive. Indeed, the contrary is true: it would be naive to believe that we would be able to solve global political, diplomatic, economic and environmental challenges without bridge-builders, without people who have developed a sympathy for and understanding of other cultures, and who work together to overcome these challenges, even when agreement and conciliation may be difficult at times and cooperation can sometimes stand on uncertain ground.

It is for these reasons that we have made a conscious decision to focus our Strategy 2030 on the three core fields of our activity which are reflected in this year's Annual Report: funding, networking, advising. Each of these areas is backed up by specific objectives which we are committed to achieving by 2030. Furthermore, these

objectives are aligned with priorities which reflect our societal position as a German institution in Europe. These priorities comprise: strengthening Germany as a place to study, work and do business; contributing to sustainable solutions to global challenges; shaping science diplomacy in the framework of a multipolar global order; and promoting democracy and social cohesion in Germany, Europe and around the world.

As the Federal President summarised in his address to our centenary celebrations on 6 May 2025: 'If the DAAD didn't exist, we'd have to invent it!' We take President Steinmeier's words as a mandate for us for the future to play an active role in shaping the space for academic cooperation, especially in the face of new challenges to security and global partnerships. You can read about how we have taken up this mission in the pages that follow.

I hope this report proves to be inspiring reading.

Kind regards,



Professor Dr Joybrato Mukherjee
President of the German Academic
Exchange Service

Bonn, March 2026

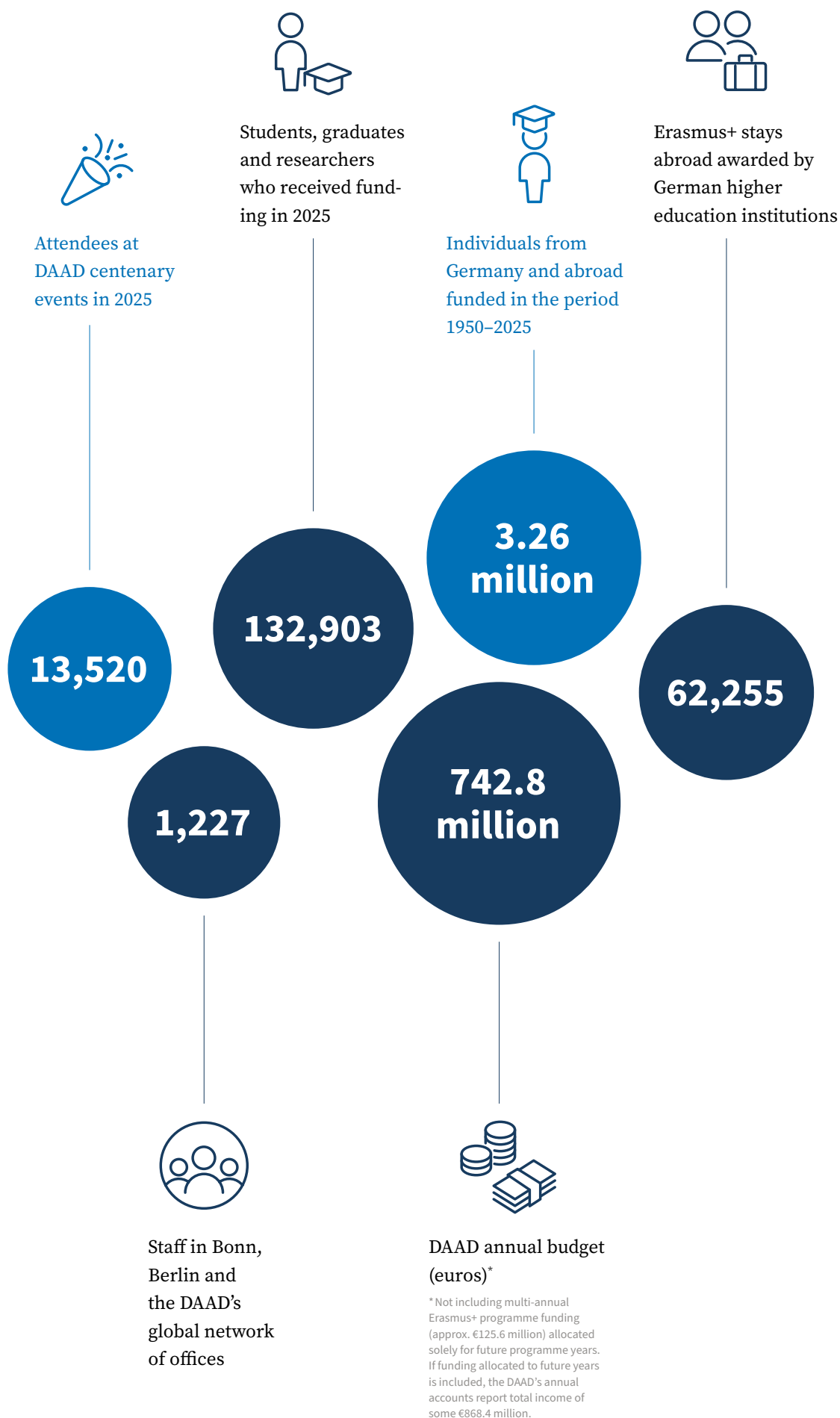


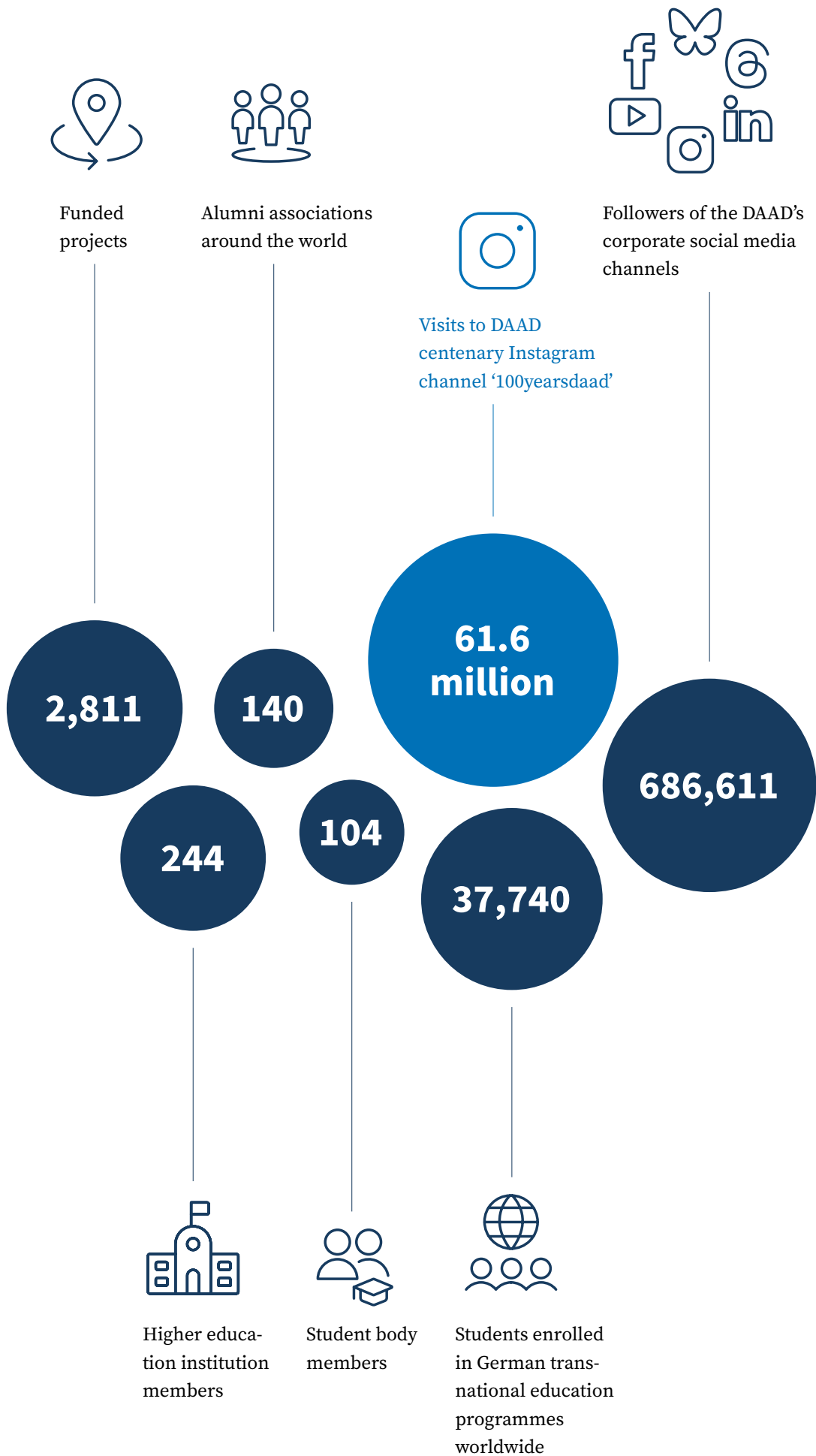




The year at a glance

A year in figures





Centenary figures

The DAAD – 2025 in review

January

23 JANUARY 2025

DAAD Strategy 2030

How can Germany join forces with international partners to overcome the challenges of a multipolar world where the rule of law is increasingly contested? The DAAD answers this question with regard to its sphere of activity in 'DAAD Strategy 2030', which presents the DAAD's four top priorities: strengthening Germany as a base for academia, innovation and business; seeking joint solutions to the vital questions for our future; shaping science diplomacy in a multipolar world; and promoting democracy and social cohesion. Strategy 2030 underlines the DAAD's significance as a key player in foreign academic policy and science diplomacy.



29 JANUARY 2025

Erasmus+ impact assessment

Erasmus+ has funded 350,000 stays abroad between 2014 and 2020, with a satisfaction rate of over 90%. The new 'Once in a Lifetime' impact assessment conducted by the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation emphasises the importance of the Erasmus+ programme for the future of Europe. The study illustrates the positive impact made by the programme on every level, from students and higher education institutions to European society. Erasmus+ drives internationalisation while at the same time opening up new skillsets and career prospects for its alumni, who serve as ambassadors for the European ideal, forging connections and fostering relationships.

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February

13 FEBRUARY 2025

Gaining a competitive edge from international experience

The German economy is facing many different challenges, from digitalisation and decarbonisation to demographic changes. A survey of 823 businesses carried out jointly by the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD and the German Economic Institute (IW) has revealed that employers increasingly consider international experience an important advantage for graduates' skillsets. Competencies such as intercultural openness, the ability to solve problems, and independence are particularly in demand as core proficiencies for the economic transition.

→ p. 94

The New York skyline



19–23 FEBRUARY 2025

Transatlantic perspectives

The President of the DAAD Professor Joybrato Mukherjee travels to the USA to underline the importance of the close academic and scientific partnership between Germany and the United States. A breakfast round-table entitled 'Transatlantic Academic Relations after the Elections' hosted by the German Center for Research and Innovation in New York focuses on the role of science diplomacy in periods of geopolitical tensions and technological disruption. Following this, a networking event at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. brought together guests from academia, science, politics and alumni networks in Germany and the US to maintain a lively and effective transatlantic dialogue. The reception provides an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new connections, and underlines the importance of long-term collaborations in teaching and research.

18 MARCH 2025

Economic growth from international students

A new study shows that students from abroad make a significant contribution to the strength of the German economy. The analysis of the economic effect of migration through higher education institutions was carried out by the German Economic Institute (IW) on behalf of the DAAD. The report analysed the fiscal and economic effects of educational mobility on public budgets, value creation and employment. The data shows that when international graduates remain in Germany, their education pays for itself several times over through higher tax revenues, boosting rates of attracting and retaining skilled workers from abroad, and positive effects on economic growth.

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31 MARCH TO 5 APRIL 2025

German-Canadian talks on science security

DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks visits the Research Security Centre in the Canadian capital Ottawa. There he meets with experts from Public Safety Canada and the University of Ottawa to discuss strategies for protecting international research. The aim is to develop joint efforts and agreed standards to promote scientific and academic collaboration that is both open and safe.



9 JANUARY 2025

The DAAD at 100: centenary year celebrations commence

Deutsche Post gets the DAAD's anniversary celebrations off to a first-class start by issuing a special stamp. The DAAD's 'Letter' magazine publishes a centenary issue entitled 'Visions of Future' which highlights outstanding alumni and showcases the outcomes of their research and their visions.

21 FEBRUARY 2025

Commemoration of DAAD co-founder Carl Joachim Friedrich in New York

Academic exchange with the USA has been part of the DAAD's 100-year history since the very beginning. The first of a series of major centenary events for 2025 takes place there. At a reception in German House New York, DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee welcomes over one hundred guests representing the spheres of science, academia, politics and alumni networks. Professor Su Friedrich, Carl Joachim Friedrich's granddaughter, spoke at the event to honour what her grandfather had achieved. Working closely with the New York Institute of International Education (IIE), Carl Joachim Friedrich laid the foundations for the DAAD.

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20 MARCH 2025

Double anniversary celebrations in New Delhi

For one hundred years the DAAD has been a champion of international exchange, and its Regional Office New Delhi has been a node in the global DAAD Network for 65 of them. Over 250 representatives of public institutions, funding bodies, politics and representatives of higher education institutions gather at the German Centre for Research and Innovation New Delhi for a major conference. The 'Indo-German Forum: Research, Innovation and Transfer' is an opportunity to celebrate the double anniversary year and shape the German-Indian partnership. Discussions cover topics such as equality in research partnerships, transnational research career, and technology transfer pathways.

27 – 30 MARCH 2025

DAAD alumni associations meeting

What means are available to promote effective alumni engagement activities in a world of conflicts and crises? Through its support and funding, the DAAD shapes people's lives and seeks opportunities to collaborate with its alumni going forward. This commitment is clear at the fourth meeting of the DAAD's global network of alumni associations, where 80 representatives of 50 DAAD alumni associations from more than 40 countries assemble in Bonn for four days to celebrate the DAAD's centenary, forge new contacts and initiate new projects. The ideas set in motion at the meeting include a workshop to explore the impacts of climate change and hybrid events on the topics of member recruitment and project management.

Professor Anna-Katharina Hornidge, herself a DAAD alumna, gives the keynote speech on sustainability in times of global order and disorder.



April

24 APRIL 2025

New DAAD Accra Regional Office

The DAAD is expanding its presence in West Africa with a new Regional Office in the capital of Ghana. The Regional Office replaces the Information Centre which was established there in October 2020, and builds on 25 years of uninterrupted work in Accra. It will strengthen collaborations with higher education and research institutions in the region, and boost exchange programmes and project partnerships.

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Opening of the DAAD Regional Office in Ghana (l-r): Manuel Müller, Chargé d'Affaires at the German embassy in Accra, Regional Office Director Lena Leumer and DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee

May

19 – 23 MAY 2025

Centres for German and European Studies conference

Against a background of 200 years of German migration to Brazil and 100 years of the DAAD, academics and scholars from the USA, Asia and Europe gather in Brazil to debate forms of identity and belonging in a globalised world. The 10th interdisciplinary conference hosted by the DAAD-funded *Centres for German and European Studies* (ZDES) in Porto Alegre addresses themes such as migration and academic mobility, cultural diversity and social cohesion in periods of global upheaval. One of the key takeaways from the conference is that, in an age of multiple international crises, Germany's initiative as a foreign and security policy actor is increasingly in demand.

3 – 4 APRIL 2025

New York alumni event

A centenary event held at German House in New York sets the stage for DAAD alumni, partner organisations and scholarship holders from the USA and Canada to discuss the potential of transatlantic higher education partnerships. The meeting, entitled 'Building Life-long Connections in Science and Education' also underscores the importance of international collaboration in responding to the decisive questions of our future. DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks is among those in attendance at the event which explores the following themes: climate change, AI, sustainable urban development and the importance of international cooperation in periods of geopolitical upheaval. The evening concludes in celebratory mood, with the presentation of the Excellence Awards by the DAAD Alumni Association USA.

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Professor Stephan Harbarth, President of the Federal Constitutional Court and DAAD alumnus, addresses a meeting of scholarship holders in Heidelberg, the birthplace of the DAAD.

4 – 6 APRIL 2025

President of the Federal Constitutional Court Stephan Harbarth addresses scholarship holders

The DAAD was established at the University of Heidelberg in 1925. One hundred years later, 500 scholarship holders from almost 100 countries gather there. President of Germany's Federal Constitutional Court Stephan Harbarth gives a speech at the celebration on 'From St. Paul's Church to the Basic Law in a united Europe', in which he reflects on the importance of democracy and the rule of law in Europe and praises the role of the DAAD in building bridges for academia, science and society. Professor Harbarth argues that the effects of academic exchange were not limited to the worlds of academia and science – it also unlocks impetus for democracy and an open society.

6 MAY 2025

The DAAD celebrates a century of 'opening doors for foreign academic policy'

The high point of the centenary year comes when 500 guests from the spheres of academia, politics and civil society – many of whom are DAAD alumni – acclaim the hundred-year history of the DAAD at the Humboldt Forum in Berlin. Speaking via video message specially recorded for the occasion, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier stresses the role of the DAAD in 'opening doors for foreign academic policy', and praises its commitment to academics and scientists facing persecution. DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee emphasises that, 'In a world in upheaval, it is our responsibility to shoulder planetary responsibility, and to put all our energy into harnessing and shaping the potential of exchange and collaboration.'



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(l–r): Dr Kai Sicks (DAAD Secretary General), Dr Muriel Helbig (DAAD Vice President) and Professor Joybrato Mukherjee (DAAD President)

13 – 16 AND 27 MAY 2025

Alumni meetings in Indonesia and China

For the DAAD's Jakarta Regional Office, 2025 is marked by two anniversaries in one: the DAAD's centenary and 35 years of the DAAD's presence in Indonesia. More than 120 former DAAD funding recipients from across Indonesia assemble in Jakarta for an alumni meeting which includes inspirational talks, personal reflections and musical performances. In China two weeks later, one hundred alumni and partner institutions participate in a celebratory reception at the German embassy in Beijing. Talks and personal reflections vividly illustrate the extent to which the DAAD has influenced international academic exchange since 1925.

20 MAY 2025

Prague Information Centre turns 25

To celebrate the DAAD's centenary and 25 years of the DAAD's Prague Information Centre, alumni, friends and partners of the DAAD meet at the German embassy in the historic Lobkowicz Palace. The event includes the presentation of scholarship certificates to new DAAD funding recipients. In her welcome address, DAAD alumna Barbora Kolářková highlights the ways in which international education strengthens democracy, mutual understanding and social resilience, and stresses the importance of the new horizons which the DAAD opens up for young people. Kolářková is speaking from recent personal experience, having completed a degree in political science in Berlin in 2024, for which she received a DAAD scholarship.

26 MAY 2025

Exchanges in Australia

DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee visits partners in the Pacific region during the centenary year. At a jubilee event in Sydney, he meets DAAD Lecturers, research ambassadors and representatives of Australian partner organisations. He stresses the importance of values-based international academic collaborations in the face of global challenges. At a meeting with leading universities in Sydney and Universities Australia, which represents the higher education sector in the country, Professor Mukherjee explores opportunities to deepen German-Australian partnerships in higher education, research and academic exchange.

June

10 JUNE 2025**Diversity Agenda 2.0**

The DAAD bolsters diversity, equality of opportunity and participation in international exchange with an update to its Diversity Agenda, which first appeared in 2022. One new addition is the concept of “belonging”, which considers higher education institutions as places that are free from discrimination and promote democratic participation and openness to other cultures, values and identities, and which promote the inclusion of all students and researchers in the international academic community. The Agenda also prioritises attracting talented individuals from groups which have previously been less represented in international academic mobility, along with championing gender equality.

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24 JUNE 2025**DAAD General Assembly calls for greater support for Erasmus+**

The DAAD General Assembly elects new student members to the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. The Assembly also adopts a resolution which calls for a substantial increase to the EU Erasmus+ budget from 2028 onwards. For the first time, the Erasmus+ Programme budget allocates over €250 million for international mobility for German higher education institutions. However, the resolution states that ambitious EU mobility targets require a total budget of over €60 billion across the whole EU in the period up to 2034, including €20 billion for higher education institutions.

25 – 26 JUNE 2025**GATE-Germany Marketing Conference 2025**

‘Transforming change: Marketing at the intersection of discourse, dissonance and digitality’. The title of the 2025 GATE-Germany Marketing Conference makes it clear that change is afoot in higher education marketing. For the conference in Bonn, two questions are at the top of the agenda: how can success be achieved in the face of global competition? And how can German higher education institutions raise their profile around the world and attract international talent? For staff from German higher education institutions and non-university research institutes, the conference is a chance to learn and discuss trends, strategies and examples of best practice with experts in the field.

GATE // Germany
Internationales
Hochschulmarketing

6 JUNE 2025**Future dialogues in Chengdu, China**

Who is shaping the future of German-Chinese exchange? Who is looking for opportunities to talk despite global tensions? DAAD alumni from China represent an important point of contact for Germany in periods of global turbulence. An event hosted by the DAAD's Beijing Regional Office welcomes former scholarship holders from various regions of China to celebrate the DAAD's centenary and discuss ways of maintaining effective dialogue – not just now, but for generations to come.

13 – 15 JUNE 2025**Gathering at the DAAD's second birthplace**

With varied opportunities for networking and conversation at talks and discussions, the DAAD brings together 500 scholarship holders from nearly 90 countries at the University of Bonn. The largest groups of participants come from Nigeria and Columbia, while Turkey and Afghanistan are also strongly represented. But the choice of location has another layer of meaning, too, as it was in the Senate Hall of the University of Bonn that the DAAD was re-established after the Second World War in August 1950.



© DAAD/Michael Jordan

4–6 JULY 2025

Scholarship holders meet Foreign Minister Wadephul

Scholarship holders from 94 countries who have recently arrived in Germany gather at the Freie Universität Berlin. The city is closely linked to the history of the DAAD, as the organisation's head office was located in Berlin until 1943. The scholarship holders use the occasion to meet, share ideas and make contacts. 'You are all welcome!' says Federal Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul in his speech to the scholarship holders. He also emphasises that, 'The freedom of art, academia, research and teaching – which is secured by Article 5 of our Basic Law – is a freedom that we will protect and uphold now and in future.'



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(l–r): Dr Kai Sicks (DAAD Secretary General), Professor Joybrato Mukherjee (DAAD President) and Dr Johann Wadephul (Federal Foreign Minister)

Centenary year

8–9 JULY 2025

Alumni conference in Ghana

How can research methods and data bolster the land rights of marginalised groups in Africa? This question set the agenda for the NELGA Alumni Conference in Accra, organised by the German development organisation GIZ and the DAAD. NELGA (Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa) connects over 70 African universities and research institutions. At the conference, academics and scientists present the results of field studies and showcase collaborations between higher education institutions, youth organisations and civil society.



© Foto Fischer

The 2025 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Prizes were awarded to Dr Elaine Cristina Roschel Nunes and Professor Albert Gouaffo.

23 JULY 2025

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Prizes for excellence in German studies

For 30 years the DAAD has presented the Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm Prize to scholars from around the world to recognise outstanding contributions to German studies. The recipient of the 2025 prize is Professor Albert Gouaffo from Cameroon. In his research on literature and cultural studies, Gouaffo focuses on the period of German colonialism in Cameroon, through which he is promoting ways of handling African cultural artifacts in historically sensitive ways. Dr Elaine Cristina Roschel Nunes from Brazil receives the Grimm Young Talents Award, for her work to develop new training pathways for future German teachers.



© DAAD/Michael Jordan

Five hundred scholarship holders from around the world meet at the University of Bonn to celebrate the 2025 centenary year.

August

14 AUGUST 2025
DAAD awarded PACA status

The DAAD passes a major milestone when it completes the European Commission 'Pillar Assessment' and achieves 'PACA' status for the EU (Pillar Assessed Contribution Agreement). The new status adds an extra dimension to the DAAD's European identity, as the European Commission can now directly commission the DAAD to implement collaborative science and education projects, and to carry out EU-funded projects anywhere in the world. Following the award, the DAAD's Brussels Regional Office will become the organisation's European Liaison Office in 2026, serving as an interface between DAAD headquarters, DAAD Regional Offices and European institutions.



The DAAD is enhancing its profile as a European institution.

29 – 31 AUGUST 2025
GAIN25 in Boston

Amid uncertainty in the academic and scientific community in the US, scholars are increasingly interested in Germany as a place to work and conduct research. The German Academic International Network (GAIN) conference targets this demand. Organised by the DAAD, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Research Foundation, the 2025 conference is primarily aimed at postdocs from Germany who currently work in North America, along with international graduates. The event offers detailed advice on planning careers at higher education and research institutions or in the German research industry. High-ranking representatives of academia, science, industry and politics are joined by the science and higher education ministers of six German federal states to talk to attendees, along with DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee and DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks.

September

8 SEPTEMBER 2025
Knowledge Security Checklist for German higher education institutions

The DAAD issues the new KIWi Checklist Knowledge Security following the latest recommendations from the German Science and Humanities Council. The checklist provides a tool to identify and assess security-relevant dimensions of international academic and scientific partnerships, giving researchers and higher education institutions in Germany practical advice and support with systematically evaluating risks in collaborations with institutions outside Germany. Seventeen sets of questions address key areas such as partners and funding, export control regulations, handling intellectual property, evaluating outcomes and ethical aspects of academic partnerships. KIWi, the Centre for International Academic Cooperation, is also developing a digital knowledge security platform to accompany the Checklist.

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24 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2025
Hydrogen Futures conference

How can green hydrogen help achieve global decarbonisation goals? How can Europe work with international partners to make the breakthrough to generating carbon-free hydrogen? The DAAD's Hydrogen Futures conference at the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) in Bonn provides a forum for scholarship holders on the DAAD's *ERA Fellowships - Green Hydrogen* programme to meet with other experts from science, politics and industry. The conference forms part of the BMFTR's Science Year 2025, the theme of which is 'energy of the future'.



The GAIN25 conference in Boston puts the spotlight on career opportunities, with opportunities for early-career academics and researchers to network and find out more about why Germany is a great place to work and study.





© DAAD/Michael Jordan

DAAD celebrations in Bonn

11 SEPTEMBER 2025

Ceremony in Bonn

With its headquarters in the city since 1950, the DAAD has close links to Bonn and academic and scientific institutions in the area. These ties are plain to see at the Centenary Celebrations in Bonn, attended by 800 current and former staff, along with representatives of partner organisations in the region and the University of Bonn. DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee and Katja Dörner, Mayor of Bonn, open the evening's festivities. A podium discussion with DAAD Vice President Dr Muriel Helbig, Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks, staff and current and former funding recipients explores the ways in which the DAAD shapes international career pathways.

14 AND 18 – 20 SEPTEMBER 2025

Alumni events in Cairo and Cape Town

Two major events celebrate the DAAD in Africa, marking 100 years of the DAAD, while the DAAD's Cairo Regional Office also honours 65 years of work in the Egyptian Capital. Joined by 120 partners and former scholarship holders, including leading figures in the sphere of German-Egyptian academic cooperation, the DAAD reflects on what has gone before and looks forward to the future of collaboration in education and research. With attendees from South Africa, Namibia and Germany, the alumni conference 'Shaping Careers and Thinking Ahead Together – Marking 100 Years of DAAD' in Cape Town underlines the diversity of the DAAD community and strengthens German-African networks.

24 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2025

Erasmus+ annual conference celebrates DAAD centenary

The 2025 annual Erasmus+ conference at the University of Mannheim also toasts the DAAD's centenary while focusing on a European future. Entitled 'Skills and Values', the conference surveys the economic competitiveness of the European Union and a European identity. In his speech to open the convention, DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks stresses the importance of the Erasmus+ programme in supporting shared values.

Centenary year

4–8 OCTOBER 2025

German-Japanese dialogue

Demographic changes are posing challenges to Germany and Japan alike. DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee attends the 'Global Health: Innovations for an Aging Society' symposium hosted by DWIH Tokyo, which addresses strategies for societies facing increasingly elderly populations, and features contributions from the worlds of science, business, industry, healthcare and civil society. Professor Mukherjee then visits the National Institute of Informatics, where he meets DAAD-funded PhD students and postdocs. At the Japanese Ministry of Education and Science, the DAAD President learns about new government initiatives to foster excellence in academic exchange.



© DAAD AS Tokyo

The DAAD's Tokyo Regional Office

5–8 OCTOBER 2025

Stronger partnership in the Middle East and North Africa

In Arabic, 'Ta'ziz' means 'strengthening', and over the past three years, the DAAD's *Ta'ziz Partnership* in the MENA region has achieved precisely that. The programme focuses on encouraging reforms in the higher education sector through developments such as new curricula, digital teaching strategies, inclusive governance and research collaborations. At the conference in Tunis to mark the conclusion of the project, DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks underlines its many successes, such as 27 long-term projects and over 100 short-term activities which have forged links between German higher education institutions and partners in countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

Centenary year

10 – 11 OCTOBER 2025

Double centenary celebrations in Paris

The DAAD and the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris come together at an alumni meeting organised by the DAAD's Paris Regional Office to celebrate their respective centennial jubilees. Inspired by the theme of 'European Perspectives for Academic Cooperation in a Multipolar World', attendees discuss the future of Franco-German academic collaborations and the potential of academic partnerships in the context of the 'Weimar Triangle': France, Germany and Poland.

13 – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

Transatlantic dialogue in Canada and the US

For the DAAD, the questions that will shape the future are of fundamental importance. DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks joins discussions with partners from business and politics at the German American Conference 2025 at Harvard University to explore the outlook for transatlantic collaborations. The student-organised convention also explores joint efforts to promote innovation and questions of global security. Following his visit to Harvard, Dr Sicks travels to Montreal in Canada to attend a DAAD alumni event where he continues the conversation with partner institutions and former funding recipients.

24 – 29 NOVEMBER 2025

Building bridges between Latin America and Germany

To celebrate the DAAD's centenary and 25 years of its presence in Mexico, the DAAD's Mexico City Regional Office joins representatives of the higher education sector, alumni networks, funding bodies and political partners from the region to put the spotlight on bilateral academic and scientific relations. In his keynote address Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks stresses how higher education institutions now bear a greater responsibility in the light of global challenges. After the alumni meeting, Dr Sicks attends an alumni symposium for Central America at the DAAD's San José Information Centre in Costa Rica, where he joins high-profile guests and former funding recipients to celebrate the bureau's 40th anniversary.



DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks (second from left) joins partner institutions in celebrating the DAAD at 100 and 25 years of the DAAD's presence in Mexico.

October

6 OCTOBER 2025

Training for higher education leaders

An innovative approach to upskilling higher education leaders from the Global South kicks off with the 'LEADx – Leadership for Transforming Higher Education Institutions' training course. Organised by the *Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies* (DIES) programme, the course enables the vice presidents of 23 institutions to enhance their leadership skills at the University of Potsdam. DAAD Vice President Dr Muriel Helbig gives the opening speech for the programme, which includes modules on leadership and governance, organisational development and higher education management, conflict management and strategic stakeholder management.



László Krasznahorkai

9 OCTOBER 2025

Nobel Prize for Literature awarded to DAAD alumnus László Krasznahorkai

For the seventh time, the Nobel Prize for Literature is awarded to a former fellow of the DAAD's *Artists-in-Berlin Program*. This year's laureate, the Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai, lived and worked in the German capital in 1987 and 1988. In works such as 'Sátántangó', 'The Melancholy of Resistance' and 'Seiobo There Below', Krasznahorkai fuses apocalyptic visions with existential questions of what it is to be human.

15 – 17 NOVEMBER 2025**German-Jordanian University anniversary celebrations**

On a visit to Madaba, DAAD Vice President Dr Muriel Helbig praises the 20th anniversary of the German-Jordanian University (GJU). At the event entitled ‘Two Nations, One Vision: 20 Years of Innovation at GJU’. Dr Helbig gives the opening speech in which she illustrates the importance of the DAAD’s role in funding exchange programmes, scholarships and research partnerships, which have helped raise the international profile of the GJU.

17 – 18 NOVEMBER 2025**Ten years of global mobility with Erasmus+**

Since its inception in 2015, the Erasmus+ Mobility funding line has been building bridges between Europe and the rest of the world. Tens of thousands of stays abroad have been made possible by the programme. Students and lecturers from partner countries such as Jordan, South Africa, Mexico and Vietnam have come to Germany, while representatives of European higher education institutions have been sent to numerous countries. In 2025, 184 German higher education institutions have been granted funding, along with 1,300 partner institutions in around 180 countries around the world. To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the funding line, the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD hosts an event at Hochschule Bielefeld – University of Applied Sciences and Arts, where representatives of the higher education sector discuss the future shape of the programme line.



(l–r): Dorothee Bär (Federal Minister of Research, Technology and Space), Professor Joybrato Mukherjee (DAAD President), His Eminence Oleksii Makeiev (Ambassador of Ukraine to the Federal Republic of Germany)

3 – 4 DECEMBER 2025**Dialogue with higher education institutions in the Global South**

How can academic partnerships be designed in such a way that both partners are involved as equals, while still facilitating innovative and sustainable solutions? This was the question at the heart of the ‘Creating Impact in Challenging Times’ conference organised by the DIES programme. DIES runs courses and events which bolster institutional management at universities in the Global South. Some 120 delegates from all nine DAAD programmes funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) meet in Berlin. The convention includes a large number of representatives of higher education institutions in the Global South who have studied or conducted research in Germany.



(l–r): Professor Peter Mayer (Hochschule Osnabrück – University of Applied Sciences), Dr Faith Mugisha Ahabyoona (Cavendish University in Kampala, Uganda) and Professor Fides del Castillo (De La Salle University, Philippines) share ideas and experiences at the DAAD/DIES Conference ‘Creating Impact in Challenging Times’ in Berlin, 3–4 December 2025.

3 – 4 DECEMBER 2025**Federal Minister Bär joins meeting of German-Ukrainian University Network**

At an event in Berlin to mark the opening of the BMFTR-funded DAAD *German-Ukrainian University Network*, Federal Minister for Research Dorothee Bär praises the new programme. Representatives from the higher education sector and policymakers are invited to the official commencement of the 30 projects and the first in-person network meeting. Those in attendance are committed to expanding collaborations between German and Ukrainian higher education institutions. In her speech to welcome the guests, Bär joins the Ukrainian Ambassador Oleksii Makeiev and DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee in stressing the enormous potential of academic partnerships.

→ p. 41, p. 44

Centenary insights

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Carl Joachim Friedrich Founder of the DAAD

The DAAD emerged from a student initiative in Heidelberg one hundred years ago. Carl Joachim Friedrich (1901–1984) was one of the central figures who inspired and drove the project forward. Influenced by his own experience of visiting the USA to study, Friedrich, who would later become a professor of political science, developed his ideas of a systematic approach to promoting mobility for students and researchers. From the very outset, these ideas would shape the work of the 'Akademischer Austauschdienst' (AAD). Founded in 1925, it would later become the DAAD – the German Academic Exchange Service.



© P-a/LUNAPRESS/Roberto Monaldo

Leoluca Orlando

Member of the European Parliament and Mayor of Palermo for many years; first funded: 1969

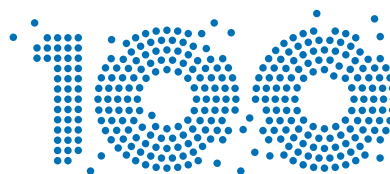
While still a young lawyer, Leoluca Orlando studied in Heidelberg on a DAAD scholarship. That period would set the course for the rest of his career. In an environment rich in dialogue, discussion and intercommunication, Orlando deepened his understanding of the rule of law, democracy and European responsibility. He went on to become Mayor of Palermo for many years, where he was resolute in his opposition to the Mafia and his commitment to democratic participation. Today he is a member of the European Parliament, where he is committed to issues such as expanding the EU's international networks.



© private

Professor Ummu Salma Bava Jean Monnet Chair Professor, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University; first funded: 1994

For Professor Ummu Salma Bava, German reunification in 1990 marked the beginning of her academic career. In that year, Bava commenced her PhD in political science at Jawaharlal Nehru University, studying German foreign and European policy. A short-term DAAD scholarship allowed her to travel to Germany in 1994, where she conducted research on her thesis at Freie Universität Berlin and the universities of Hamburg, Bonn and Heidelberg. This period of deep engagement with Europe would shape her further career and lead to a long-lasting commitment to Indian-European dialogue.



JAHRE
YEARS

Dedicated to dialogue: Over the course of its centenary year, the DAAD created portraits of individuals who exemplify the ways in which DAAD scholarships inspire courage to bring about change and promote international understanding, three of which are presented here. Meet Leoluca Orlando, who took on the Mafia, Ummu Salma Bava, who builds bridges between India and the EU, and Andriiana Raikova, who champions the rights of refugees.



Andriiana Raikova

Language trainer; first funded: 2020

From an early stage in her academic career, Andriiana Raikova looked for opportunities to participate in European exchanges. After leaving school, Raikova moved to Poland to study for her bachelor's degree in applied linguistics, and an Erasmus+ scholarship later took her to the University of Heidelberg, where she made a new circle of friends and first became interested in the field of German as an additional language (GAL). In 2020 she began a degree programme at the University of Jena on a DAAD scholarship, studying to teach German as a foreign language. Two years later, she was awarded the university's DAAD Prize for her outstanding academic achievements and her commitment to supporting refugees from Ukraine. After completing her master's degree, Raikova went straight to the University of Ostrava in the Czech Republic to take up a post as a DAAD teaching assistant. These days Andriiana Raikova is a language trainer at the Vienna Volkshochschule adult education colleges, where her work helps promote European relations.

The DAAD's Anniversary Website brings you a collection of these and other portraits and videos, along with recollections and 'Stories of Change': The DAAD at 100 – A Century of Change through Exchange



www.daad.de/en/daad100

Focus on the Nazi era: 'Future Needs Remembrance' project

How did people go about the work of the DAAD in the early years of its history, overshadowed by the conditions of Nazi rule? The 'Future Needs Remembrance' project has created portraits which investigate this question, presenting the lives of eleven former DAAD staff and alumni who exemplify the different ways in which people responded to the challenges of the period. Their biographies present a broad spectrum of attitudes, from staunch collaboration with the system to silent conformance, and even closet or open resistance. Others found themselves targets for persecution due to their origins, beliefs or associations. The project reveals the ways in which individuals took decisions under a dictatorship, and shows why engaging with this period of history is of vital importance to the present and future.



www.daad.de/future-remembrance

Academic exchange during the period of German Reunification



Die **DDR**
und wir
im DAAD

Drawing on 60 interviews, the DAAD has created a multimedia project entitled 'The GDR and Us at the DAAD' which documents the history of academic exchange between East and West Germany, from the division of Germany to its reunification in 1990. Former scholarship holders, university lecturers, civil servants and DAAD staff recount their experiences of studying, funding and everyday life, and of encounters between East and West. The conversations are available online as video and audio podcasts, and share unique insights into how people experienced the collapse and continuation of international exchange after 1990.



www.daad.de/ddrundwir (German only)

One year, many anniversaries

The DAAD's great jubilee year includes a number of other significant anniversaries. Some of the programmes celebrating milestones this year include:

- *Dhoch3* (p. 31), which has been supporting the training of German teachers around the world for ten years.
- *Government Scholarships with Pakistan and Oman* have been awarded for 20 years.
- For two decades, *RISE Germany* (p. 50) research scholarships have enabled international students to study at German higher education and research institutions.
- The *Carlo-Schmid-Programm* (p. 26 and p. 56) is celebrating 25 years of funding internships at international organisations and EU institutions.
- *Eastern European Academic Partnerships* is marking its 50th year of operation.

Voices from the political arena



© DAAD/David Ausserhofer

FEDERAL PRESIDENT FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER

**speaking at the ceremony to mark the centenary
of the DAAD, held at the Humboldt Forum Berlin on
6 May 2025**

For one hundred years, the DAAD has been promoting international exchanges for students and teachers, strengthening international cooperation between universities, and helping countries which could not do so themselves to build up academic and research systems. It is a real success story. (...)

The global exchange of ideas and research data, debates with colleagues from other countries, international research projects – all this lies right at the heart of academia and science. (...) Outside the confines of official protocol and at a level below official diplomatic relations, it is often the scientists and academics of different countries who work closely together. (...) These international contacts, ties which frequently persist even when others have broken, whether as a result of war or government crises – this research and academic relations policy is part of the DNA of the DAAD. (...)

Since the re-establishment of the DAAD 75 years ago, one thing has become clear time and again: neither the freedom of research and teaching nor free international academic exchange can be taken for granted. (...) Again and again, the DAAD steps in precisely where scientists and academics can no longer work independently, where they are at risk of persecution, where they are deprived of their rights and robbed of their freedom. For that, I am most grateful to you. (...)

The DAAD's work has long consisted of much more than awarding scholarships. You have advised, and continue to advise, many countries of the Global South in building up their higher education sectors. (...) Of course it is not only the countries concerned that benefit when high-level research is conducted in other countries and young people are well trained and given a prospect for their professional future, but us as well. (...)

At a time when we are seeing a new fascination with authoritarianism, when nationalism is once again spreading, in Europe too, and when new threats to the freedom of science are emerging, independent thinking across all borders is as important as never before. If it didn't exist, we would have to invent it!

Figures from the world of politics joined in honouring the DAAD in its anniversary year. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul and Federal Minister of Research Dorothee Bär reaffirmed the significance of the contribution made by international exchange in upholding Germany's position in periods of geopolitical tension.



FEDERAL FOREIGN MINISTER JOHANN WADEPHUL

speaking at the alumni meeting held at the Freie Universität Berlin on 4 July 2025

(...) To everyone who studies here in Germany, who conducts research here, who intends to graduate here: to us, you are ambassadors of your countries. You are a part of the global processes of exchange and meetings between individuals that would be impossible without science and higher education – and without which, foreign policy would not be possible, either. (...)

‘Foreign cultural and social policy’ is now an integral part of our wider foreign policy, and seeks to foster understanding between people and between our societies. (...) It is an approach to foreign policy that takes the long view. It is a forward-looking policy, committed to ensuring that every one of you continues to feel a connection to Germany, long after your stay here has ended. (...)



Every year, the DAAD helps 140,000 academics from Germany and around the world to undertake stays abroad. That means 140,000 ambassadors for understanding and harmony, for academic exchange and innovation every year. (...)

FEDERAL MINISTER OF RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY AND SPACE DOROTHEE BÄR

speaking at a meeting of the German-Ukrainian University Network on 3 December 2025

Our position is clear: our support for Ukraine is unwavering. The struggle in Ukraine for peace, for our freedom, for our values: that struggle is our struggle. And academia shares the same view. We are lending our full support to the academic and scientific system in Ukraine. (...)



By 2029, the aim is to create a network that will bind Ukraine to the European Higher Education Area. (...) In this, we are building on our experiences from past joint projects across higher education, teaching and university administration. (...)

And German higher education institutions are benefitting, too. They have become more resilient and more flexible. They have learned how to deal with crises. (...)

For us at the Ministry, the German-Ukrainian University Network is therefore about much more than just institutional funding. (...) It is a sign that science and learning do more than advance our two nations. They build bridges. They transform partners into friends – especially in times of war.





Fields of action

Funding

At a glance

The DAAD promotes international academic exchange by awarding scholarships to people from Germany and abroad, and by supporting joint projects involving German higher education institutions and international partner organisations. DAAD funding programmes comprise services for academics at all career stages and disciplines. The DAAD is continuously expanding and developing its programme portfolio to meet the needs of the people and organisations it supports.

Future tech: a demonstration in the robotics lab at TU Darmstadt, part of the annual meeting of the DAAD-funded *Zuse Schools* in October 2025



Cultivating skills to shape the world

What can be done to make an impact in a world in turmoil? As the situation around the world becomes increasingly volatile, there is an ever-greater demand for leaders who can act reflectively in times of crisis and conflict. Responding to this challenge is the mission of the *Carlo-Schmid-Programm*, founded in 2000 by the DAAD and the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. For over two

decades, the programme funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) has allowed students and graduates to undertake internships at international organisations, from EU institutions to the UN. On the 25th anniversary of its creation, programme alumni reflect on their remarkable career journeys, many of which have led them to key positions of inter-state exchange, diplomacy and mediation.



One of them is Daniel Maier, Head of Strategic Planning at the UN MONUSCO mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the face of challenging and complex conditions, the mission has achieved a great deal in recent years, from bolstering local democracy to curbing violence against women. With the help of the *Carlo-Schmid-Programm*, Maier interned at UNOPS, the United Nations Office for Project Services, in 2003. It was the prelude to his career at the UN. ‘The internship reaffirmed my decision not just to accept crises and conflicts as a fact of life, but to get to work on the ground.’

Targeting specialist skills

Scholarships make a difference. They foster individual talent and empower individuals to bring about positive change across all areas and industries. One problem facing many countries – including Germany – is the lack of highly specialised skilled professionals in sectors such as engineering. To address the specific demands in this field, the DAAD has

created the *Combined Study and Practice Stays for Engineers from Developing Countries* (KOSPIE) programme, with funds from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Through the programme, engineering and computer science students in the early stages of their careers come to selected German higher education institutions to study and complete work placements as part of their research towards their dissertations. The programme focuses on providing practical, real-world training to future leaders and specialists. Several major German industrial groups provide placements, and students can also intern with SMEs working in renewable wind and solar power. The impact of the programme was demonstrated by results analysis carried out in 2025, which showed that 90% of alumni felt they had improved their technical expertise and subject knowledge through their stay in Germany, and alumni report how the programme had made a positive impact on their careers.

Dr Birgit Klüsener, Director of the Scholarships department at the DAAD, points out that, ‘The DAAD is continuously reviewing and modernising its scholarship portfolio to ensure it can meet different regional needs and changing career pathways.’ One element of this work is the DAAD’s 2025 strategic shift to widen access to its study scholarships. For example, it has broadened the regional focus of master’s degree scholarships – the majority of which have historically been targeted at industrialised countries – to include applicants from emerging and developing nations. Developing specialist and leadership skills in

STEM subjects is a key priority, so the DAAD has initiated a STEM master’s degree pilot programme in selected regions in South-East Asia, Latin America and Jordan, with a view to recruiting skilled professionals to Germany.

New skills for industry

STEM skills are no less important in the successful transition to sustainable forms of energy and the long-term development of the sector. The DAAD is providing targeted support through the BMFTR-funded *ERA Fellowships – Green Hydrogen* programme, which operates across the whole European Research Area. In September 2025 the ERA programme brought together early-career scientists from across the world for the ‘Hydrogen Futures: Inspiring Researchers and Innovators in Clean Energy’ conference in Bonn, for conversations, debates and discussions with colleagues and experts.

Another programme which has its sights set on the challenges of the future are the *Konrad Zuse Schools of Excellence in AI*, which was established in 2022 with funding from the BMFTR. The DAAD-coordinated programme has achieved an impressive set of outcomes by the close of 2025. After only three years in operation, 288 master’s degree and 130 PhD students from 60 countries around the world had benefited from programme funding. In addition to this, the *Zuse Schools* have published over 400 academic articles, and had established partnerships with 45 partners in industry.

Right from the outset, the *Zuse Schools* were designed to make as broad an impact as possible across the research sector and society

‘The DAAD is continuously reviewing and modernising its scholarship portfolio.’

Dr Birgit Klüsener
Director of the Scholarships
department at the DAAD

Alumni of the
Carlo-Schmid-Programms
celebrate the 25th anni-
versary in 2025, with
insights from around
the world.



© DAAD/Stefan Zeitz

as a whole. ‘The *Zuse* programme seeks to foster a sense of identity with Germany as a hub for AI and with the wider European research community, building on the principles of academic freedom and interdisciplinary collaboration,’ says Dr Michael Harms, Deputy Secretary General of the DAAD. The *Zuse Schools* are helping build ‘AI made in Europe’ which respects values such as democracy, human dignity, freedom and equality.

Another vital contribution to the future of Europe comes from the Erasmus+ programme, thanks to its funding for academic exchange. Even in troubled political times, Erasmus+ retains its powerful appeal, as evidenced by the UK’s 2025 decision, nine years after the British people voted for Brexit, to return to the EU mobility programme from 2027. Switzerland is also planning to join Erasmus+ at the same time.

A track record of success for Erasmus+

Since the programme went into operation in 1987, over one million students, researchers and lecturers from Germany have participated in Erasmus+. A study published in early 2025 analysing the impact of Erasmus+ from 2014 to 2020 affirms the contribution which the programme makes to the personal development of students and others involved in higher education (p. 44). For Dr Stephan Geifes, Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD, the benefits are unquestionable. ‘Thanks to their outstanding academic training, our Erasmus+ alumni are not merely powerful intercultural ambassadors for the European ideal. They also contribute skills which we need for strong economies and societies in European and global contexts.’ ●

‘Thanks to their outstanding academic training, our Erasmus+ alumni contribute skills for strong economies and societies in European and global contexts.’

Dr Stephan Geifes

Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD

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SAFE fellowships awarded in 2025

SAFE is a new EU-funded programme that offers protection from persecution for at-risk academics and researchers in European countries. Working in partnership with European agencies such as Campus France, UNIMED and the PAUSE programme of the Collège de France, the DAAD is sending out a powerful message in support of academic freedom.



www.daad.de/safe-programme



© Marius Maasewerd

‘Thanks to the support of FIT, we can precisely target how we prepare our international students for integration into the German labour market.’

Sabrina Alexandra Schwach

leads on FIT – Promotion of International Talents for Integration Into Studies and the Labour Market projects at HAWK Hildesheim/Holzminden/Göttingen.

Leadership for Syria

Accelerating reconstruction in Syria

With funding provided by the Federal Foreign Office, the DAAD initiated the *Leadership for Syria* programme in 2015 to give Syrians a chance to study in Germany. Ten years on, the vast majority of the programme's highly qualified alumni are working in Germany. Nevertheless, they are still making a vital contribution to the reconstruction of their homeland. A fact-finding mission in Syria organised by the Federal Foreign Office in 2025 underlined the importance of the engage-

ment of the academic diaspora, particularly in the fields of science, engineering and medicine. The DAAD was represented by Dr Christian Hülshörster, Head of Division Scholarship Programmes Southern Hemisphere, as a member of the delegation, which was tasked with gaining a deeper understanding of local conditions and developing a fuller understanding of the most efficient ways to fund the reconstruction of the higher education system, which will play a key role in rebuilding Syria as a whole.

Teachers and students in around **100** countries access the Dhoch3 programme

Through *Dhoch3* the DAAD is building up university education for future German teachers abroad. Participants study digital course modules which can be adapted to regional contexts, allowing them to deepen their subject knowledge about the German language and how to teach it. In 2025

the Federal Foreign Office-funded programme celebrated its tenth anniversary and launched its eleventh module, a new unit on assessing language proficiency in German as an additional language.



www.daad.de/the-dhoch3-project

Fruitful partnerships

Numerous projects to deliver reforms at partner higher education institutions in the MENA region were realised through the DAAD's *Ta'ziz Partnerships* programme between 2023 and 2025. Dr Layla Raswol, Dean of the College of City and Regional Planning at Dohuk University in the autonomous region of Kurdistan in northern Iraq was one of the university leaders who worked with the *Ta'ziz* scheme in a project with the TU Dortmund University to promote public participation in urban and regional planning. Raswol points out that, 'Administrations and NGOs now actively come to us for advice on the topic of participation. If all involved are included in how decisions are made from the outset – along with their hopes and individual interests – the result isn't just better projects: there are also fewer conflicts.'



Scan to read more about *Ta'ziz Partnerships* in the DAAD Journal, and how they are promoting public participation and sustainable development in Egypt, Tunisia and Iraq. (German only)

**‘I want to build a future
in which Afghan women
are free to learn, work
and live in dignity.’**



**Find out more about the
EFFAL programme and
how it supports Afghan
women. (German only)**



Fatema Hosseini

is studying for a master's degree in Talent Management and Human Potential Development in Organisations at the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek. She holds a scholarship from the DAAD's *Empower Future Female Afghan Leaders (EFFAL)* programme, whose first graduates celebrated completing their degrees in 2025.

5 German-Ukrainian higher education projects benefit from special funding

In a sign of cooperation during times of conflict, the Harald Christ Foundation for Democracy and Diversity provided funding through the DAAD for five German higher education institutions to expand their exchanges with Ukrainian partners in 2025. The funding builds on the DAAD's BMFTR-funded programme *Ukraine Digital: Ensuring academic success in times of crisis*. Thanks to the funding, Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development was able to expand its network of Ukrainian partner higher education institutions to 14 and start working with two Ukrainian NGOs. Meanwhile in Brandenburg, the new funds have allowed the partnership between Wildau Technical University of Applied Sciences and Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics partnership to deliver teaching entirely in English.

New German- Indian network

Following the seventh round of German-Indian government consultations in October 2024, the two countries inaugurate the *German Indian Academic Network for Tomorrow (GIANT)* in 2025. GIANT allows Germany and India to join forces in critical fields such as energy, sustainability and climate, and in areas such as semiconductor and AI research. The network is a boost to bilateral academic cooperation, fostering outstanding research conducted by Indian and German partners.



www.daad.de/giant-programme

Strategic clarity in challenging times

In response to a complex global economic and political picture and growing pressure to drive down costs, the DAAD has set clear priorities and targeted measures in 2025.

The DAAD is not alone in facing sustained pressure due to rising costs. Increases in energy prices and uncertainties caused by war and conflicts are impacting the global economy, leaving many actors in international exchange having to confront considerable challenges. The DAAD finds itself in a unique position, says DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee. 'Over the past ten years, the cost of scholarships for foreign students and doctoral candidates who come to Germany has risen by 34%.' However, there has been no concomitant increase in the DAAD's budget. 'These cost increases require effective and carefully considered measures if we are to maintain our ability to achieve our objectives in our core funding areas of scholarships and higher education partnerships.'

It was inevitable that there would be changes to the DAAD's programme portfolio in 2025. Thirteen programmes were discontinued, primarily those with a regional focus or which are aimed at a narrow range of subjects. 'We are focusing on programmes with a wide reach and broad international audience, programmes which are fundamental to the impact of the DAAD,' explains DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks. 'We have taken prompt and proportionate steps in response to ensure we are able to achieve our goals with more limited resources.'

Under Strategy 2030, the DAAD remains firmly committed to objectives such as promoting personal development and gaining new skills, and instigating social and global transformation processes that ensure a better future. Even where programmes have been discontinued, they still contribute to achieving these goals. For example, cost reductions made it necessary to suspend the DAAD's *Leadership for Africa* programme

in the near future. Established in 2021 and funded by the Federal Foreign Office, the programme has allowed talented young people from countries with large numbers of refugees to study for a master's degree in Germany. 'The alumni of this programme will remain key partners for Germany', Sicks stresses.

Kai Sicks refers to another example of the DAAD's approach to the consolidation process, this time in Ukraine. 'We have not been able to continue all our previous activities,' he says. 'However, with funding from the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space, we launched the *German-Ukrainian University Network* in 2025, a sign of how we are strengthening higher education partnerships between the two countries over the long term.' For the DAAD, the focus is to continually develop its programme portfolio in spite of the challenges of war, economics, geopolitics and crises. •

'We are focusing on programmes with a wide reach and broad international audience, programmes which are fundamental to the impact of the DAAD. We have taken prompt and proportionate steps in response to ensure we are able to achieve our goals with more limited resources.'

Dr Kai Sicks
DAAD Secretary General

Focus

Bringing global talent to Germany



© Andreas Heddergott/TUM

Students at TU Munich are gaining valuable technical skills.

The DAAD is targeting support to attract skilled professionals: International students at German higher education institutions receive invaluable support while they are studying and as they transition into the German labour market.

When it comes to preparing for a career in Germany, international students and skilled professionals thrive when the right support is there from day one. The DAAD's *FIT – Promotion of International Talents for Integration Into Studies and the Labour Market* programme assists German higher education institutions with providing tailored and targeted support to students from all over the world – from matriculation to embarking

on their careers. 'FIT funding has opened up new avenues for us,' is how Michaela Hoppe from the Career Center at Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH) sums up the impact of the programme. Funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), FIT has facilitated 89 projects since April 2024.

Aimed at students on engineering study programmes, 'From Campus to Career' project at the Technical

Funding

Targeting top talent

The DAAD's new funding programme: *Academic Horizons – Attracting Global Minds* is designed to attract potential international master's and PhD students with outstanding qualifications to come and study in Germany. The programme targets key technologies and research fields with strategic relevance to 'High-tech Agenda Germany'. *Academic Horizons* encourages German higher education institutions to coordinate and expand measures targeted at reaching out to talented individuals, supporting them, and helping them integrate. A budget of €15 million has been made available from the BMFTR 'Global Minds Initiative Germany' for the period up to 2029.



bmftr.bund.de/gmig

University of Munich (TUM) is just one example of these projects. Inspired by the motto 'Engineers for Germany', the university is reaching out to international master's degree students who are seeking employment in Germany after completing their studies. Over the two-semester programme they learn about the job application process in Germany and get advice on how to present their specialist skills as effectively as possible to employers. The web-seminars on offer cover everything from how to write a compelling CV and getting the right application photo, to coaching on successful interviews. What's more, students gain insights into trends in recruitment and a better understanding of employment contracts.

Hand-in-hand with start-ups

At TUM's Language Center, the FIT project offers a German language course focused on the practical requirements of the workplace – working in partnership with start-ups. Students on the course learn German by working on tasks that are relevant to one of these fledgling businesses. For the students, the presentations of their work mark the final assessment of their language course. While for the start-ups, it's a fascinating chance to hear about topics in their specialist fields. 'Applied contexts such as these facilitate valuable contacts between international skilled professionals and potential employers,' explains Judith Venherm, the DAAD's Team Leader for the FIT programme.

At the other end of the country, the 'TalentHub' FIT project at Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences is another example of a promising approach to helping students transition into employment. Most recently, the Neubrandenburg programme has helped talented stu-

dents prepare to attend INTERGEO 2025 in Frankfurt am Main, the world's most important convention for the geoinformation industry. Before heading to Frankfurt, students learned how to present themselves in a professional way. 'I loved seeing how the students acted on all the training and the tips and tricks they had learned when they were speaking to potential employers at the convention – and achieved tangible outcomes,' says Julia Funk, the project's coordinator. In addition to nine new business contacts, Funk describes how the conference delivered offers of partnerships for dissertations, and a trial working day.

All 89 projects facilitated by the FIT programme are part of the DAAD's *Campus-Initiative for International Talents*. The BMFTR-funded initiative is the living manifestation of a DAAD position paper published in 2023 on recruiting skilled professionals. Alongside the FIT programme, the *Profi plus – Academic Training for the German Labor Market* programme is now well established at German higher education institutions, with 25 projects up and running. 'The programme supports people who have studied in their home countries but require additional academic qualifications in order to start their careers

here,' explains Katharina Latsch, Team Leader for *Profi plus* at the DAAD. 'In *Profi plus* we have a qualifications programme that closes gaps linguistically and academically.' Two events held in May and June 2025 were an opportunity for higher education institution representatives, along with figures from politics and industry, to find out more about what the two programmes are achieving.

Tapping potential

'Kipäd plus' is one of the 25 *Profi plus* projects that exemplifies good practice in helping international early years education students transition into work. Based at the Evangelische Hochschule Dresden, the programme delivers qualifications to work in nurseries and schools. In 2025, it was recommended in a policy brief published by the Expert Council on Integration and Migration (SVR). 'Kipäd plus' offers a way to reduce the shortage of skilled education professionals, which is particularly acute in Germany. Katharina Latsch believes this is an opportunity that has to be seized. 'We currently have over 80,000 teachers and educators from abroad in Germany who are not working in their specialist fields,' she notes. 'Kipäd plus' offers a condensed bachelor's degree course in early

years education, including a semester on placement. Thanks to the scheme, some of the skilled professionals described by Latsch are being helped to start afresh in new careers in Germany.

Attracting and retaining skilled professionals

At Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, the *Profi plus* project IQ@BB takes an integrated approach to helping skilled professionals in technology, law, administration, industry, economics and social work gain the qualifications they need. The semester-long certificate programme offers people who hold degrees from their home countries language teaching and skills-based additional qualifications so they can enter employment in Germany at a level that matches their level of education. IQ@BB and Kipäd plus are just two examples of the extraordinary range of FIT and *Profi plus* projects, shown on an [interactive map](#), which went live on the DAAD website (p. 94) in 2025.

The *Campus-Initiative* includes a range of events to promote dialogue

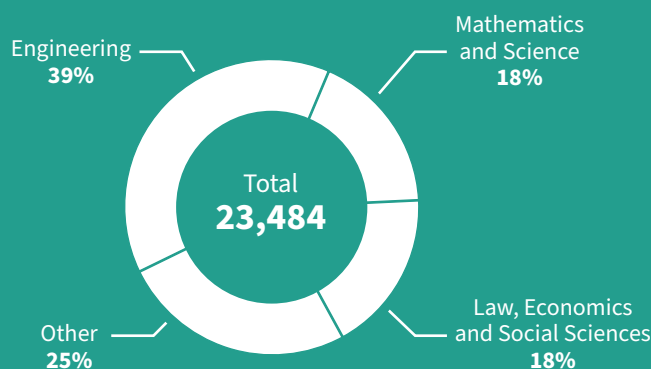
with stakeholders from the spheres of politics and industry, such as the ‘English for Enrollment, Deutsch for Employment?’ conference in December 2025. The DAAD also published several studies in 2025 analysing the topic of international skilled professionals for Germany, such as a DAAD-commissioned report by the German Economic Institute (IW) on the economic effects of migration through higher education institutions, which showed that international students boost public finances and economic growth, especially when they stay on to live and work in Germany after completing their studies (p. 94). Of the 79,000 international students who commenced their studies in 2022, the IW predicted that around 40% would remain in Germany for relatively long periods, which the Institute calculated would contribute an additional €15.5 billion in tax and revenues to the public purse. ‘If we succeed in integrating 10% more into the German labour market, the benefit rises to €26 billion,’ explained Professor Axel Plünnecke, who led the IW study. ‘In other words, providing effective support

to international students repays itself many times over.’ Dr Sven Werkmeister is Director of the Strategy Department at the DAAD, which commissioned the studies and stakeholder consultations. He emphasises that, ‘It’s in our economic interest to attract international students to Germany. As highly qualified skilled professionals, they make a vital contribution to German economic growth, and they are urgently needed in STEM careers.’

Encouraging findings

In July 2025 the DAAD presented the results of analysis of data from the BintHo study in a report entitled ‘Ankommen, Studieren, Bleiben’ [‘Arriving, Studying, Staying on’], which focused on how international students see their futures in Germany (p. 94). The analysis was carried out as part of the *Campus-Initiative*, and underlines international students’ potential to help meet the shortage of skilled professionals in Germany. A survey carried out in the 2023/2024 winter semester of over 20,000 international students at 130 German higher education institutions showed that two-thirds came to Germany with the intention of remaining here – an encouraging finding in the context of the need for more skilled professionals in Germany. The analysis also revealed Germany’s popularity as a destination for international students, three-quarters of whom ranked it first as their chosen place to study. International students enrich academia and science in Germany by contributing new perspectives and thereby boosting innovation in the country as a hub for research, business and skills. ‘It’s a powerful argument in favour of international student exchange – and an affirmation of the engagement of the DAAD,’ says Sven Werkmeister in conclusion. ●

Skilled professionals for Germany



Participants on the FIT – Promotion of International Talents for Integration Into Studies and the Labour Market programme. The total increased by 20,223 in 2025 alone. India ranks first among countries of origin, followed by China and Turkey.

Source: DAAD Section P43 – Campus-Initiative – Evaluation of Annual Report 2025 Participant data – 03/2026

The *Prospects for Peace Through Education in Iraq* in-country scholarship programme gives young people from disadvantaged backgrounds the chance to study for a bachelor's degree and gives them a great start in their working lives. A group of over 70 funding recipients worked on projects for a conference in Erbil in 2025, collaborating across five different first languages, including Kurdish dialects, Arabic and Assyrian. The *Prospects* programme is delivered by GIZ and the DAAD.



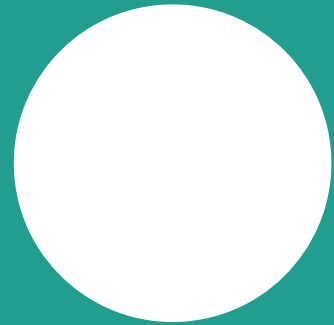
www.daad.de/programme-iraq

A digital programme to give international students the preparation they need to study successfully in Germany – that's the idea behind the VORsprung programme. The programme entered its second project phase in 2025, running up to 2027. At its heart, the programme combines academic preparation with language teaching. German higher education institutions can use their own internal access procedures to open up study programmes to students who have completed the VORsprung programme. The only requirement is a simple cooperation agreement.



www.daad.de/vorsprung-programme

Diversity Digitisation Sustainability



SDG Alumni Projects run by higher education institutions and the DAAD for Germany alumni from the Global South provide seminars that encourage active learning about all aspects of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The projects also give participants invaluable practical insights at conferences and trade fairs. In 2025 the programme included BIOFACH in Nuremberg, the IFAT environmental technology trade fair in Johannesburg, and 'Tropentag' in Bonn, which focused on sustainable land use.



www.daad.de/sdg-alumni-projects

‘The Fritz Haber Institute of the Max Planck Society in Berlin ranks among the world's leading institutions in chemistry. I was able to spend almost a year there working on my research – an experience which was enormously valuable to me, both academically and personally. Along with the inspiring environment at the Institute, the close collaboration with leading international researchers played a decisive role in the fact that I am currently working on my PhD at the Fritz Haber Institute and will achieve my doctorate here in Germany.’

Raquel Anastácio Amaral

grew up in Brazil and studied electrochemistry at the prestigious Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR). After completing her master's degree in 2024 she commenced a PhD on green hydrogen technologies. Thanks to a scholarship from the DAAD's *ERA Fellowships – Green Hydrogen* programme she came to Berlin in early 2025. Her area of research is one of the most important priorities in technology policies in Germany today. The Fritz Haber Institute (FHI) of the Max Planck Society allowed her to extend her research even further. After her scholarship ended, Amaral directly took up a PhD position at FHI, where she began a new PhD research project which she intends to complete in Germany.

A portrait of a woman with long, dark, curly hair and round glasses. She is wearing a black and white vertically striped long-sleeved top. She is looking slightly to the side with a gentle smile. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and a building.

Find out more about the
*ERA Fellowships – Green
Hydrogen* scholarship
programme.



[www.daad.de/
green-hydrogen](https://www.daad.de/green-hydrogen)

Networking

At a glance

The DAAD brings people and institutions together. Working in partnership with its members, partners and alumni, it creates long-term crisis-resilient international academic networks which maintain channels for international dialogue and cooperation, even when the conditions are challenging. The DAAD is a committed and active member of German, European and international partnerships and alliances, shaping conversations with policy-makers on the level of national and federal state governments.

Alumni associations meeting in Bonn: Wisdom Sefiamor Adjei (l.), alumnus of the DAAD's *Centres of Excellence in Africa* programme, DAAD RISE Worldwide programme alumnus Lucas Möller



Stronger together – networking unlocks new horizons

It was the first chance to meet in person since the pandemic, and the spirit of community and the joy at being part of a wider family was tangible at the meeting in Bonn of the DAAD's 140 alumni associations from around the world. But this wasn't the only reason why the event in Bonn in March 2025 was so valuable to the DAAD. It demonstrated how former funding recipients are making active contributions, transcending national bor-

ders through their engagement, to nurture and expand a global network of DAAD alumni – even forging links between different generations.

At the same time, the gathering underlined the strength of the associations' local networks, working with stakeholders from civil society and German embassies. 'More regional networks have emerged from this meeting', explains Dr Heidi





DAAD Senior Desk Officer Tilman Fietz-Bockard (l.), and Dr Anna Titova and Professor Tetiana Skibina (below, l-r) joined the opening event for the *German-Ukrainian University Network* in December 2025 in support of joint efforts to forge a great future for Ukraine.



Wedel, Head of Section for Alumni: Concept and Coordination at the DAAD. European associations met again at an event in Serbia, while alumni groups from Latin America gathered ahead of the COP30 climate conference in Brazil. ‘These are new structures which think across national borders,’ says Wedel.

The EU’s Erasmus+ programme also facilitates international networking on a grand scale. ‘For 38 years it has been the European Commission’s most successful education and mobility programme – so far, it has funded 17 million people in every sphere of education,’ explains Dr Stephan Geifes, Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD. ‘In Europe, pretty much every higher education institution is connected with other institutions through Erasmus+.’ In Germany, 350 higher education institutions participate in the programme, giving

almost all students access to Erasmus+. The total budget for the programme in 2025 was a record quarter of a billion euros. Since 2015, opportunities for networking have no longer been limited to Europe alone. Through the ‘International Credit Mobility’ funding scheme (ICM), Erasmus+ is supporting strategic internationalisation initiatives between German higher education institutions and 1,300 partner institutions in 180 countries. The funding has unlocked targeted investment in exchanges with partner institutions around the world, and makes it possible to invite students and members of higher education institutions to come to Europe from all over the world.

Solutions to global challenges

Academic exchange through higher education partnerships can forge resilient links – especially during politically challenging periods. Indeed, trusted networks may be more important than ever, be they

transatlantic partnerships or joint efforts to support Ukrainian students. ‘Creating and growing networks is part of the DNA of our programmes and events,’ says Dr Klaus Birk, Director Projects at the DAAD. This includes plans to promote the internationalisation of German higher education institutions, and initiatives to fund development cooperation. ‘Through projects such as expanding the *Global Centres for Climate and Environment*, we are not just supporting networking with German higher education institu-

‘Creating and growing networks is part of the DNA of our programmes and events.’

Dr Klaus Birk
Director Projects

tions. We also want to see stronger networks between higher education institutions in the Global South, and for those institutions to be able to seek opportunities for dialogue with the spheres of politics, industry and civil society.' Robust networks ensure the transfer of new research outcomes into practical applications, and help develop solutions to global challenges. German partner institutions benefit from this in that they can bring their expertise to bear on a very broad basis. Transnational education projects (TNE) such as binational higher education institutions, institutes and study programmes are becoming increasingly significant with regard to how German higher education institutions position themselves internationally. The DAAD is supporting the creation and expansion of TNE programmes, encouraging institutions to participate in binational higher education institutions abroad, and employing a broad range of funding tools to advance the awarding of scholarships for study at German partner institutions.

Another flagship for international higher education cooperation celebrated a major anniversary in 2025 – the German-Jordanian University (GJU). Founded in 2005 and based on the internationally respected model of German universities of applied sciences, the GJU is supported by a consortium of German higher education institutions. The GJU takes a practice-oriented approach, through which students are required to complete a placement in industry during a compulsory year in Germany, making it particularly interesting for universities of applied sciences as a bridge to cooperation with partners in the Arab world. Speaking at the anniversary celebrations in Amman, DAAD Vice President Dr Muriel Helbig picked

out many aspects of the GJU's work, such as its double-degree programmes and strong connections to industry, along with the university's German language centre and initiatives to promote digitalisation, innovation and technology transfer. Dr Helbig praised the GJU's role as a hub where innovation, learning and cultural understanding coalesce, opening up new horizons for young people in Jordan and Germany.

Building connections between a range of stakeholders forms part of the DAAD's approach to all major projects, says Klaus Birk. The most recent example of this philosophy was on show at the event to mark the opening of the *German-Ukrainian University Network* (DUHN), held in December 2025 under the motto of 'growing stronger together'. More than one hundred representatives of higher education and policymaking in both countries gathered for a networking meeting to commence the 30 projects, which was also attended by Dorothee Bär, Federal Minister of Research, Technology and Space. All those present were committed to supporting Ukraine and its higher education sector in particular during the war and in the years after its conclusion. 'Every project lead at each partner institution is facing the same challenges,' Birk observes, noting the need to establish structures, develop formats and access third-party funding. 'Our objective is to forge links between them to facilitate their interaction without the involvement of the DAAD, so that projects can go on operating beyond the conclusion of the funding phase.'

The DAAD's alumni engagement activity is helping achieve this goal. DAAD funding recipients are encouraged to see themselves as 'ambassadors for Germany' from the

'A feeling of being connected, even if you have never met before.'

Dr Heidi Wedel

Head of Section Alumni:
Concept and Coordination

very outset, in recognition of the fact that cultivating active relationships with alumni around the world not only serves to drive internationalisation in academia and science, but also acts as a boost to current scholarship holders, who benefit from opportunities to encounter and learn from the DAAD's global alumni network. Last but not least, the DAAD and its partners reap the rewards of a network of contacts who understand and appreciate Germany.

Integrating diverse perspectives

Based in the DAAD's Scholarships department, the Alumni Section supports over 150 events around the world every year. Most are organised by alumni themselves. Heidi Wedel has observed a broad trend towards opportunities for technical and professional meetings, such as the recently established DAAD alumni network for legal professionals, through which alumni from Europe and Georgia can contribute ideas from very different perspectives. 'They are developing approaches that will be of interest to policymakers and society,' Wedel explains, 'working at a very high level and sharing ideas with colleagues across international borders.' Wedel describes a 'DAAD spirit' which she has experienced at meetings of DAAD alumni from all over the world, 'A feeling of being connected, even if you have never met before.' ●

Networking

Spotlights

For **5** years

the *European University Networks – national initiative* programme has supported the German members of European University Alliances. Through the programme, the DAAD provides additional funding along with opportunities to access advice and networking to accompany the EU initiative. In its most recent iteration, 75 German higher education institutions benefited from the programme. Europe is coming together, campus by campus.

Find out more about European University Alliances and AI at



www.daad.de/euonair-alliance

30 collaborations between German higher education institutions and partners in Ukraine

have been receiving support from the DAAD's *German-Ukrainian University Network* since June 2025 to help them develop joint study programmes and teaching and learning modules. The four-year grants have been funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space. The DAAD is contributing to the education and training of Ukrainian students and lending its support to the long-term reconstruction of the country.



www.daad.de/ua-hs-system
(German only)

‘My Erasmus stay left a lasting impression on me. If I’d stayed in Germany I would probably never have applied for a sales role in Spain. I still work for the same company – and I love my job!’



Benita Engelhardt

spent time in Spain in 2018 through the Erasmus+ programme.

The Erasmus+ impact assessment highlights the importance of the contribution made by the programme to the ‘Union of Skills’ strategy to promote competitiveness in the EU. Data from the survey shows that study-related stays abroad and internships completed through Erasmus+ are helping to accomplish the strategy, which the European Commission issued in March 2025. ‘In the face of dramatic global shifts, Europe needs to boost its resilience and competitiveness, both as a society and as an economic community,’ says Dr Stephan Geifes, Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation at the DAAD. ‘Erasmus+ is already making a difference in this area. Now we need to extend the programme by growing participant numbers.’



www.daad.de/wirkungsstudie
(German only)



‘*Lehramt.International* funding hasn’t just reinforced the connections between the University of Würzburg and its international partners. It has also strengthened the network which exists between five higher education institutions in Bavaria through their *Lehramt.International* projects. We regularly discuss our experiences and the challenges we face in internationalising teacher education.’

Dr Matthias Erhardt

is the *Lehramt.International* project lead at JMU Würzburg. In 2025 the scheme to support internationalisation in teacher education study programmes celebrated its fifth anniversary.

70 higher education and research institutions

in the Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA) are working together to help re-shape land policy in Africa. At a conference jointly organised by GIZ and the DAAD in the Ghanaian capital Accra in July 2025, the members of the network developed a vision and roadmap for a pan-African NELGA alumni network. After all, networking and cooperation are key to boosting the impact of many projects. With this in mind, the DAAD is leveraging joint knowledge creation across many of its programmes, where international teams at higher education institutions work with local partners to develop solutions to regional challenges, such as climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable energy supplies and more stable food systems.



Explore three best practice case studies which are linking research and practice in Africa.

How the DAAD is reinforcing academic and scientific networks

The DAAD's global network continued to develop through the 2025 centenary year. The DAAD works with its partners and alumni in major cities and at regional level all over the world to seek solutions to social and scientific challenges.

At the DAAD, we are making a determined effort to extend the network of German foreign academic policy in West Africa, not least with a view to the neighbouring Sahel region and the associated challenging geopolitical conditions.' In his address at the official opening ceremony of the DAAD's new Regional Office in the Ghanaian capital Accra in April 2025, DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee underlined the importance of a strong presence at a local and regional level. 'In times afflicted by crisis, science diplomacy and the academic collaborative space make robust and vital contributions to German security. Science and academia represent a form of "hard currency" in foreign and security

policy, and we are delighted to be able to expand our presence in West Africa with the support of the Federal Foreign Office.'

International networks cannot be taken for granted in a world increasingly impacted by tensions and conflicts. Yet in periods shaped by manifold uncertainties, the networks of friends of Germany which the DAAD emphasises in DAAD Strategy 2030 are of vital importance. The DAAD is therefore targeting its activities on regional priorities and on networks that are closely aligned with specific local demands and conditions. As part of this process, the DAAD expanded its former Information Centre (IC) in Accra into a Regional Office with responsibility for West Africa.



© demerzel21 / Adobe Stock

Accra in Ghana, where the DAAD has expanded an Information Centre into a Regional Office

Another component of the transformation process is represented by the DAAD's former Information Centre in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek, which became the Central Asia Regional Office in February 2025 with responsibility for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In recent years Central Asia has become a significantly more important academic, scientific and geopolitical partner for Germany and the EU. The new Regional Office will play a key role in helping shape this trend in the years to come.

New programmes to promote exchange with Mexico

Across the Atlantic, 2025 was a year for breaking new ground while simultaneously celebrating long-

Country-level expertise at a glance

What's going on in higher education around the world? The annual reports of the DAAD's Regional Offices present the latest observations and analysis from over 20 countries around the world, focusing on trends in politics, economics and especially higher education policy.



Explore a rich variety of insights into the regions and countries related to your areas of interest (available in German only). www.daad.de/as-berichte

The Centre for International Academic Cooperation (KIWi) also provides a wide range of country-specific information for a broad spectrum of needs and purposes, from a quick overview to in-depth analysis.



www.daad.de/laenderwissen
(German only)



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The DAAD has long-standing ties with Mexico, which were given fresh impetus in 2025, such as here in Mexico City.

‘Mexican and European higher education institutions can play an important role in training urgently needed experts.’

Christoph Hansert

Director of the Mexico City Regional Office

standing cooperation, as the DAAD’s Mexico Regional Office looked back on its 25-year history while at the same time commencing new exchange programmes. Under the initiative, the first cohort of Mexican scholarship holders commenced their master’s degree programmes in Germany on a programme co-funded by the Mexican State Council for Science and Technology (COMECYT). The DAAD and the Mexican Government Ministry for Technology and Science agreed to award up to 65 new scholarships a year for master’s programmes in Germany, commencing in 2026.

Christoph Hansert, Director of the Regional Office, stresses Mexico’s significance as a partner to Germany and Europe, pointing out opportunities for joint investment in areas such as rail transport, electric mobility, recycling and pharmaceuticals – all fields facing major shortages of skilled professionals. ‘This is an area where Mexican and

European higher education institutions can play an important role in training urgently needed experts,’ Hansert explains.

Lively discussions and dialogue in Europe’s major cities

In the DAAD’s centenary year, its network proved it was equipped to tackle the challenges of the future in Europe. This spirit was on display in numerous thought-provoking discussions with alumni in cities such as Warsaw, Prague, Paris and Madrid, where the DAAD is represented by a Regional Office or IC. These conversations all underlined the ways in which Europe draws strength from these networks and reaps the benefits of diversity. Celebrating the successful collaboration between German and Spanish higher education institutions through European University Alliances was on the agenda for the ceremony at the German ambassador’s residence in Madrid. Elsewhere, centenary events in Paris and Warsaw underlined the importance of the

‘Weimar Triangle’ of Germany, France and Poland, with representatives of all three countries in attendance. In Greece, too, attention turned towards the future, with initiatives such as a new memorandum of understanding to promote academic exchange signed by the DAAD and its counterpart Study in Greece. The signing took place in Thessaloniki, which is home to the largest university sector in the Balkans region and the office of the DAAD’s Greek alumni association.

Long-term partnerships in Asia

In the face of political turmoil, nurturing existing relationships and cultivating new networks are vitally important tasks. Such efforts are no less important for relatively new academic partnerships with Australia or Fiji than in the context of longstanding partnerships in Asia. Events in China, Japan, India, Indonesia and South Korea not only celebrated the DAAD’s centenary, but also bolstered long-term collaborations. Since 2009, the co-funded DAAD-ACEH Scholarship of Excellence programme has supported early-career scientists and academics in Indonesia to assist with reconstruction of the Aceh region following the devastating tsunami in 2004. The programme supports reconstruction in a range of fields including academia and science. Programme alumni have lived and studied in Germany, making the former scholarship holders important contacts for Germany in the South-Asian region which is experiencing a period of rapid growth. In the context of German-Indian exchange, the *German Indian Academic Network for Tomorrow* (GIANT) commenced its activities in 2025, focusing on areas of research bearing on major future challenges. This new initiative will in turn foster the ongoing creation of new networks,

further expanding opportunities for cooperation.

Partnerships that transcend national borders are the only means by which humanity can overcome great international challenges. For the German Centres for Research and Innovation (DWIH) in New York, São Paulo, New Delhi, Tokyo and San Francisco 2025 was the year of ‘Global Health’, dedicated to finding answers to questions such as how to improve global access to medication, and means of combat-

ing international pandemics. The Centres are coordinated from a central office in DAAD headquarters in Bonn and by Regional Offices in various regions of the world. Funding for the DWIH comes from the Federal Foreign Office. The Centres provide a place where German scientific organisations, higher education institutions and research business can network under one roof and pool their strengths with international partners, all working together to drive groundbreaking innovations. ●



DWIH Annual Reports: global perspectives on academia, science and innovation

Each year, the global network of German Centres for Research and Innovation (DWIH) turn their attention to a topic of vital importance. In 2025, Global Health was at the top of the agenda, an interdisciplinary approach to improving healthcare around the world.

The joint annual report for the Centres in New York (photo above), São Paulo, New Delhi, Tokyo and San Francisco illustrates the ways in which German academia and science can elevate their international profiles, and the potential for this to generate fresh impetus for global collaborations.

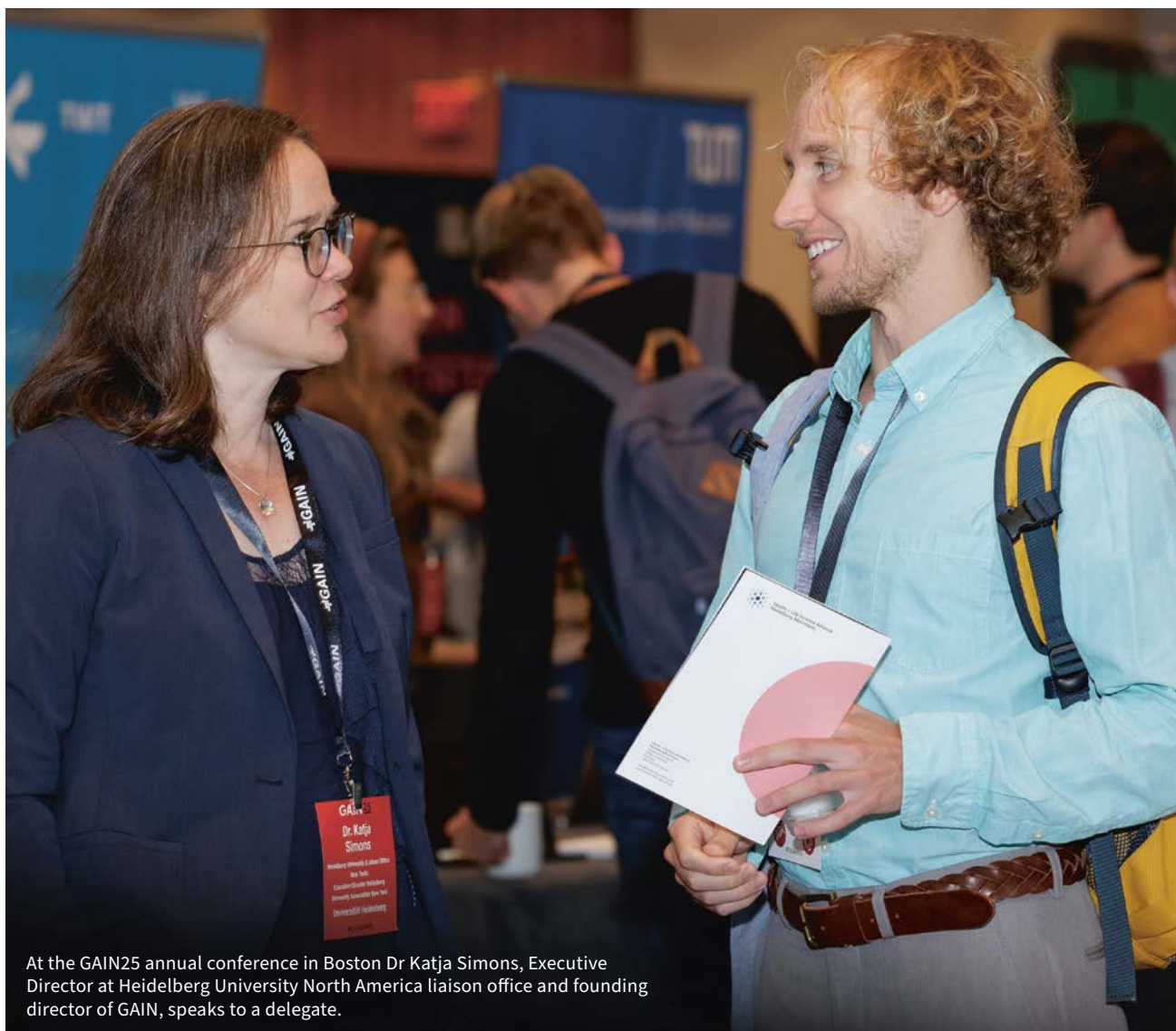


Explore what drives DWIH Centres around the world and the Global Health projects which have been delivered at: www.dwih-netzwerk.de/dwih-annual-reports

Networking

Focus

Transatlantic networks



At the GAIN25 annual conference in Boston Dr Katja Simons, Executive Director at Heidelberg University North America liaison office and founding director of GAIN, speaks to a delegate.

The USA remains a top destination for students and researchers from Germany. During the DAAD's centenary year, the importance of resilient relationships with the United States was underlined again and again.

The close ties that link the DAAD and the USA go back one hundred years. Those ties began with a vision, when, following a lecture series in the US, the Heidelberg University student Carl Joachim Friedrich succeeded in raising funding from US higher education institutions for the first 13 scholarships for young German scientists and academics. In return, German institutions offered places for US students in Germany, and thus was born the idea of an organised student exchange programme. It was out of this idea that the DAAD's predecessor emerged in 1925. Without the US higher education system to extend a helping hand to Germany in the isolation which it faced after the First World War, there would probably be no DAAD today.

'Close transatlantic relations form the bedrock of the DAAD, even if those relations have become more challenging in recent years,' stressed DAAD Secretary General Dr Kai Sicks on one of his several visits to North America in 2025. Dr Sicks' visit in late March included the Research Security Center in Ottawa, Canada, where he learned how Canada is protecting its research from theft, espionage and foreign influence. In November he took part in the German American Conference at Harvard, entitled 'Transatlantic Relationship at a Crossroads'.

Strengthening close ties with higher education institutions and partners in the USA is a primary concern for the DAAD, especially during its centenary year. As a world leader in science and academia, the US is still one of the top destinations for international students and researchers, and is one of the most sought-after

places to study and research for German scholarship holders.

Research into security questions

An important element of the collaboration between Germany and the US relates to research into matters of security. In recognition of the particular importance of transatlantic dialogue in this area, the DAAD is using funds from the Federal Foreign Office to support the prestigious Helmut Schmidt Distinguished Visiting Chair at the Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs at Johns Hopkins University in the USA, along with an associated postdoc programme. The current Visiting Chair is Marina Henke, Professor of International Relations at the Hertie School and an internationally recognised expert on European security and defence policy.

The strength of the DAAD's North American network one century on was plain to see at the central alumni centenary event in New York in April 2025 – as was the network's continued growth. Under the banner of 'Building Lifelong Connec-

'On my RISE scholarship to GSI Helmholtzzentrum für Schwerionenforschung in Darmstadt, I gained a deeper understanding of the application of high-frequency technology and IT in industry. The experience gave me the confidence to apply for a master's degree course in electrical technology and IT at TU Darmstadt – and for another DAAD scholarship, too. And I got them both!'



Tamara Hinderman
RISE Germany and RISE Professional alumna

tions in Science and Education', the event brought together 120 former scholarship holders, partners and sponsors from the US and Canada for two days to add new impetus to international cooperation. The venue was German House, with its long tradition of supporting German-American exchange. The highpoint of the convention came with the presentation of the Excellence Awards for International Exchange

'Close transatlantic relations form the bedrock of the DAAD, even if those relations have become more challenging in recent years.'

Dr Kai Sicks
DAAD Secretary General

by the DAAD Alumni Association USA.

Yet times have rarely been this complex for sharing and exchanging ideas across the Atlantic. Trump administration policies such as a temporary suspension of the visa process for international students coming to the USA have put significant barriers in the way of funding recipients from Germany in 2025. 'We have responded swiftly and flexibly,' said Dr Birgit Klüsener, Director of the Scholarships department at the DAAD. Measures taken by the DAAD include stepping up advice and support for funding recipients, organising web conferences to offer guidance to students shortly before their departure, and offering alternatives such as postponements or different destination countries. In spite of all the uncertainties, some 300 DAAD funding recipients arrived in the USA between June and November 2025. Only 15 decided to postpone, change destinations or give up their scholarship.

The DAAD's USA Advisory Service, created in 2025 and supported by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space, has allowed the DAAD to expand its dedicated provision of information and advice related to the United States. The office pools the expertise of staff in the Centre for International Academic Cooperation (KIWi), the DAAD's New York Regional Office and Info Centre (p. 61, p. 63) and provides advice on key questions around study and research stays in the USA and on recent developments in higher education policy.

Robust commitment

'We have also observed strong growth in US interest in transatlantic exchange and academic cooperation with Germany,' says Christian Strowa, Director of the DAAD's New York Regional Office. Strowa explains that the trend has been evident both when visiting higher education institutions, and in the actual data for scholarship applications.

'There has been strong growth in interest in academic co-operation with Germany.'

Christian Strowa

DAAD New York Regional Office Director

'For German higher education institutions and the DAAD this a huge opportunity to present ourselves as a trustworthy and reliable partner. The USA Advisory Service is not only helping us enhance the resilience of transatlantic academic exchange under new conditions and circumstances, but also to endow it with new life, new initiatives and even greater commitment.'

The growth in interest in Germany as a hub of research and scholar-



DAAD Alumni Association USA presents Excellence Awards for International Exchange at the New York alumni meeting. Prize-winner Dr Jason Wong (centre) with Professor Sigrid Berka (l.), Chair of the Prize Committee, and Professor Manfred Philipp (r.), Chair of the DAAD Alumni Association USA.

ship was also in evidence at the GAIN25 end-of-year conference in Boston in August 2025, which had seen demand for registrations soar. The German Academic International Network (GAIN) is supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the DAAD and the German Research Foundation (DFG), and supports German researchers working in North America. At the top of the agenda was the opportunity for researchers who plan to return to Germany as a chance to develop their careers to meet and network with academic and scientific institutions who can help them make the transition.

Solidarity with US partners

The reason behind GAIN's great success over the past 25 years is the fact that academic exchange creates connections which often last a lifetime. 'I really value the informal setting of the event, where you can speak openly with everyone involved in supporting science and academia, from the dean to the

'At this point it is all the more important to work together to maintain German-American higher education cooperation.'

Professor Joybrato Mukherjee
DAAD President

president, outside all hierarchies. My international postdoc friends envy me for having this opportunity,' explains Dr Georgios Toupalas, a postdoc at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and member of the GAIN advisory council. GAIN also helps articulate the interests of researchers when speaking to policymakers.

Given the pressure currently facing science and academia in the US, the conference took place under slightly changed circumstances. 'That makes it all the more important to support our partners in the USA right now, to show our solidarity and to work together to maintain German-American higher education cooperation and to expand it wherever possible,' said DAAD President Professor Joybrato Mukherjee. As GAIN Programme Director Anna Oberle-Brill confirms, current US policy is causing uncertainty among many researchers. 'Against the backdrop of the political situation and research budget cuts in the USA, many postdocs are expressing

increased interest in Germany as a place to conduct their research,' she says. Welcoming attendees to the event, Professor Mukherjee stressed that the annual conference was not intended as an attempt to woo researchers. Rather, he said, it was a 'logical step' in the long history of German-American exchange. For researchers who plan to return to the German academic system after a long stay abroad – or who want to make the move there for the first time – cultivating and maintaining strong networks will naturally be a high priority.

GAIN's importance was further underlined by the presence of many high-ranking representatives of the German higher education and science sectors, along with senior policymakers. Among the high-profile guests to make the trip were BMFTR State Secretary Rolf-Dieter Jungk and the Presidents of the Humboldt Foundation, the DAAD and the DFG. Science and education ministers of German federal states were also in attendance,

Transatlantic report affirms the value of transatlantic cooperation

Since its inception in 2023, the Transatlantic High-Level Roundtable Dialogues have provided a forum for the DAAD and the US Institute of International Education, to bring together governments and organisations around the same table. The first comprehensive report on the series of talks was published in September 2025, summarising the outcomes of the high-ranking meetings and presenting strategies to sustain and scale up exchange programmes in education. The data clearly illustrates the extent to which academic cooperation between the US and the EU offers mutual economic, security policy and strategic benefits. In one example presented in the report, the number of US students studying for a degree in Europe has doubled in the past 25 years.



www.daad.de/iie-daad-report

For 20 years the RISE Germany programme has offered research internships in Germany.



© DAAD/Andreas Herr (2)



along with numerous members of the Bundestag and representatives of industry, science, non-university research and higher education leaders.

Contacts in the German higher education sector

In the year of its 20th anniversary celebrations, the DAAD's RISE Germany programme also saw record levels of applications in 2025. RISE allows bachelor's degree students from North America, the UK and Ireland to undertake research placements in industry in Germany. In 2026, the programme received 3,150 applications, of which around 2,000 came from the US. 'This easily accessible service is extremely attractive to many young people who are leaving their home countries for the first time,' notes Michaela Gottschling, RISE Team Leader at the DAAD. 'We provide intensive support to help funding recipients get through the jungle of questions around employment regulations and residence in Germany, to make

'We are all part of a global academic ecosystem.'

Jessica Cissell
Germany Today Tour participant

it as easy as possible for them to get started.'

The opportunity to make direct contacts in the German higher education sector met with positive responses across the board in 2025. Initiatives such as the DAAD's Germany Today Tour provide an opportunity for representatives of North American higher education institutions to find out about the German higher education system and expand their international networks through face-to-face meetings. In 2025 the itinerary focused on strengthening partnerships between Germany and North America. During the week-long tour around Germany, guests from the

USA and Canada got to know the full spectrum of academic and scientific institutions in Germany, from high-tech innovation centres such as the DESY research campus in Hamburg, to examples of the university of applied sciences model (HAW). A meeting with the DAAD's Vice President Dr Muriel Helbig, who is also President of the Technische Hochschule Lübeck, was a highlight of the trip.

Jessica Cissell, an Associate Provost at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, was among those who emphasised the positive impact of the Germany Today Tour. 'The Germany Today Tour once again brought home to me the value of international exchange,' she said. 'We are all part of a global academic ecosystem. Whether it's through international partnerships or one-to-one conversations, these experiences sharpen our perspective, challenge us to think differently, and help us improve how we support students and societies.' ●

Building networks, facilitating support, offering encouragement were at the top of the agenda for the third Global Disability Summit in early April 2025, jointly organised by Germany, Jordan and the International Disability Alliance. Four DAAD scholarship holders were among those in attendance. 'It was a great opportunity to show to others affected by these issues that it is possible to experience study-related stays abroad – even if there is still a bit to do,' says Dr Jenny Morín Nenoff, Senior Desk Officer for Diversity and Equal Opportunities at the DAAD.



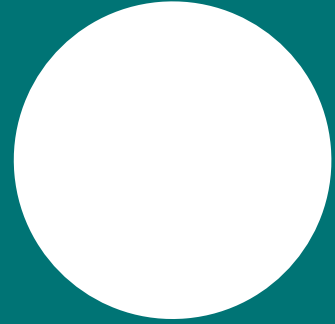
[www.daad.de/
g-d-summit-inclusion](http://www.daad.de/g-d-summit-inclusion)

The Sub-Saharan Africa DaF digital network project (SANDD) is designed to improve the training of teachers of German as an additional language (GAL) in countries in the region. SANDD is funded through the DAAD's (*Digital*) GAL Competence Network in Sub-Saharan Africa programme. The dafubao.net open source platform was launched in autumn 2025 where SANDD members can share and develop materials, as well as networking through chats, forums and video conferences. The new platform also includes links to services in the *Dhoch3* programme which makes available materials for training German teachers through the DAAD's Moodle platform in a service running since 2018.



www.daad.de/sandd-project

Diversity Digitisation Sustainability



The DAAD programme *SDG Graduate Schools* are designed to strengthen international networks related to sustainable development. Programme funding comes from the BMZ. A report based on evaluation of programme monitoring demonstrated the great impact of the *SDG Graduate Schools* thanks to targeted tools, coherent funding phases and suitable levels of funding. One programme who can point to concrete successes is the German-Peruvian postgraduate programme *trAndeS*. Twenty early-career researchers have already completed its PhD programme on topics as diverse as water distribution conflicts and the efficiency of environmental legislation.



[www.daad.de/
sdg-programme](http://www.daad.de/sdg-programme)

Networking

Portrait

‘International cooperation is extremely complex. Good ideas can only make a difference if they are communicated well and if they are able to win over policymakers. That’s something I learned during an internship at UN Trade and Development. Geneva’s cultural diversity made it easy for me to make the leap into an international career, and it made me more open to new things – a mindset which continues to shape me today.’

Professor Bernhard Reinsberg

is Professor of International Political Economy and Development at the University of Glasgow and an alumnus of the *Carlo-Schmid Programm*, which arranges internships at international organisations and EU institutions. Reinsberg, who hails from Germany, is an expert on political science who conducts research into the political economics of organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In addition to investigating the factors which shape how such institutions behave, Reinsberg is examining the points at which their development projects make a concrete impact. For Reinsberg, this is more than just the business of academia. ‘When I was made a professor in Glasgow I fulfilled a life-long career ambition,’ he says.



Learn more about the
Carlo-Schmid-Programm,
which celebrated its
25th anniversary in 2025, at



www.daad.de/25jahre-csp
(German only)

Advising

At a glance

As an academic organisation, the DAAD advises individuals, institutions and decision-makers in science, academia, politics and society. The DAAD also fosters dialogue between the spheres of academia and politics on aspects of foreign, scientific and educational policy. Its profound regional and practical knowledge as well as extensive expertise on global higher education systems strengthens internationalisation skills among higher education institutions and across the German academic and scientific sectors as a whole. The DAAD provides information about opportunities for academic mobility and cooperation, promotes Germany as a location for study and research, and uses position papers and in-house studies to stimulate debates concerning international scientific and higher education policy.

(l-r): Dr Alexandra-Gwyn Paetz (Head of Technological Sovereignty and Innovation, BMFTR) and Dr Katja Lasch (then Director of the DAAD's New Delhi Regional Office) at the KIWi Policy Talk on 'Innovation & Indo-German Academic Exchange', 7 November 2025



‘International collaborations are vitally important’

India boasts one of the world's largest academic, scientific and innovation systems. This holds enormous potential for Germany in areas such as recruiting talent, boosting transferable skills through collaborations with the highly dynamic Indian start-up scene and research industries, and in reducing geopolitical dependencies. At the same time, it must be made clear that India sets its own

priorities, and these will not always fully align with European or German expectations around common research goals. India is positioning itself as an ‘emerging power’ which faces east as well as west, fostering close partnerships with Russia and China as much as with European states. As a consequence, each collaboration requires close scrutiny, balancing European interests against those of the respective part-





Professor Svenja Bedenlier from Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg delivers the keynote address at the 'Future Needs Collaboration' conference in September 2025. Professor Bedenlier sits on the DAAD's committee on future perspectives on academic mobility.

(l-r): Dr Kathrin Knodel (Programme Officer, International Affairs, DFG), John Dzaba (Events and Reporting, KIWi) and Matthias Schwarz (Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Expert, KIWi) meet during the KIWi Policy Talk '(How) can African-European science diplomacy promote equitable partnerships?' in October 2025.



ner, while also taking into account risks such as knowledge leakage. 'It is no longer automatically the case that every partnership is desirable', stressed Dr Michael Harms, Deputy Secretary General of the DAAD, in a Policy Talk hosted by KIWi (Centre for International Academic Cooperation) in Berlin in December 2025. At the same time, Dr Harms acknowledged that 'we cannot afford not to cooperate.'

Sharp rise in demand for advice and guidance

Indeed, academic collaborations often emerge in spaces shaped by competing demands: between openness and caution, or between sharing knowledge and acting in the interests of security. International cooperation remains vitally im-

portant, even when partners do not always share the same values. Scholarship must preserve its independence, but at the same time it must bear responsibility for its political impact. For higher education institutions, the implications are clear: international academic cooperation nowadays is embedded in complex geopolitical dynamics which constantly throw up new challenges for higher education institutions and researchers.

These trends are having an ever greater impact on the work of the DAAD. 'In 2025 we saw another sharp rise in demand for advice and guidance related to international collaborations. Stakeholders in academia, science and politics must reorientate themselves in the face of a

'Stakeholders in academia, science and politics must reorientate themselves in the face of a new set of circumstances in the world.'

Dr Sven Werkmeister

Director of the Strategy Department at the DAAD

new set of circumstances in the world,’ says Dr Sven Werkmeister, Director Strategy at the DAAD. In March 2025 the DAAD published a strategy paper on ‘India as a Strategic Partner’ (p. 94), which specifically considers the area of German-Indian academic cooperation.

Serving every corner of the world

The DAAD’s advice services cover every region of the world. ‘The Ukraine war, conflict in the Middle East, growing tensions with China – and last but not least the huge shifts in transatlantic relations under the second Trump presidency: all these have brought about a tangible sense of uncertainty,’ Werkmeister explains. The creation of the USA Advisory Service in the spring of 2025 was one way in which the DAAD responded to upheavals in world politics. ‘We have combined the expertise of the Centre for International Academic Cooperation, our New York Regional Office and the DAAD Info Centre in Bonn, which has enabled us to provide comprehensive information in an extremely fast-moving situation.’

Geopolitical considerations are playing an ever-more important role in project development at the DAAD. ‘Both for existing programmes and future plans, we need to give careful thought to the political implications which require consideration,’ explains Dr Klaus Birk, Director of the Projects Department at the DAAD. The issue of knowledge security is becoming more important every day. As a concept, knowledge security is broader in scope than research security, also covering areas such as student exchanges, teaching and knowledge management. Likewise, evaluating

security-relevant risks has become more challenging. To help higher education institutions respond to these demands, the DAAD published the KIWi Checklist Knowledge Security (p. 94) in September 2025 as a tool for researchers and staff to identify and systematically assess potential risks in international academic cooperation at an early stage.

However, the challenges of internationalisation are not solely due to knowledge security. Internationalisation is a highly complex issue which affects all aspects of an institution’s life and work and bears on every field of activity in higher education management, particularly in the context of questions of academic exchange in the light of geopolitical tensions and the demands of sustainable mobility. The DAAD has set up an academic committee to address future perspectives on academic mobility (p. 92) to make recommendations to support higher education institutions. In this regard, the committee is building on the DAAD’s entire suite of programme work, with a focus on ways of embedding mobility for students and lecturers in curricula.

Sharing knowledge systematically

Making knowledge available in a systematic way is a central aspect of the DAAD’s role in providing advice and guidance. The DAAD’s advisory services are not solely focused on current trends in geopolitics. They also cover a wide variety of topics and issues which are relevant to higher education institutions, students and researchers, from opportunities to study abroad and questions of project planning and partnership design, through to tap-

‘We take a scientific approach to analysing the key issues, providing new insights and fresh thinking to drive higher education policy to promote the internationalisation of the German scientific and academic system.’

Nina Salden

Head of the Strategic Planning Division at the DAAD

ping the potential of international students to become the skilled professionals of tomorrow. Studies and analysis which shed light on trends in international higher education cooperation are vital tools which provide evidence-based recommendations for internationalisation practice. The DAAD shares its expertise with higher education institutions and policymakers through publications, advice services for individuals and event formats designed to promote discussion and engage stakeholders. ‘We take a scientific approach to analysing the key issues, providing new insights and fresh thinking to drive higher education policy to promote the internationalisation of the German scientific and academic system,’ explains Nina Salden, Head of the Strategic Planning Division at the DAAD. ●

15.5

billions of euros:

additional value of tax and duty revenue paid by a single cohort of international students over the course of their careers,

compared to benefits provided to them by the state. This was one of the findings of a study conducted by the German Economic Institute (IW) on behalf of the DAAD and published in March 2025. The figure assumes that 40% of international students remain in Germany after graduating. The 'Ankommen, Studieren, Bleiben' ['Arriving, Studying, Staying on': How international students see their future in Germany] study, published in July 2025 (p. 94), reported

that two-thirds of international students in Germany hope to remain in the country after completing their studies. The study surveyed 20,000 students at 130 higher education institutions.

For a summary of the details of the IW study, visit



www.daad.de/iw-kurzbericht
(German only)

'Internationalisation shapes the ways institutions build their profiles, influences academic performance, and boosts the recruitment of talent to science, academia and the labour market. The DAAD's support for higher education institutions isn't just about funding programmes: it also includes advice and guidance. Our programmes boost expertise on issues related to internationalisation and help higher education institutions establish and expand sustainable structures.'

Internationalisation is a topic which affects every aspect of higher education institutions' life and work. In late September 2025, representatives of the higher education sector gathered for the 'Future Needs Collaboration' conference to discuss these questions. The DAAD provides a wide range of programme support for higher education institutions such as *Integrated International Degree Programmes with Double Degrees (ISAP)* and *Lehramt.International*.



Dr Katharina Fleckenstein

Head of Division Internationalisation of Higher Education in Germany at the DAAD

USA

Advisory Service

How do I get a visa? What's up with the travel ban? What should I be aware of on arrival in the USA? In the light of recent developments, anyone travelling to the USA for a study or research stay will likely need detailed advice and guidance. Since July 2025 the Advisory Service USA has provided a single point of contact for information on the situation in the USA, bringing together the expertise of the Centre for International Academic Cooperation (KIWi), the DAAD's New York Regional Office and the DAAD Info Centre. In future the USA Advisory Service will also offer bespoke advice to international students, PhD students and postdocs seeking alternative pathways or long-term prospects in Germany in view of the political situation in the USA. Funding for the Advisory Service comes from BMFTR budgets.



Find out more
about the Advisory
Service.

55,000

enquiries

handled by DAAD Info Centre staff in 2025, who provide advice and guidance by phone, email and social media, as well as in person at events – up 15% from 2024. In addition to this, the 'Amiko' chatbot responded to 54,000 enquiries through daad.de. The DAAD Info Centre is the central point of contact for questions about DAAD scholarships, and for enquiries about study and research in Germany and abroad.



www.daad.de/kontaktformular
(German only)

1,500

higher education staff took advantage of International DAAD Academy (iDA) professional training and development services in 2025

to keep up-to-date on the key issues around internationalisation and to network with other higher education institutions. One event that attracted particular attention was the 'Shaping Internationalisation' seminar, which explored the transformation in strategic perspectives. The event was aimed at higher education institution leaders who are championing internationalisation at their institutions. The seminar provided an opportunity for attendees to reflect on core questions of strategic internationalisation, such as: What is my institution's strategic position? How can it raise its international profile? And, how can my institution position itself for success on the global education market?



www.daad-akademie.de
(German only)

Securing science



© DAAD/Stefan Zeltz

(l-r): Anke Reiffenstuel (Commissioner for Foreign Education, Science and Academic Diplomacy at the Federal Foreign Office), Matthias Oel (Head of International Affairs and Europe, BMFTR), Sandra Pfister (Deutschlandfunk) take part in a panel discussion at the KIWI Policy Talk on 'Science Diplomacy – Latest Trends and Challenges' in Berlin, 16 December.

Openness is vital to international research, but geopolitical tensions are transforming the terms of international collaborations and creating new regulatory demands. Through the services it offers to provide advice and guidance, the DAAD helps institutions maintain a sense of perspective in complex partnerships.

How much risk is associated with a research collaboration? Should a PhD student be allowed to take sensitive data to a partner institution? What dual-use risks are concealed in an apparently harmless lab project? By what means can academic freedom be preserved under rising geopolitical tensions and a consequent increase in regulatory complexity? Since September 2025, higher education institutions

have been able to access a powerful tool to answer just these questions, in the form of the 17-question Knowledge Security Checklist compiled by KIWI, the Centre for International Academic Cooperation (p. 94). 'The list is designed to facilitate self-evaluation,' explains Sakine Weikert, KIWI's Head of Section. 'It's about reflection: where are we now, and how can we make academic collaboration more secure?'

The right tool at the right time

The Checklist came right on time. Even before its official publication, it was in widespread use, even at higher education institutions which had already developed their own knowledge security policies. 'The KIWi Checklist gives us a helpful frame of reference to calibrate our own guidelines,' explains Professor Anja Strobel, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research at TU Chemnitz, one of the institutions in this group. 'In 2022 we set up an ad-hoc ethics commission on security-relevant research, and as part of the same initiative, we introduced a two-stage assessment process in 2023 for all projects which are relevant to the ethics of security-related research.' Dr Wolfgang Reuter, Honorary Director of the German-Chinese Medical Society, often finds himself questioned about the risks of cooperation in the context of medical or medicine-adjacent research. 'The fact that the KIWi Checklist now provides knowledge gained from direct experience in condensed form is very helpful,' he explains.

Reconciling the values of openness and international cooperation with the need to protect knowledge and technology can be challenging, but the challenge is not new. 'Higher education institutions are becoming more and more aware of the extent to which this issue must be addressed at a fundamental, inter-departmental level – especially when it comes to remaining open to collaborations,' Weikert says, pointing out that the concept of knowledge security itself is helpful. 'We're not just talking about research in isolation. Fundamentally, we're talking about all forms of mobility and exchange, and the entire field of knowledge management. It's a demanding task for higher education institutions which cuts across all aspects of their work.'

Mounting challenges

Other specialists in the field have noted how it quickly became clear that, while security-relevant research ethics committees (REC) possess the tools to deal with these issues, the work is often extremely demanding. 'You really cannot underestimate the level of subject-specific expertise and regional knowledge you need to deal with these issues,' explains Dr Sven Werkmeister, Director of the DAAD's Strategy Department. 'Seen in purely legal terms, the rules set by the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control and EU sanctions lists provide a clear framework. But this is about something fundamentally greater than that. It's about a space for risk evaluation prior to any legal considerations, in which higher education institutions need to keep everything in perspective. In English, the term is "due diligence". It's hugely complex.'

In the light of these challenges, KIWi works in partnership with RECs through programmes such as KIWi Lab, workshops facilitated by KIWi for discussing sensitive topics and collaborating to find solutions. 'The challenges have grown enormously,' says Dr Solveig Randhahn, Managing Director of the ethics commission at Kiel University, who took part in a KIWi Lab on knowledge security in November 2025. 'This discourse is a great help, as it avoids each university having to reinvent the wheel.'

'KIWi provides a single source of information, offers guidance, and gives advice on specific questions. That is of great assistance to us in our work.'

Maria Melms

Research Ethics Coordinator and
Ombuds Office, Leipzig University



© Christian Hüller

Being able to call on the assistance of KIWi is invaluable to us.' This view is echoed by Maria Melms, Research Ethics Coordinator and Ombuds Office at Leipzig University. 'KIWi provides a single source of information, offers guidance, and gives advice on specific questions. That is of great assistance to us in our work on the REC.'

Regional expertise and expert knowledge combined

Any attempt to address the challenge of knowledge security in a holistic way requires raising awareness within the institution concerned, ensuring that staff understand the need to take an inter-departmental approach to sharing information. In addition to this, institutions must also develop the skills necessary to take this approach. For these situations, the KIWi team can turn to the 'KIWi Inhouse' model. 'We go to higher education institutions themselves. In a secure space, we can then respond to that institution's unique situation, taking a nuanced approach when evaluating issues such as how to deal with grey areas, and then explore solutions,' explains Sakine Weikert.

One such seminar in late 2023 at the University of Mannheim triggered a long-term process which delivered tangible results in 2025. 'It enabled us to develop a set of mandatory processes for evaluating research and mobility collaborations, export

controls and staff screening. ‘Without that support in combination with the DAAD’s valuable knowledge and network of experts, I am quite sure this issue would not have been treated as such a high priority at the University of Mannheim,’ says Birgit Heilig, Director of the university’s international office.

The online series of KIWi Connect events regularly takes up topical aspects of knowledge security. Topics such as dual-use and how to work with visiting researchers remain regular fixtures on the agenda. In addition to this, KIWi holds around 600 sessions a year to advise institutions on specific collaborations. Benedikt Brisch, Head of Division for Knowledge Exchange and Network at the DAAD, points out two key strengths of KIWi’s approach. ‘On the one hand, the DAAD is very close to higher education institutions, so there’s a correspondingly high level of trust when discussing even sensitive issues. On top of that, you have the comprehensive body of regional expertise that the DAAD possesses.’ For Brisch, these factors are vital when it comes understanding the connections between knowledge related to a specific domain and wider regional concerns and considerations. For example, KIWi can help researchers explore how general dual-use risks associated with a technology interact with the risks that

arise from a specific institutional cooperation in a specific country. ‘It’s always about context. Who are we cooperating with? What political networks do my cooperation partners belong to? What’s the wider political situation in the country?’

Embedding security in science and academia

Seen in this light, there is always a strong foreign academic policy element to questions of knowledge security due to its interaction with the principle of academic freedom which demands close and detailed discussions between actors in the spheres of science, academia and politics. The KIWi Policy Talk on ‘Knowledge Security in Practice’ provided a forum for just these conversations, and represented one of the high points of 2025. Forming part of the Falling Walls Science Summit in Berlin, the Policy Talk prompted discussions of the different approaches taken by Germany, Sweden, the UK and Canada. All involved agreed that knowledge security is an international challenge.

In a position paper on science and security in times of geopolitical upheaval published in 2025 (p. 94), the German Science and Humanities Council further underlined the importance of this issue. The DAAD welcomed the proposal that responsibility for knowledge security should

rest with the academic and scientific community itself. ‘That is something we strongly concur with at the DAAD,’ Brisch relates. The German Science and Humanities Council also initiated the creation of a National Platform for Research Security, where the DAAD contributed to the design process through a stakeholder consultation set in motion by the BMFTR, which commenced in October 2024 and concluded in December 2025. As part of this process, KIWi chaired a working group on information and guidance support structures, the results of which were presented at the BMFTR conference ‘Joining Forces to Safeguard Research’.

Playing a part at a European level

At a European level, too, the issue of knowledge security is gaining traction. The Council of Europe has already made recommendations on strengthening research security. In Winter 2025, the European Commission adopted new concrete measures which include the creation of an EU Centre of Expertise on Research Security. The DAAD is contributing to these discussions at a European level. ‘We expect continued growth in the need for advice and guidance among German higher education institutions,’ says KIWi Head of Section Weikert. ‘There is no doubt that our involvement at the level of the EU will step up even further.’

The experiences of 2025 make it clear that knowledge security is now firmly established as an element of international academic cooperation. By providing tools to share advice and guidance, fostering networks and creating opportunities for exchange, the DAAD helps institutions find their way through complex situations, empowering higher education institutions to act with responsibility and confidence on the global stage. ●



© Jürgen Haack

‘The challenges have grown enormously. Being able to call on the assistance of KIWi is invaluable to us.’

Dr Solveig Randhahn
Ethics Commission Managing Director,
Kiel University

Whether or not international students succeed in Germany is not solely down to their academic achievements. Recent studies show that feeling welcome and accepted here is also a critical factor. In recognition of this, the DAAD added the concept of 'belonging' to the latest edition of its Diversity Agenda (p. 94), published in 2025. The Agenda aims to reinforce diversity, equal opportunities, inclusion and participation in the sphere of international academic exchange in the period up to 2030. As part of the DAAD's commitment to providing the best possible support for talent of all kinds, scholarship applications will in future give greater recognition to applicants' diverse life circumstances.



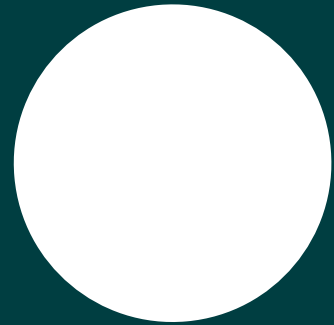
www.daad.de/diversity-agenda

The My GUIDE study orientation portal provides tailored and targeted support for international students on their pathways to studying in Germany. The service has now expanded its activities, including an AI-based tool where higher education institutions can get help with responding to enquiries. The system generates suggested answers based on information already available on the respective institution's website. These responses can then be checked, adapted and shared. Answers are generated for non-specific enquiries, and can be customised by each university.



myguide.de/higher-education

Diversity Digitisation Sustainability



Driving environmental change isn't just something that higher education institutions can do for themselves. They can also serve as a 'compass for the digital sustainable society,' said Professor Matthias Barth, President of Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, in his presentation to a seminar at the International DAAD Academy (iDA) in February 2025. Focusing on questions related to the themes of digitalisation and sustainability, the iDA offered fresh ideas and new thinking directly related to the work of higher education staff on the question of ways to make international exchange sustainable.



www.daad-akademie.de
(German only)

Advising

Portrait

‘The DAAD plays a key role in funding diversity-friendly higher education and academic mobility. It has already achieved a great deal, providing support for students with disabilities when applying for international study programmes, working with higher education institutions to develop inclusive learning environments, and campaigning for political changes to remove barriers to higher education.’

Collins Losu

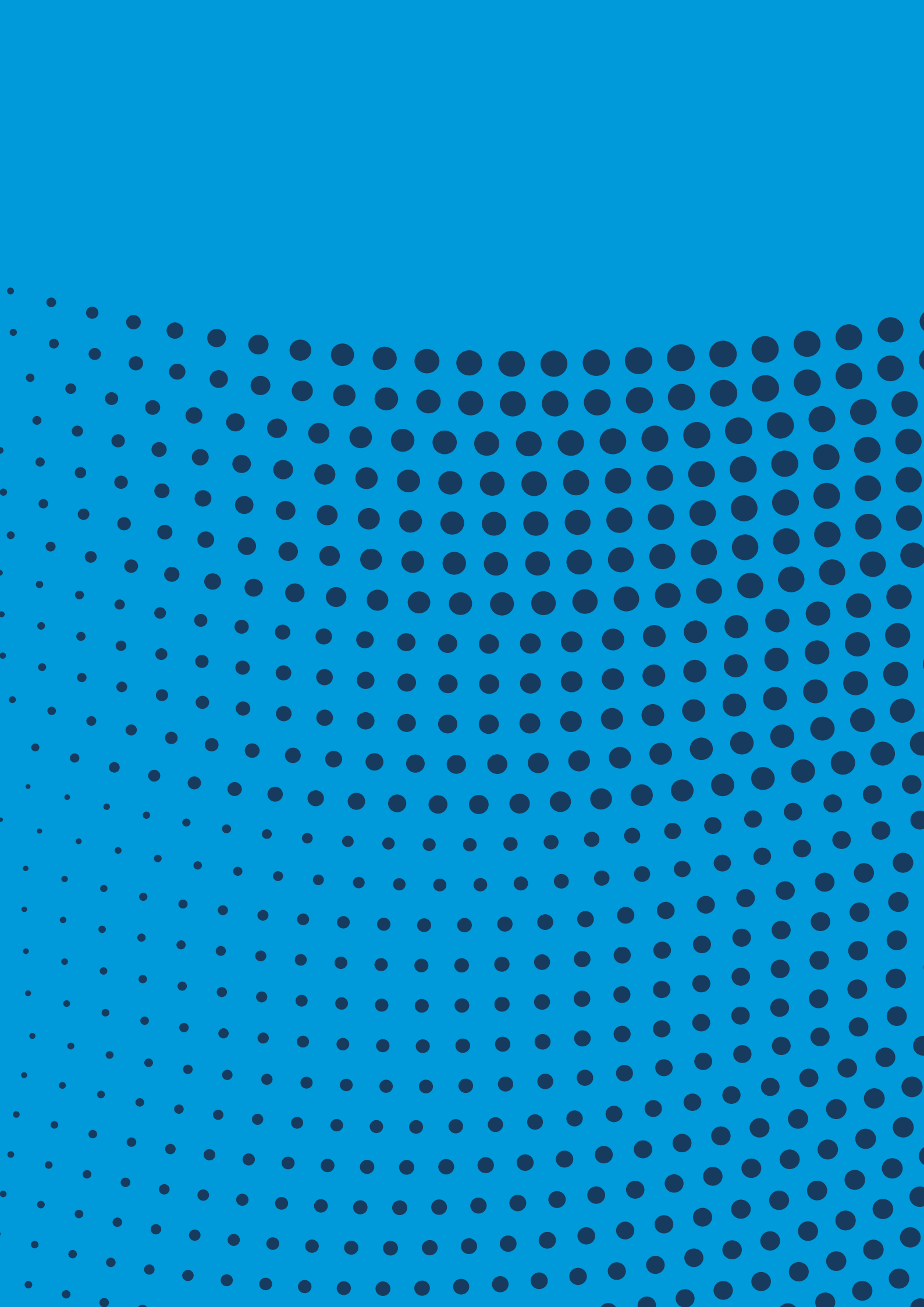
from Ghana has been studying for a master’s degree in social protection on a hybrid programme at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences in Sankt Augustin since 2024. Blind since childhood, Losu gained his bachelor’s degree in political science and philosophy at the University of Ghana in Accra in 2019. He then went on to work in Accra as an inclusion manager and advisor at a German-Ghanaian recruitment agency, which creates jobs in the IT sector in Africa. As a DAAD scholarship holder, he spoke at the Global Disability Summit in Berlin (p. 94), where he was thrilled by opportunities to share ideas and experiences with other international students with disabilities on how they deal with challenges along their education journeys.



Find out more about the
Global Disability Summit and
how the DAAD contributed to
this important event at



[www.daad.de/
g-d-summit-inclusion](http://www.daad.de/g-d-summit-inclusion)





Funding worldwide

Which country attracted the largest number of DAAD scholarship holders from Germany in 2025? Among international students in Germany, what was the largest group by nationality? This chapter presents a snapshot of key data and trends from 2025 across every region of the world.

Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from **Germany**

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Spain	9,782
France	7,468
Italy	6,443
Austria	3,703
Sweden	3,061

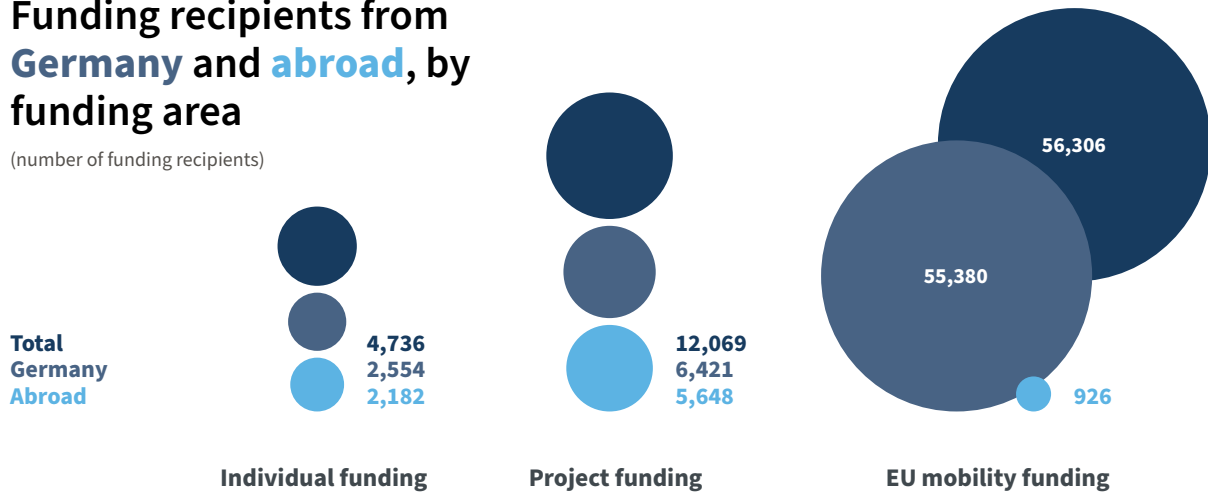


Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from **abroad**

1,033	Poland
1,014	Turkey
565	France
558	Italy
528	United Kingdom

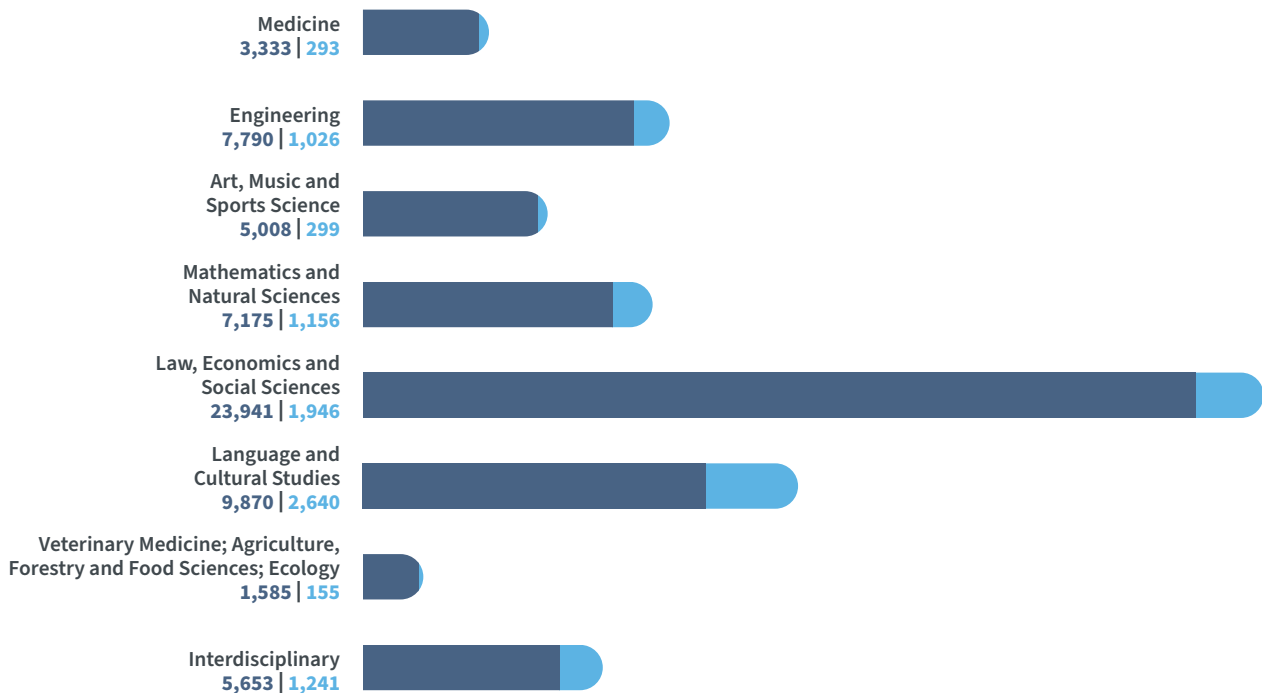
Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by funding area

(number of funding recipients)



Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by subject group

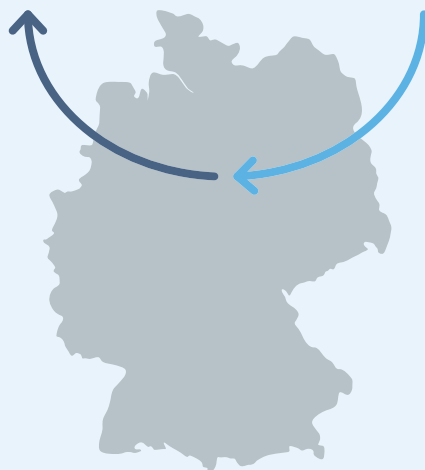
(number of funding recipients)



Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from Germany

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Georgia	335
Uzbekistan	153
Kazakhstan	141
Armenia	120
Ukraine	76



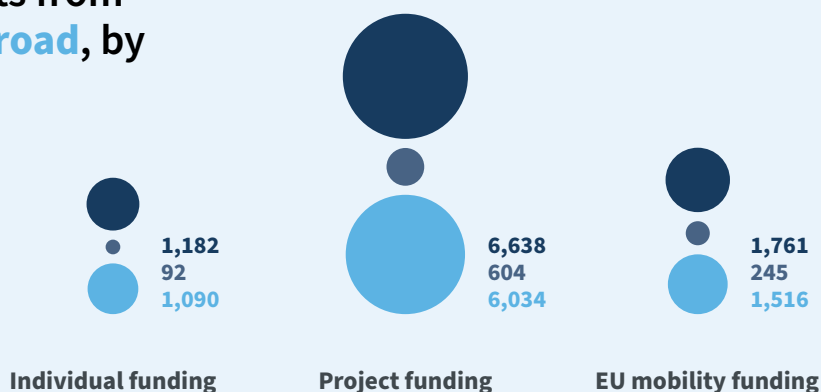
Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from abroad

4,990	Ukraine
942	Kazakhstan
744	Georgia
487	Russian Federation
452	Uzbekistan

Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by funding area

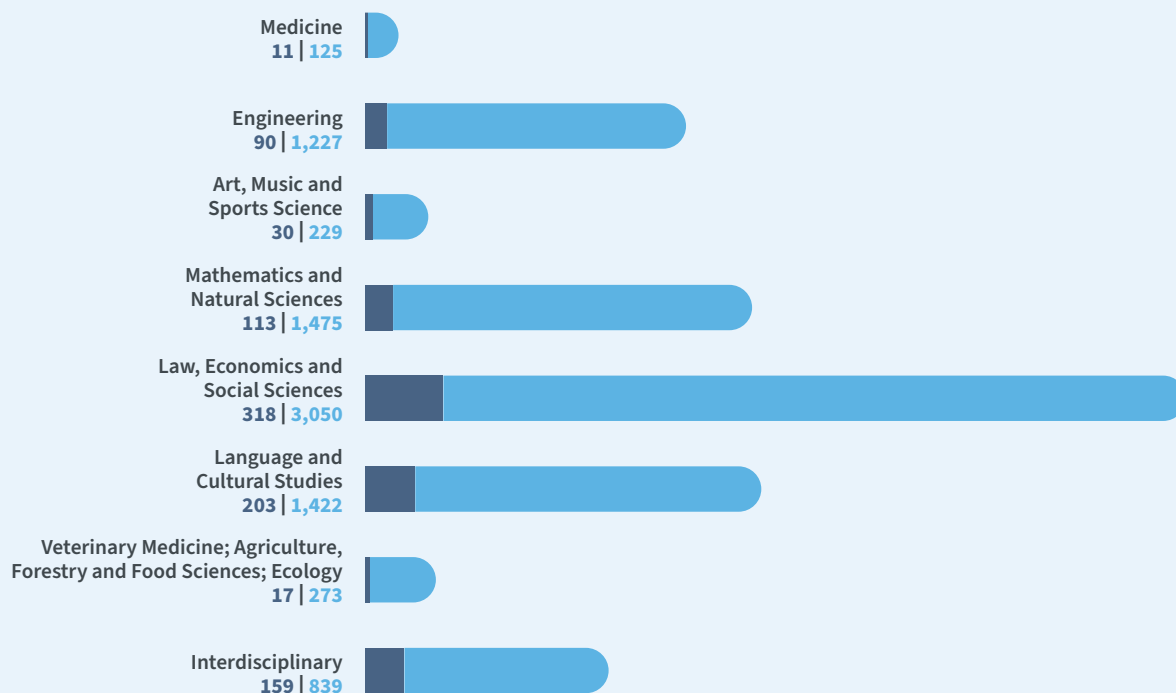
(number of funding recipients)

Total
Germany
Abroad



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by subject group

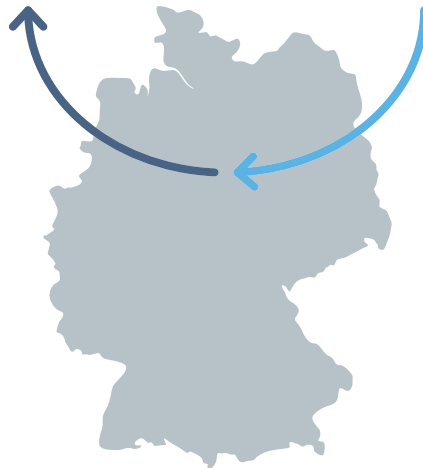
(number of funding recipients)



Funding recipients from Germany to the USA and Canada

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

USA 2,216
Canada 580



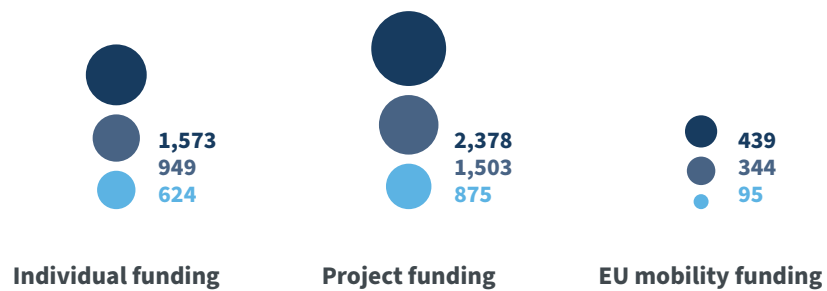
Funding recipients from the USA and Canada to Germany

1,214 USA
380 Canada

Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by funding area

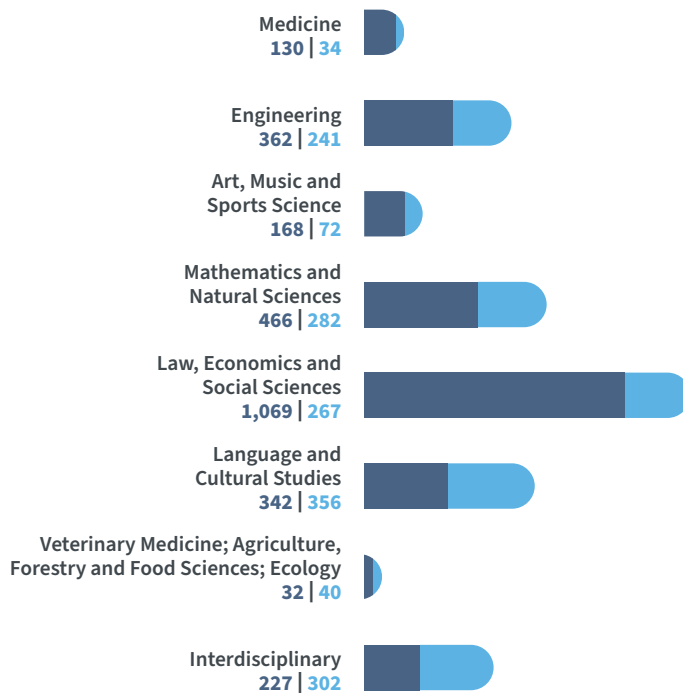
(number of funding recipients)

Total
Germany
Abroad



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by subject group

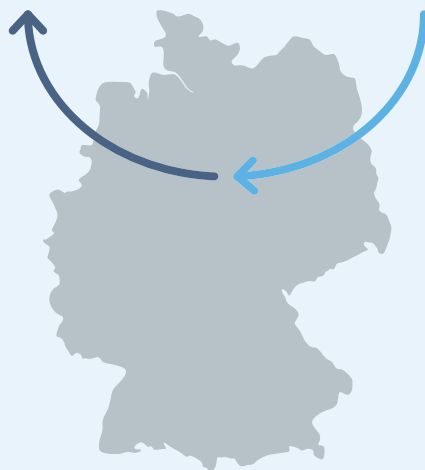
(number of funding recipients)



Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from Germany

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Brazil	546
Mexico	419
Argentina	343
Colombia	310
Chile	201



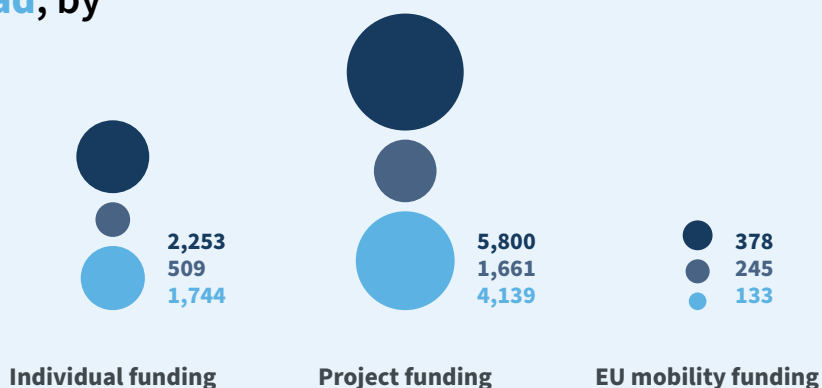
Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from abroad

1,436	Colombia
903	Brazil
670	Mexico
563	Argentina
528	Peru

Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by funding area

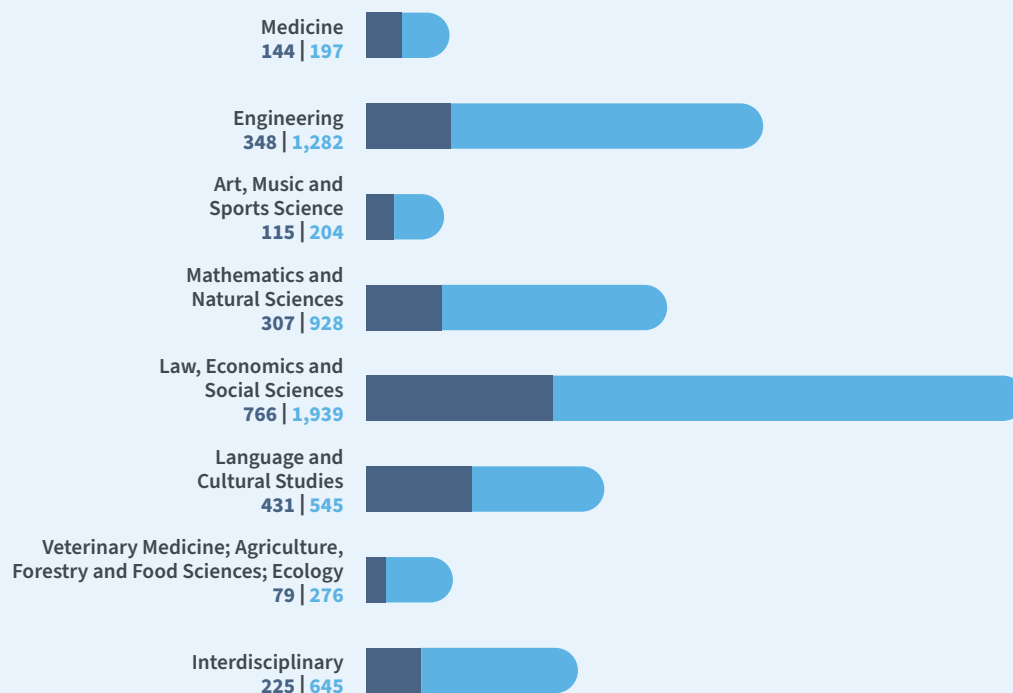
(number of funding recipients)

Total
Germany
Abroad



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by subject group

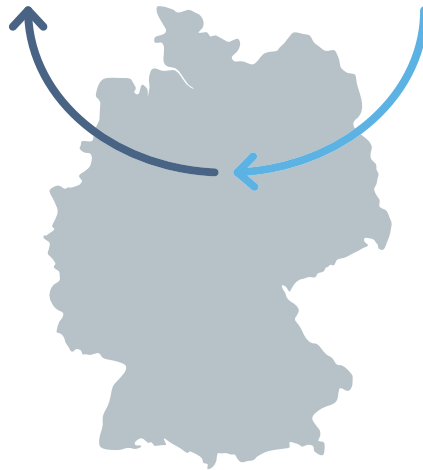
(number of funding recipients)



Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from **Germany**

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Egypt	321
Jordan	292
Tunisia	206
Israel	190
Morocco	134

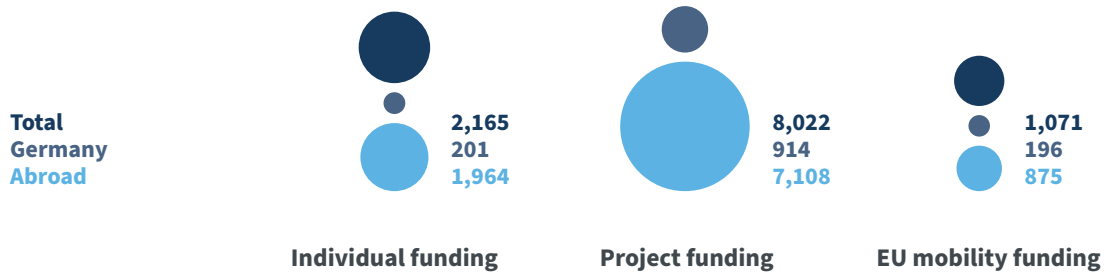


Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from **abroad**

2,423	Egypt
1,456	Jordan
1,271	Tunisia
651	Pakistan
637	Israel

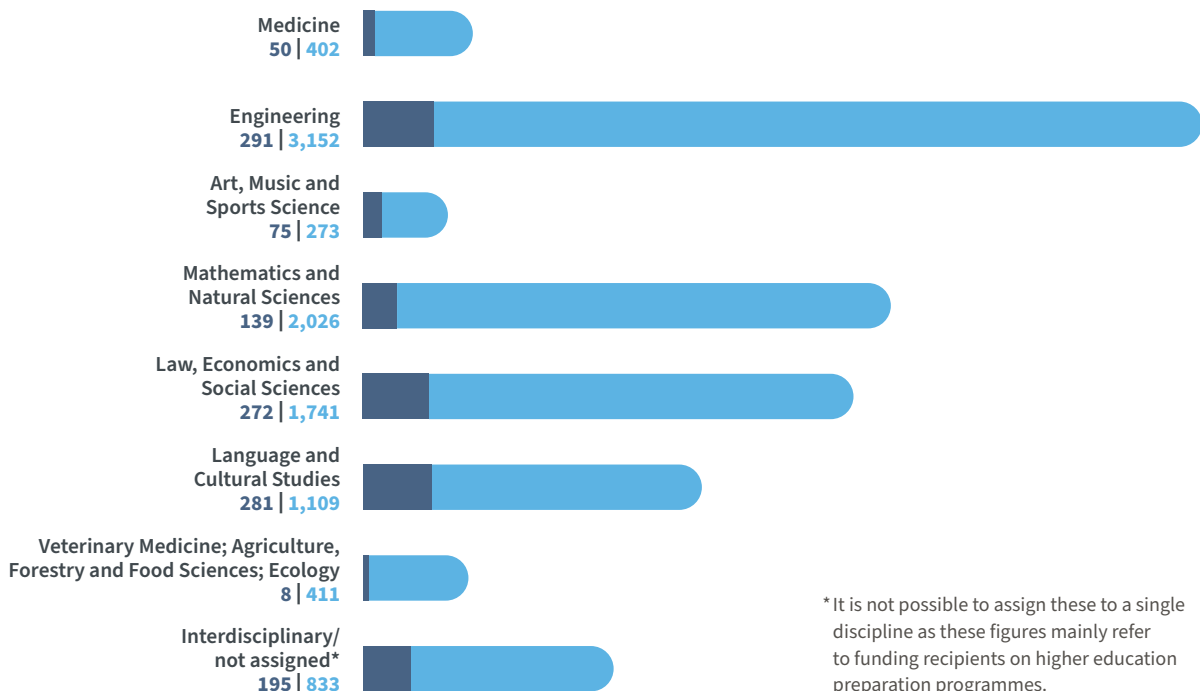
Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by funding area

(number of funding recipients)



Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by subject group

(number of funding recipients)

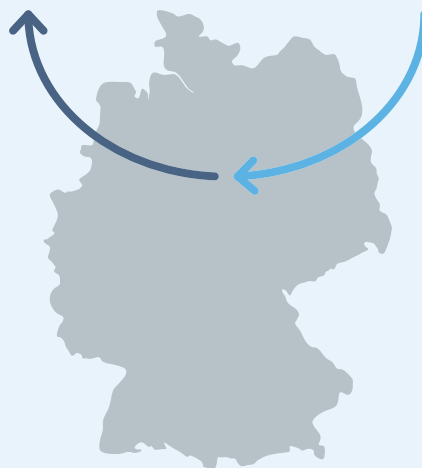


* It is not possible to assign these to a single discipline as these figures mainly refer to funding recipients on higher education preparation programmes.

Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from Germany

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

South Africa	528
Kenya	199
Namibia	195
United Republic of Tanzania	177
Ghana	154

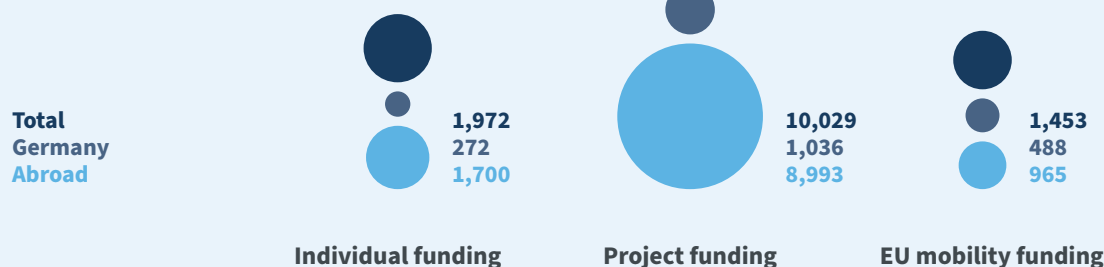


Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from abroad

2,796	Nigeria
1,488	Ghana
1,312	Kenya
1,054	South Africa
651	Ethiopia

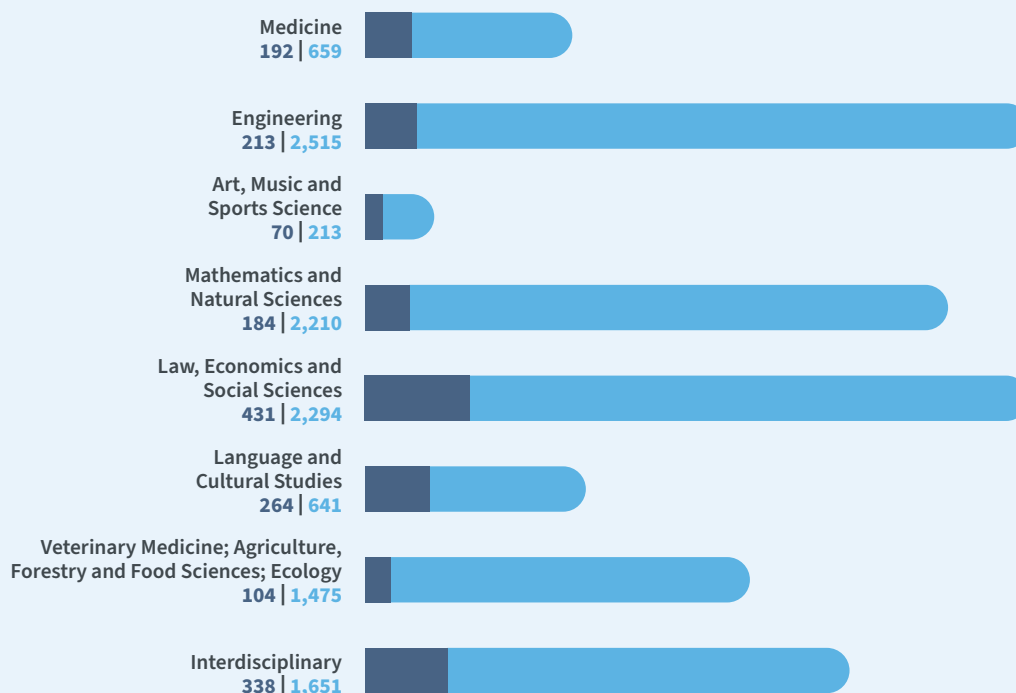
Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by funding area

(number of funding recipients)



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by subject group

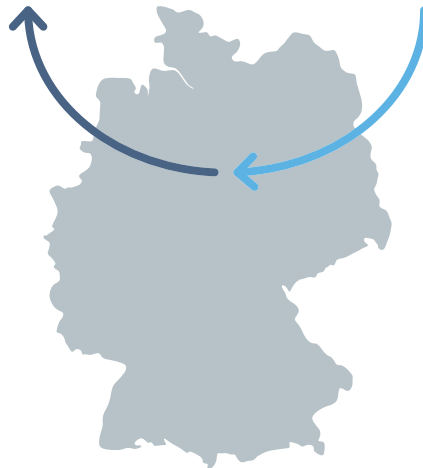
(number of funding recipients)



Top 5 destination countries for funding recipients from **Germany**

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Japan	986
Australia	789
China	741
Korea (Republic)	707
Taiwan	297



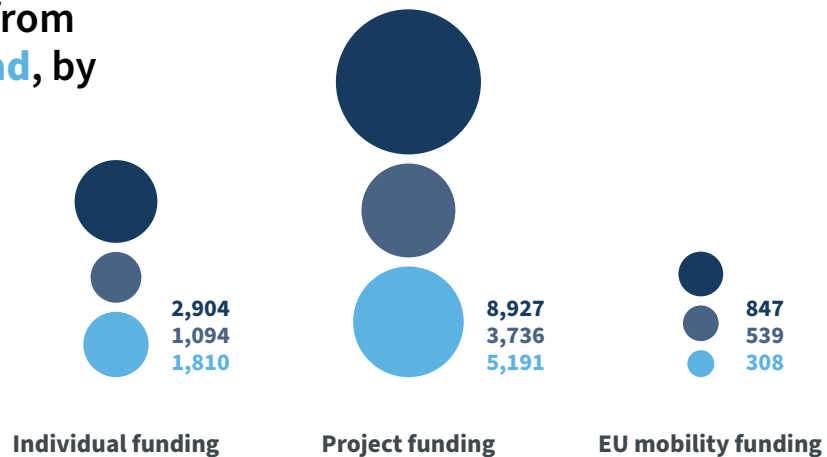
Top 5 countries of origin for funding recipients from **abroad**

1,858	India
1,205	China
632	Vietnam
607	Indonesia
413	Korea (Republic)

Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by funding area

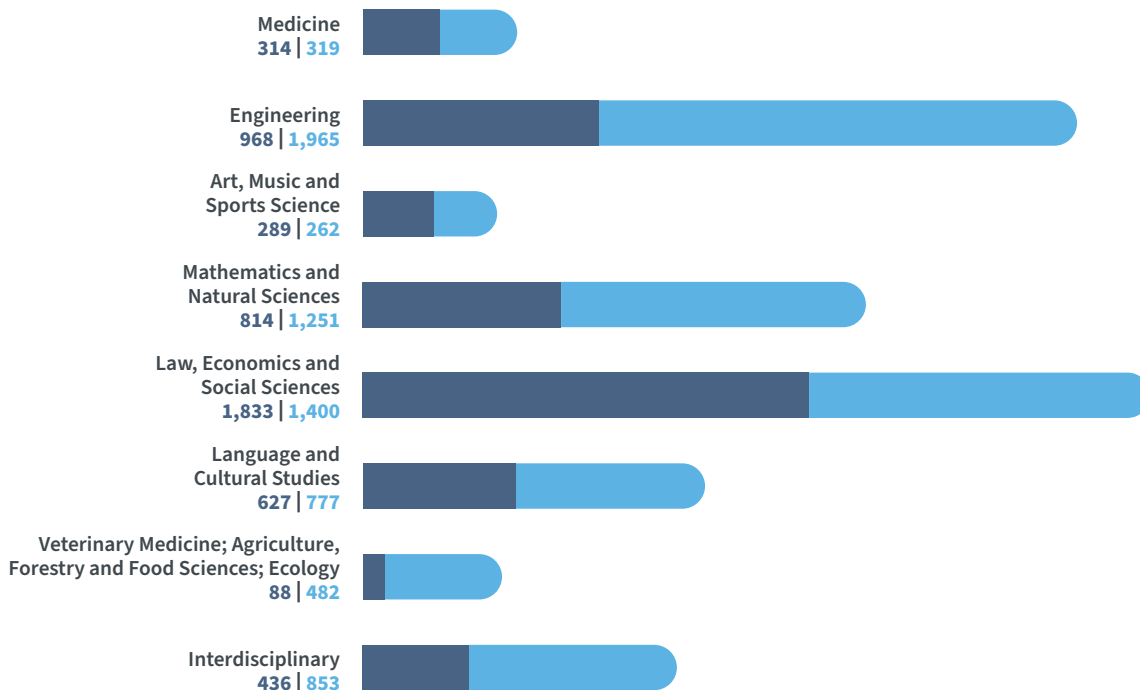
(number of funding recipients)

Total
Germany
Abroad



Funding recipients from **Germany** and **abroad**, by subject group

(number of funding recipients)

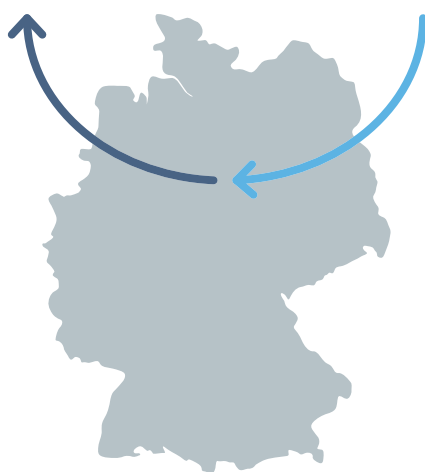


Worldwide

Top 10 destination countries for funding recipients from Germany

Includes all funding areas
(individual funding, project funding,
EU mobility funding)

Spain	9,782
France	7,468
Italy	6,443
Austria	3,703
Sweden	3,061
Netherlands	2,942
Finland	2,806
Norway	2,662
Portugal	2,629
United Kingdom	2,453

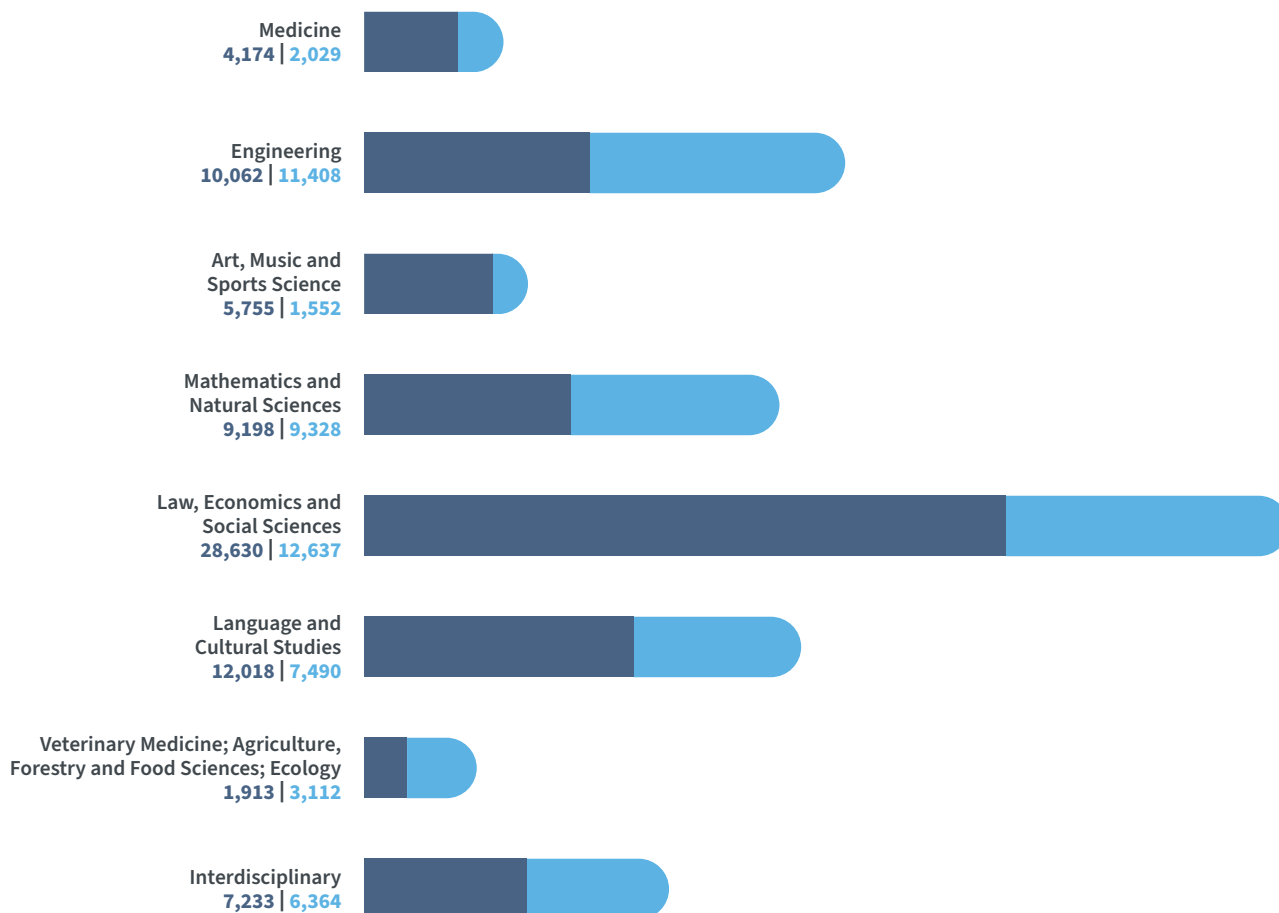


Top 10 countries of origin for funding recipients from abroad

4,990	Ukraine
2,796	Nigeria
2,423	Egypt
1,858	India
1,488	Ghana
1,456	Jordan
1,436	Colombia
1,312	Kenya
1,271	Tunisia
1,214	USA

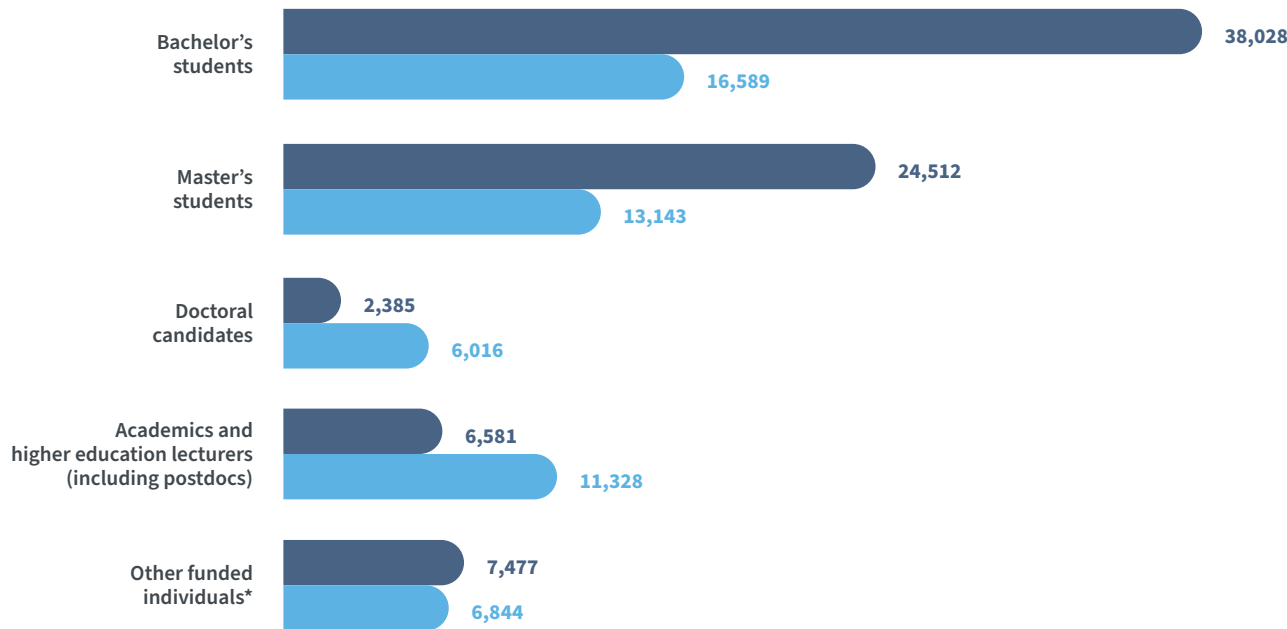
Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by subject group

(number of funding recipients)



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by academic status

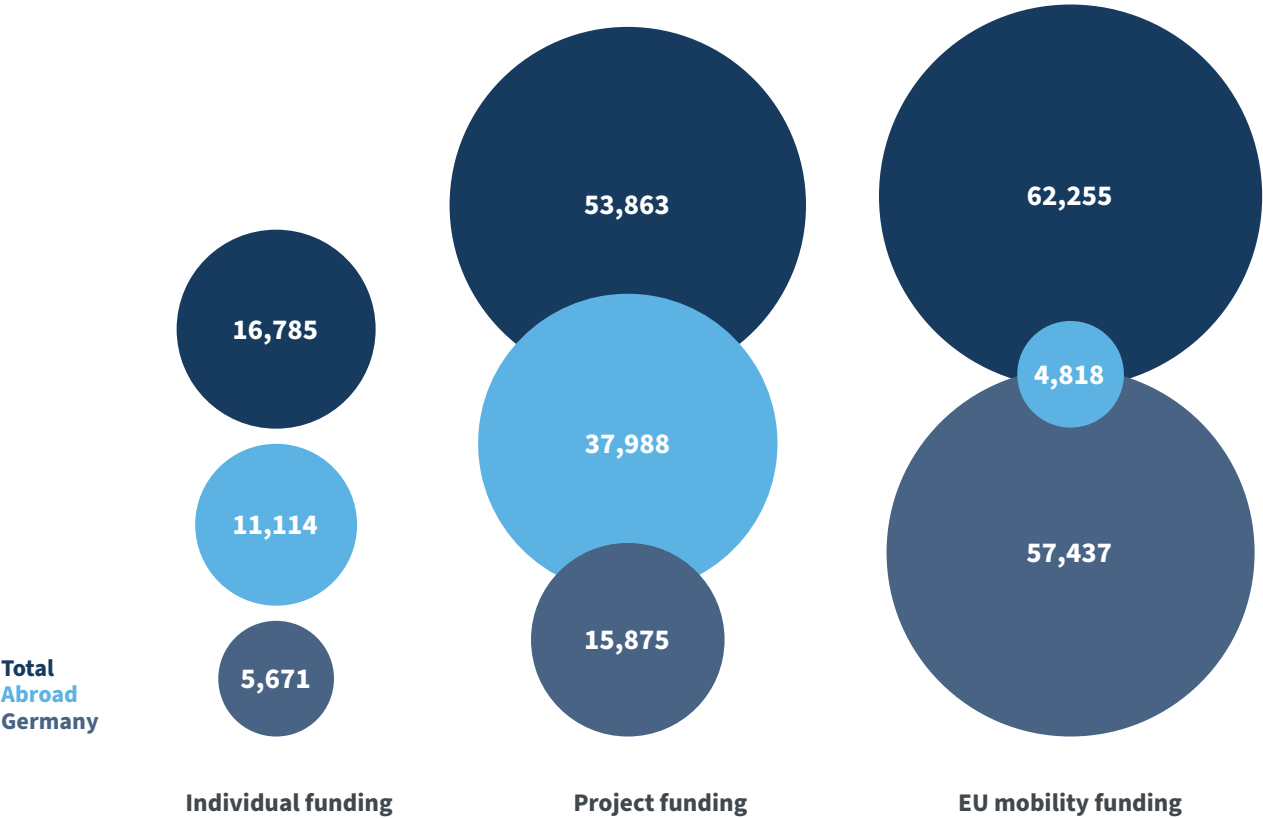
(number of funding recipients)



* Individuals on preparatory courses and higher education staff supervising projects

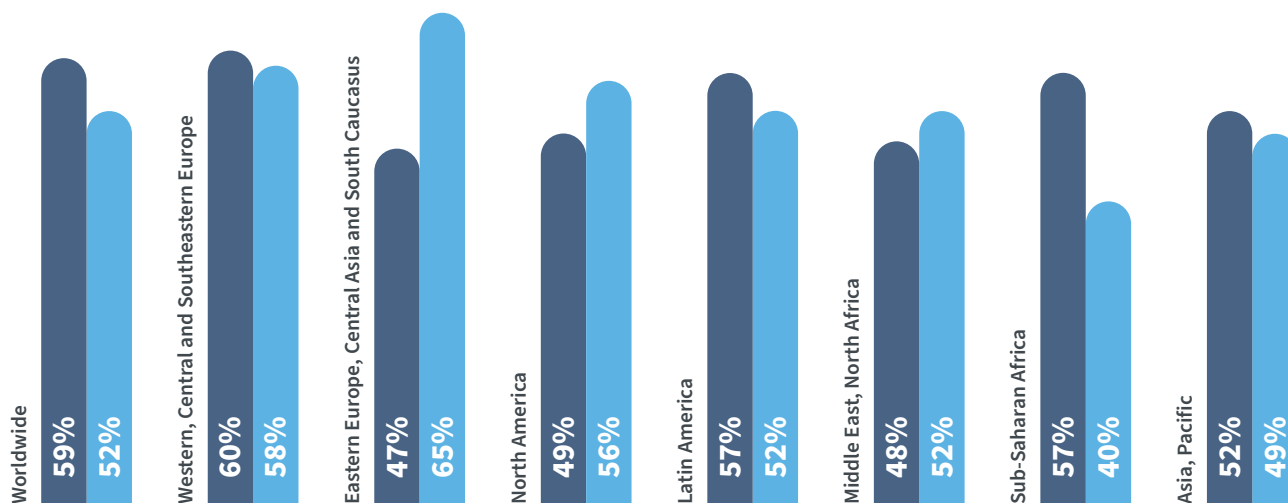
Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by funding area

(number of funding recipients)



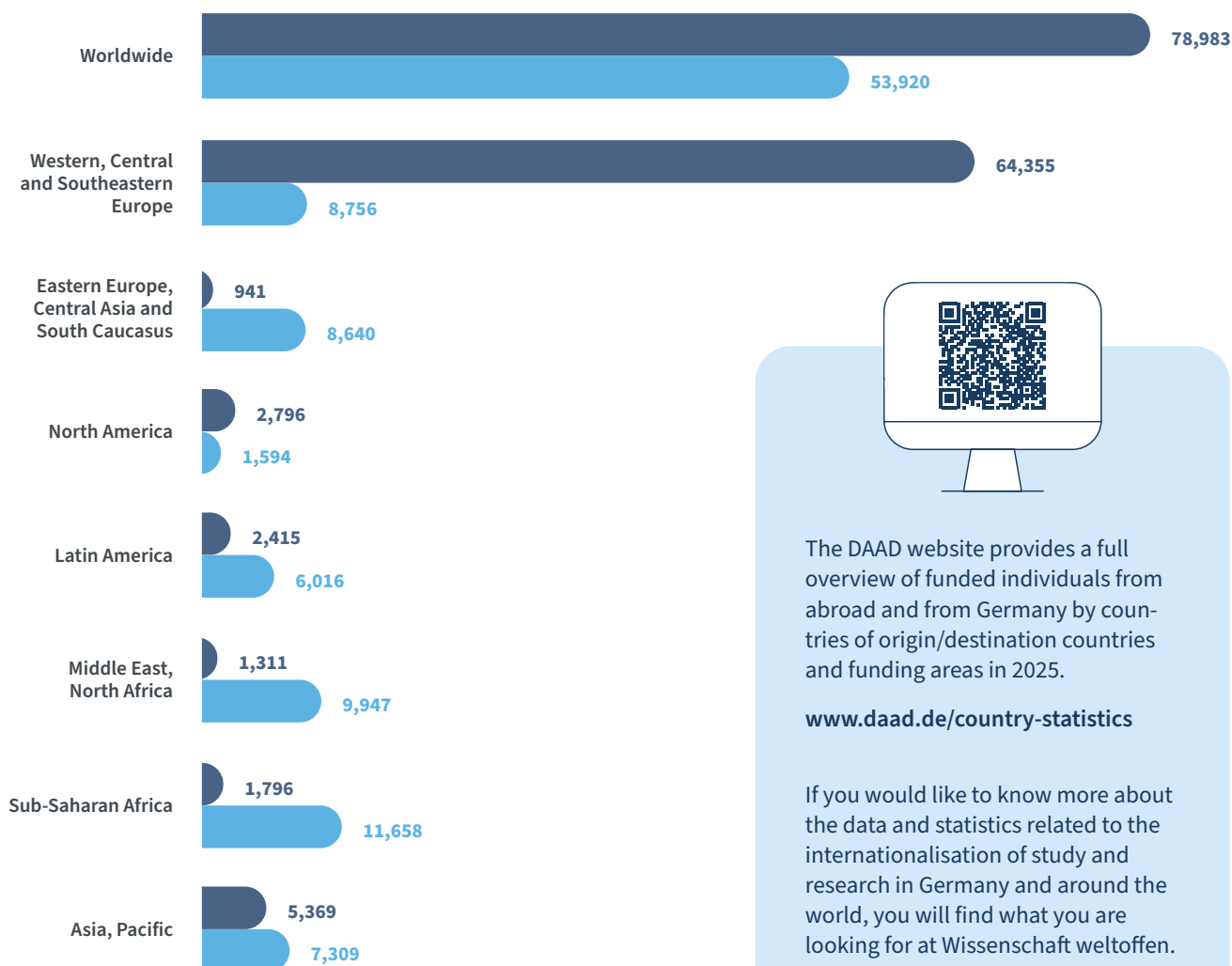
Proportion of women among funded individuals from Germany and abroad

(in %)



Funding recipients from Germany and abroad, by world region

(number of funding recipients)



The DAAD website provides a full overview of funded individuals from abroad and from Germany by countries of origin/destination countries and funding areas in 2025.

www.daad.de/country-statistics

If you would like to know more about the data and statistics related to the internationalisation of study and research in Germany and around the world, you will find what you are looking for at Wissenschaft weltoffen.

www.wissenschaft-weltoffen.de/en

Full overview

Funded individuals from **abroad** and from **Germany** by funding area 2024/2025

Calendar year	Funded individuals from abroad		Funded individuals from Germany		Total funded individuals		of whom new	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2025	
I. Individual funding – total	14,293	11,114	7,073	5,671	21,366	16,785	7,978	
1. By status								
Bachelor's students	3,816	2,409	2,346	1,697	6,162	4,106	2,696	
Master's students	4,622	4,125	1,665	1,642	6,287	5,767	2,043	
Doctoral candidates	3,575	2,937	1,510	1,115	5,085	4,052	1,693	
Academics and higher education teachers (incl. postdocs)	2,280	1,643	1,552	1,217	3,832	2,860	1,546	
2. By duration of funding								
<1 month	3,442	2,188	2,288	1,246	5,730	3,434	2,809	
1–6 months	2,093	1,023	2,160	1,974	4,253	2,997	2,393	
>6 months (long-term funding)	8,758	7,903	2,625	2,451	11,383	10,354	2,776	
3. Selection of major programmes								
DAAD scholarships for study	2,255	2,117	2,276	1,875	4,531	3,992	1,486	
DAAD scholarships for research	2,826	2,065	601	574	3,427	2,639	890	
Hilde Domin Programme for at-risk students and doctoral candidates	273	178			273	178	22	
Scholarships through cooperation and third-party-funded programmes	1,297	1,265	87	92	1,384	1,357	460	
Development cooperation scholarship programmes	2,331	1,928			2,331	1,928	542	
Lecturers, Long-term lecturers			446	437	446	437	74	
Short-term lecturers			82	59	82	59	41	
Travel Grants for Conferences or Invited lecturers			1,538	978	1,538	978	978	
Language and subject courses	1,650	623	372	84	2,022	707	666	
Internships	617	315	1,343	1,225	1,960	1,540	1,327	
II. Project funding – total	52,934	37,988	16,425	15,875	69,359	53,863	45,174	
1. By status								
Bachelor's students	17,290	12,361	6,062	6,238	23,352	18,599	16,578	
Master's students	15,676	8,244	6,040	5,686	21,716	13,930	12,061	
Doctoral candidates	3,602	2,825	967	891	4,569	3,716	2,801	
Academics and higher education teachers (incl. postdocs)	9,757	8,865	2,724	2,462	12,481	11,327	8,346	
Other funded individuals*	6,609	5,693	632	598	7,241	6,291	5,388	
2. By duration of funding								
<1 month	23,062	24,344	9,918	9,182	32,980	33,526	29,910	
1–6 months	23,220	8,443	5,220	5,355	28,440	13,798	12,083	
>6 months (long-term funding)	6,652	5,201	1,287	1,338	7,939	6,539	3,181	
3. Selection of major programmes								
PROMOS – Programme to Increase the Mobility of German Students			8,204	8,453	8,204	8,453	8,453	
Structural programmes for study abroad (ISAP, Double Degree)	693	656	1,037	1,086	1,730	1,742	1,222	
Grant and Support Programmes (STIBET)	4,165	3,585			4,165	3,585	3,270	
SDG-Partnerships	2,255	3,337	295	363	2,550	3,700	3,056	
Higher education partnerships with countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe	1,127	1,145	634	705	1,761	1,850	1,515	
	Project 2022	Project 2023	Project 2022	Project 2023	Project 2022	Project 2023	Project 2023	
III. EU mobility programmes – total	304	4,818	49,896	57,437	50,200	62,255	62,255	
1. Individual mobility								
1. Erasmus student mobility (study abroad)			37,455	40,258	37,455	40,258	40,258	
2. Erasmus student mobility (internship abroad)			7,370	8,759	7,370	8,759	8,759	
3. Erasmus staff mobility (lecturers, other staff)	128	136	5,071	7,127	5,199	7,263	7,263	
4. Ukraine incoming (student and staff mobility)	176	242			176	242	242	
2. Mobility with partner countries		Project 2022		Project 2022		Project 2022	Project 2022	
1. Erasmus student mobility (study/internship abroad)		2,628		406		3,034	3,034	
2. Erasmus staff mobility (lecturers, other staff)		1,812		887		2,699	2,699	
Total DAAD funding (I + II + III)	67,531	53,920	73,394	78,983	140,925	132,903	115,407	

*Individuals in preparatory courses and higher education staff supervising projects

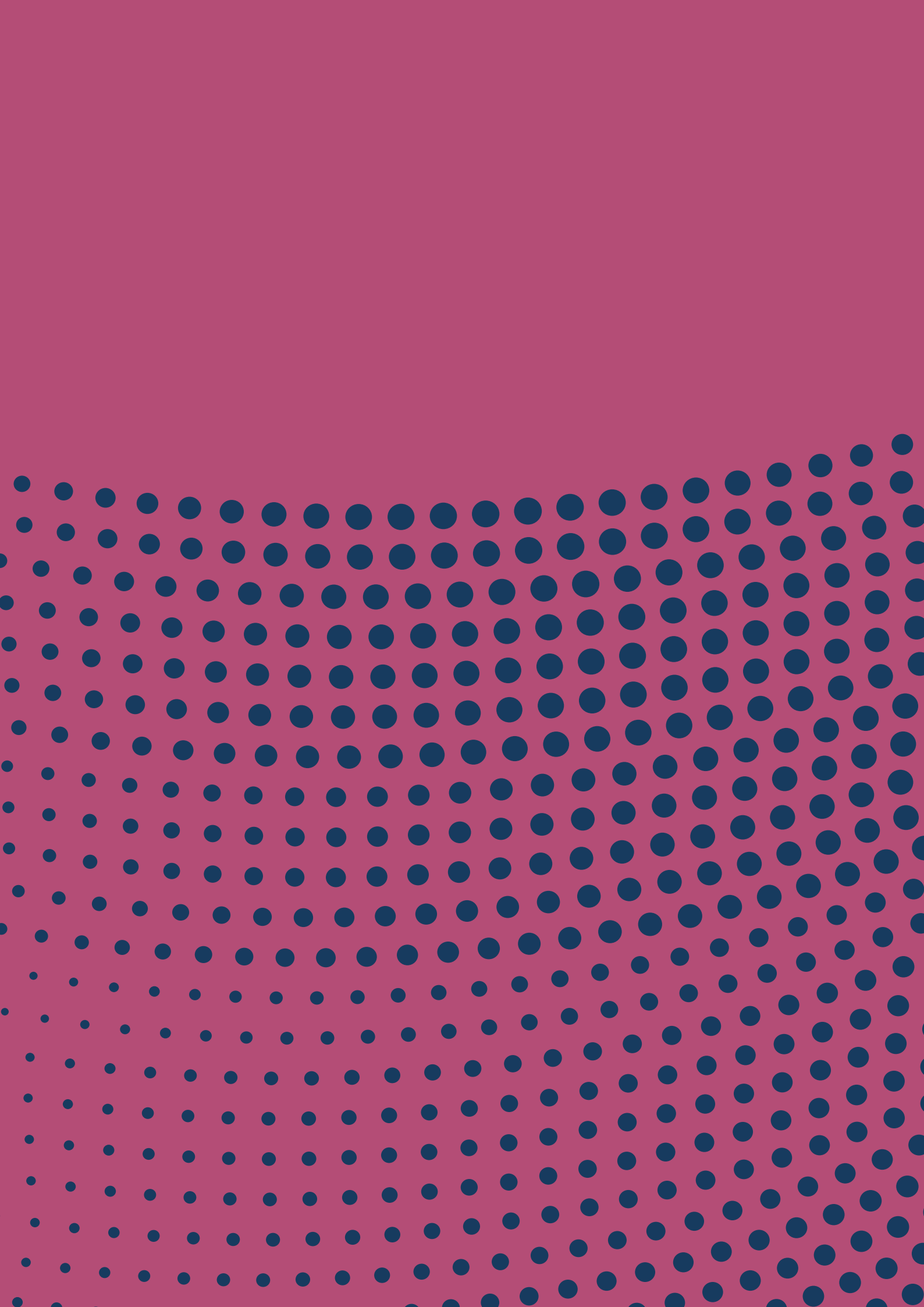
This table of DAAD-funded individuals is divided into three funding areas. The DAAD's individual funding predominantly supports students, researchers and higher education lecturers who have successfully applied for a DAAD scholarship. The DAAD's project funding mainly funds programmes to support the internationalisation of higher education structures. As the National Agency for Erasmus+ Higher Education Cooperation, the DAAD awards funding to higher education institutions to support academic mobility to other European countries in the form of EU mobility funding. The data for 'Individual Mobility' shown in the table refer to the most recently concluded funding period (2023) for the KA131 programme line (formerly KA103 – Mobility with Programme Countries, which ran 06/2023 – 07/2025; as of Feb 2026). The 2022 reference year shown here depicts mobility from the 2022 Erasmus funding period (06/2022 – 07/2024). This year is the first that reliable data is available for the programme line 'International Credit Mobility' (KA171), due to a delayed start and extended project timescales (2022 funding period: 08/2022 – 07/2025). The funding recipient numbers shown here refer to the latest available data.

Structure-building projects with DAAD funding in selected programmes





- Transnational education projects
- Centres of African Excellence/African Excellence
- Centres of Excellence
- SDG Graduate Schools
- Centres for German and European Studies (ZDES)
- Global Centres



Appendix

Annual financial statement 2025

No.	Funding bodies and programmes	Total funding EUR	Total expenditure EUR
1	Section I – II – Institutional administrative budget (operations including investments)		
1.1	Administrative budget for domestic operations		
	Own funds	91,700.00	91,700.00
	Miscellaneous income, Germany	162,622.49	162,622.49
	Income Federal State of Berlin operations	492,651.35	492,651.35
	Federal Foreign Office grants from APS funds	3,318,865.24	3,318,865.24
	Federal Foreign Office (AA)	45,410,000.00	45,404,451.33
	Total domestic	49,475,839.08	49,470,290.41
1.2	Administrative budget for international operations		
	Miscellaneous income, other countries	233,200.53	233,200.53
	Maison Heinrich Heine, Paris, compensation for use	495,960.03	495,960.03
	DWIH compensation for use payment income	162,877.68	162,877.68
	Income from Academic Evaluation Centre (APS) operations	13,666,920.84	13,666,920.84
	Federal Foreign Office grants from APS funds	950,178.31	950,178.31
	Federal Foreign Office (AA)	3,306,078.57	3,278,626.09
	Total international	18,815,215.96	18,787,763.48
	Section I – II – Administrative budget for operations in Germany and abroad	68,291,055.04	68,258,053.89
2	Section III – Federal Foreign Office/Federal State of Berlin – institutional programme budget		
	Miscellaneous income, programme budget	-147,109.71	–
	Federal State of Berlin institutional programme budget operative funds	123,848.65	123,848.65
	BKP income from sales of CDs, books and entry fees	37,938.26	37,938.26
	Funds transferred for self-management from previous year	1,200,000.00	1,200,000.00
	Federal Foreign Office institutional programme budget operative funds	142,483,921.43	142,336,811.72
	Total programme funds	143,698,598.63	143,698,598.63
	Section III – Institutional programme budget operative funds	143,698,598.63	143,698,598.63
	Section IV – Project budget from public funding bodies		
3	Federal Foreign Office (AA)		
	Programme funds	5,331,719.00	5,181,813.50
	Project-related administrative funds	802,056.00	737,359.15
	Total AA	6,133,775.00	5,919,172.65
4	Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR)		
	Programme funds	159,090,883.47	153,133,504.80
	Project-related administrative funds	33,700,874.84	32,634,718.84
	Total BMFTR	192,791,758.31	185,768,223.64
5	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)		
	Programme funds	47,673,478.00	44,699,345.28
	Project-related administrative funds	6,197,552.15	5,810,914.89
	Total BMZ	53,871,030.15	50,510,260.17
6	Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE)		
	Programme funds	1,768,561.37	1,736,618.17
	Project-related administrative funds	515,482.33	489,954.26
	Total BMWE	2,284,043.70	2,226,572.43
7	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (BMLEH)		
	Programme funds	188,550.00	188,550.00
	Project-related administrative funds	125,703.92	124,723.50
	Total BMLEH	314,253.92	313,273.50
8	Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM)		
	Programme funds	1,578,084.00	1,524,078.92
	Project-related administrative funds	515,220.00	505,152.14
	Total BKM	2,093,304.00	2,029,231.06
	Programme funds	215,631,275.84	206,463,910.67
	Project-related administrative funds	41,856,889.24	40,302,822.78
	Subtotal Section IV – Project budget from public funding bodies	257,488,165.08	246,766,733.45

No.	Funding bodies and programmes	Total funding EUR	Total expenditure EUR
Section IV – Project budget from public funding bodies			
9	Federal states		
	Programme funds	845,630.06	722,478.24
	Project-related administrative funds	181,335.00	164,971.75
	Total Federal states	1,026,965.06	887,449.99
10	European Union (EU) – Erasmus+ Education Programme		
	Programme funds	367,025,364.82	241,660,107.81
	Project-related administrative funds	5,379,393.47	5,123,755.53
	Total EU – Erasmus+ Education Programme	372,404,758.29	246,783,863.34
	Programme funds	583,502,270.72	448,846,496.72
	Project-related administrative funds	47,417,617.71	45,591,550.06
	Section IV – Project budget from public funding bodies	630,919,888.43	494,438,046.78
	Programme funds	727,200,869.35	592,545,095.35
	Project-related administrative funds	115,708,672.75	113,849,603.95
	Section I – IV – Administrative, programme and project budget from public funding bodies	842,909,542.10	706,394,699.30
Section V – Project budget from third-party funds			
11	European Union (EU) – Special Projects		
	Programme funds	6,229,473.40	3,519,075.79
	Project-related administrative funds	1,754,990.83	1,451,765.25
	Total EU – Special Projects	7,984,464.23	4,970,841.04
12	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)		
	Programme funds	541,886.83	409,980.94
	Project-related administrative funds	357,629.17	218,446.24
	Total GIZ	899,516.00	628,427.18
13	Programmes with partners in Germany and abroad		
	Programme funds	10,271,891.04	8,868,129.80
	Project-related administrative funds	2,100,278.54	2,058,251.06
	Total programmes with partners in Germany and abroad	12,372,169.58	10,926,380.86
14 – 16	Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (SV)		
	Programme funds	846,901.33	387,787.74
	Project-related administrative funds	103,000.00	102,591.50
	Total SV	949,901.33	490,379.24
17.1	Dr Mildred Scheel Foundation for Cancer Research		
	Programme funds	847,053.00	808,362.07
	Project-related administrative funds	63,114.77	52,543.53
	Total Dr Mildred Scheel Foundation	910,167.77	860,905.60
17.2 – 17.10.3	Other funding bodies		
	Programme funds	1,536,206.19	1,182,561.46
	Project-related administrative funds	792,825.19	852,222.62
	Total other funding bodies	2,329,031.38	2,034,784.08
	Programme funds	20,273,411.79	15,175,897.80
	Project-related administrative funds	5,171,838.50	4,735,820.20
	Section V – Project budget from third-party funds	25,445,250.29	19,911,718.00
	Programme funds	747,474,281.14	607,720,993.15
	Project-related administrative funds	120,880,511.25	118,585,424.15
	TOTAL Sections I – V	868,354,792.39	726,306,417.30

DAAD bodies

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Term of office 2024–2027, last updated: January 2026

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PRESIDENT: [Prof. Dr Joybrato Mukherjee](#) University of Cologne

VICE PRESIDENT: [Dr Muriel Helbig](#) Technische Hochschule Lübeck

APPOINTED MEMBERS UNDER ARTICLE 14 OF THE DAAD STATUTES: **Government Ministries** [Christina Beinhoff](#) Federal Foreign Office [Dr Jochen Zachgo](#) Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space [Dr Tania Rödiger-Vorwerk](#) Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development [Dr Gunilla Fincke](#) Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [Dr Kathrin Isele](#) Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy [Dr Kathrin Hahne](#) Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media **Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany** [Dr Katja Böhler](#) / [Martina Schmitz](#) / [Dr Vera Ziegeldorf](#) **German Rectors' Conference** [Prof. Dr Walter Rosenthal](#) President of the German Rectors' Conference [Prof. Dr Frank Dellmann](#) President of Fachhochschule Münster [Dr Ute Fries](#) Pro-Rector for Teaching, Study and International Affairs University of Music and Theatre Leipzig [Prof. Dr Ute Habel](#) Pro-Rector for International Affairs Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen [Prof. Dr Angela Ittel](#) President of Technische Universität Braunschweig **Institutions** [Dr Heide Ahrens](#) Secretary General of German Research Foundation [Matthias Anbuhl](#) Secretary General of the German National Association for Student Affairs [Dr Yvonne Dorf](#) Managing Director of the German Association of University Professors and Lecturers [Johannes Ebert](#) Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut [Andrea Frank](#) Deputy Secretary General of the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft [Dr Annette Julius](#) Secretary General of the Secretary General of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation [Dr Thomas Kiefer](#) Managing Director of Deutscher Verband Technisch-Wissenschaftlicher Vereine [Dr Roman Luckscheiter](#) Secretary General of the German Commission for UNESCO [Dr Markus Zanner](#) Secretary General of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

ELECTED MEMBERS (TERM OF OFFICE 2024–2027): [Prof. Dr Kerstin Mey](#) University of Limerick [Dr Volker Treier](#) member of the Executive Board of the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce

REPRESENTATIVES OF STUDENT BODIES (TERM OF OFFICE 2026–2027): [Amro Bay](#) Technische Universität Braunschweig [Maren Weissig](#) Dresden University of Technology [Daniel Janke](#) University of Würzburg

Members

As of: January 2026

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION MEMBERS: 244

STUDENT BODY MEMBERS: 104

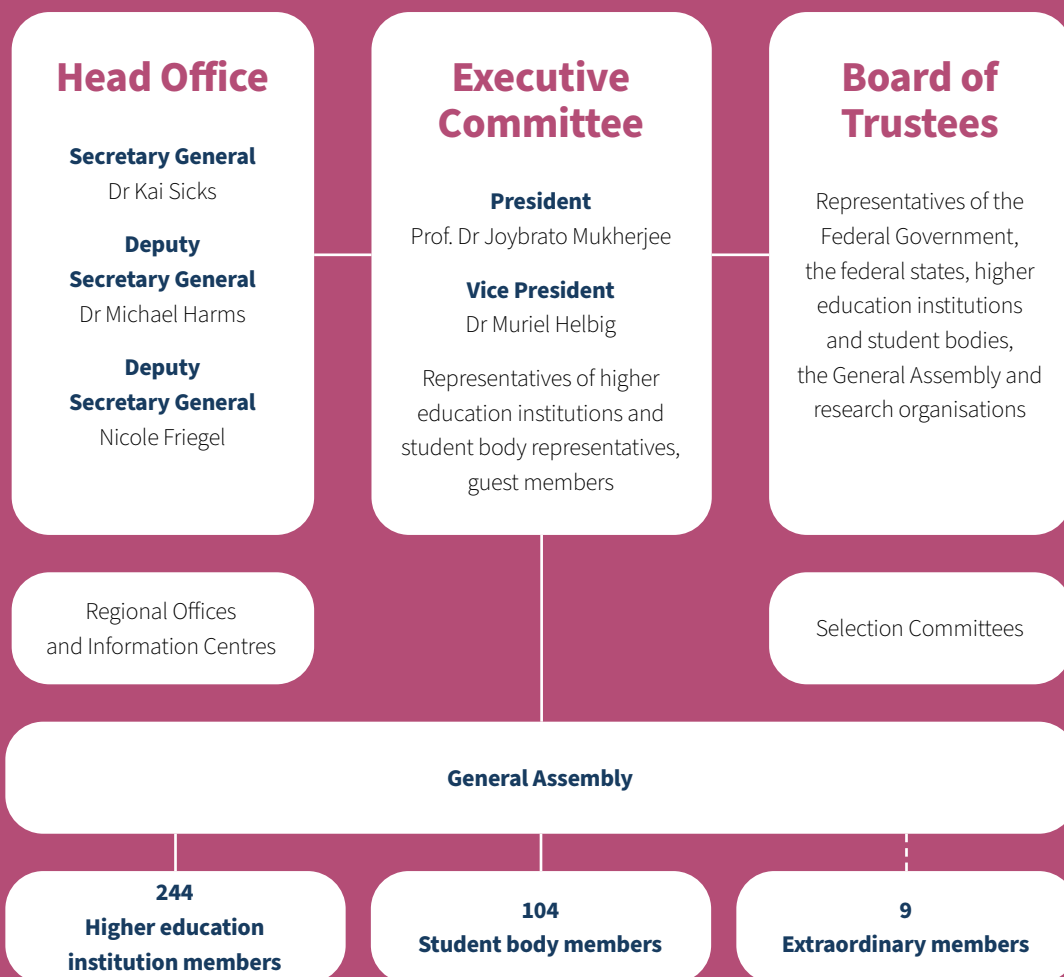
EXTRAORDINARY (NON-VOTING) MEMBERS: 9

Organisation and people

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) arose from a student initiative and was formally established in 1925. The DAAD is structured as a membership organisation to work with and on behalf of Germany's higher education institutions and their student bodies. The members elect the Executive Committee at a general assembly. The office of DAAD President has been held since January 2020 by Professor Joybrato Mukherjee,

Rector of the University of Cologne. Dr Muriel Helbig, President of the Technische Hochschule Lübeck, serves as the DAAD's Vice President. Dr Kai Sicks has been Secretary General of the DAAD since April 2021. He is supported by Deputy Secretaries General Dr Michael Harms and Nicole Friegel. The DAAD operates a DIN EN ISO 9001 quality management system, and a DIN EN ISO 14001 environmental management system.

The DAAD's Structure



DAAD organisational chart

As of: January 2026

Academic committees

With the goal of drawing on evidence-based expertise in order to strengthen the DAAD's work and raise its wider profile, the DAAD is committed to availing itself even more fully of its member institutions academic and scientific expertise, making the most of their specialist strengths and forging links with its own networking and practical expertise in international collaboration.

The system of academic committees was set up in 2024 to achieve this end. In 2024 and 2025, two committees considered substantive questions with particular relevance to international academic cooperation. The committees were wrapped up in 2025. The committees' recommendations and advice are published and made available to DAAD member institutions and other stakeholders in the academic and scientific system once their work is complete.

The Challenges and Opportunities for Academic Cooperation with States in the Post-Soviet Region Committee comprised nine experts who considered possible ways of conducting academic exchange in the 'post-Soviet' region under current geopolitical conditions. The committee also evaluated the role that academic cooperation could play in the context of German and European science diplomacy. The committee met for two working

sessions in 2025. The initial version of its final report was published on the DAAD website in December.

The Future Perspectives on Academic Mobility Committee comprised ten members who worked on developing scenarios and potential ways in which international academic mobility could take shape in the next ten years. In this, the committee built on academic and scientific discussions from the last ten years on relevant topics such as sustainability (in all its various dimensions) and digitalisation. The committee met for three working sessions in 2025. Its final report is due to be published in 2026.

Following its successful two-year pilot programme, the Academic Committee model is set to continue providing a means to draw upon the expertise of the DAAD's member institutions to enhance the DAAD's work.

Find out more about Academic Committees
and read reports on their work at



[www.daad.de/
wissenschaftliche-ausschuesse](https://www.daad.de/wissenschaftliche-ausschuesse)
(German only)

Selection committees

Deciding on awards of scholarships and other forms of funding is part of the day-to-day work of the DAAD and is a key feature of academic independence. Funding decisions for DAAD individual scholarships and institutional project grants are made by selection committees which operate on an independent and voluntary basis. These committees play a vital role in the work of the DAAD.

In 2025, hundreds of permanent and ad-hoc assessors served on over 80 DAAD selection committees, complemented by numerous additional assessors, regional experts and alumni through the DAAD's global network. Their expertise and the efficiency of the assessment bodies ensure that scholarship holders and projects are selected through competitive processes that are both independent and fair. Fairness and equality of

opportunity are matters of great importance for the DAAD.

Anyone interested in contributing to the DAAD's selection procedure as an assessor can register their interest via the DAAD website at www.daad.de/selection-committees. The DAAD is particularly interested to hear from academics and scientists working at higher education institutions or non-university research institutes. Assessors' academic and regional expertise are of key importance, but at the same time, the DAAD is committed to greater diversity and internationalisation and to equal representation of women and men on selection committees.



www.daad.de/selection-committees

Artists-in-Berlin Program

Since the DAAD took over the programme in 1964, the *Artists-in-Berlin Program* has been one of the most prestigious scholarship programmes for artists. For a list of the jurors who select the Program's guests, please visit



www.berliner-kuenstlerprogramm.de/en/jurys

Advisory Council on German Studies

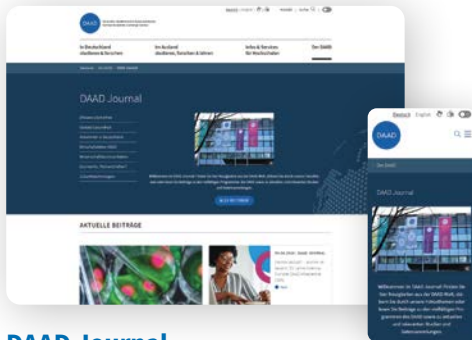
The Advisory Council on German Studies is an international body that advises the DAAD on funding policy in its core activities in German Studies and German as a foreign language outside Germany. The Council's members are appointed by the DAAD's Executive Committee. The members for the 2025 – 2028 period can be found at



www.daad.de/beirat-germanistik
(German only)

Publications and references

Keep up to date with the DAAD: The DAAD regularly releases information about scholarships, programmes and developments, as well as sharing insights, analysis and stories from the world of higher education around the globe.

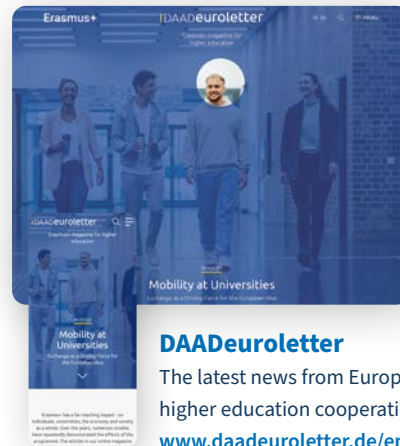


DAAD Journal

Contexts and analysis of current topics in international higher education and science policy [some English-language content], also available as a monthly newsletter (German only).

www.daad.de/daad-journal

www.daad.de/newsletter-daad-aktuell



DAADeuroletter

The latest news from European higher education cooperation

www.daadeuroletter.de/en



Letter

The Letter magazine reports on people, projects and perspectives in international exchange, focusing on alumni.

www.daad.de/letter-en



Wissen. Welt. Wandel. The DAAD podcast

Science and academia forge bonds that transcend borders. The DAAD podcast scrutinises topics from across internationalisation, research and academic exchange. (German only)

www.daad.de/wissen-welt-wandel



Press information

The latest reports and official DAAD statements for media professionals

www.daad.de/press

Publications referred to in this Annual Report

Shaping Change through Diversity and Inclusion: Diversity Agenda 2.0

→ www.daad.de/diversity-agenda

DAAD Perspectives: India as a Strategic Partner

→ www.daad.de/perspectives-india

DAAD & IW study: Die Bedeutung studienbezogener Auslandsaufenthalte im Transformationsprozess der deutschen Wirtschaft (German only)

→ www.daad.de/studie-iw-transformation

KiWi Knowledge Security Checklist

→ www.daad.de/checklist-knowledge-security

DAAD Studien: Ankommen, Studieren, Bleiben: Wie internationale Studierende ihre Zukunft in Deutschland sehen (German only)

→ www.daad.de/ankommen-studieren-bleiben

DAAD & IW study: Volkswirtschaftliche Effekte der Zuwanderung über die Hochschulen: Auswirkungen auf öffentliche Haushalte und Wertschöpfung in Deutschland (German only)

→ www.daad.de/pr-iwstudy-students

FIT and Profi plus projects map

→ www.daad.de/map-fit-profiplus

Recommendations of the German Council of Science and Humanities on knowledge security

→ www.daad.de/pr-council-of-science

The full text of the speeches referred to on pages 22–23 are available to read at www.bundespraesident.de/EN and www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en. Federal Minister Bär's welcome address can be obtained on request from the BMFTR and is quoted here with permission.

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Info Centre

Information on studying abroad (in German):

www.daad.de/kontaktformular

Information on studying in Germany (in English):

www.daad.de/contactform