

Information on the German Host Institution

Combined Study and Practice Stays for Engineers from Developing Countries (KOSPIE) – Tunisia – 2026-2028

1. Name of the institution

Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences (SUAS)



Photo: Schmalkalden University

2. General information on the institution

2.1 Institution has been accredited by:

Institutional Accreditation according to the German Accreditation Council

2.2 Does your institution follow the Code of Conduct for exchange programmes?

Yes

2.3 Welcome programmes for exchange students:

Holders of KOSPIE scholarships will profit from both the regular inbound services at SUAS (e.g. the SUAS Incoming App) and from the “SUAS QUEST” programme designed exclusively for IT and engineering scholars from Tunisia:

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3
<p>„Research Concept QUEST“</p> <p>The scholarship holders are enabled to carry out their own practical research projects in IT and engineering fields. For this purpose, final projects are supervised at HSM and carried out in cooperation with practice partners.</p>	<p>„Development QUEST“</p> <p>The scholarship holders conduct interculturality embedded and therefore frustration-free research stays. They complete an accompanying interdisciplinary training program that prepares them for starting work in Tunisia.</p>	<p>„Language Skill QUEST“</p> <p>The scholarship holders are enabled to establish lasting connections to the German scientific community. They take part in German language semester courses, the compact course “Technical German” and a “TestDaF” coaching.</p>

SUAS QUEST – Qualification Cycles for Engineering and IT Students from Tunisia

“SUAS QUEST” is a target group-specific qualification program at SUAS. It is based on careful coordination, includes specific student services [e.g. a buddy programme as well as joint events] and it forms the framework for a successful supervision of the scholarship holders.

2.4 Location of institution:

SUAS is located in Schmalkalden, a small town in the south-western part of Thuringia. With more than 50% of international students, SUAS benefits from being located in the centre of Germany. The region benefits from a vibrant business environment, particularly in the area of small and medium-sized engineering companies.

2.5 Special attractions for young people:

Schmalkalden is quietly located on the edge of the Thuringian Forest, thus offering countless opportunities for outdoor activities. It is quite affordable and safe. Students interested in culture and history can visit the nearby sites of Wartburg Castle, Weimar or Erfurt. Due to its central location, it is also possible to visit the major German cities of Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich etc.

2.6 Costs of living (dorms etc.):

Studying in Schmalkalden is inexpensive compared to larger cities. Overall, you can expect monthly costs of approx. 800 EUR for accommodation, pro rata semester contribution, meals, etc. With a scholarship it is possible to fully cover these costs.

3. Combined study and practice stays for engineers from developing countries (KOSPIE) – Tunisia

3.1 Faculties participating in the exchange programme and supervised topics offered:

Faculty

Fields of research

Computer Science

- Development and implementation of topic-related RAG systems (Retrieval-Augmented Generation) for evidence-based strategy development and decision-making
- Development and implementation of dashboard and data warehouse solutions in public institutions to assess complex and networked challenges
- Development of approaches to automate topic-related data analysis with Python to ensure evidence-based policy implementation in VUCA situations
- Development and implementation of a data literacy culture in public institutions for the responsible use of data in emerging countries

Faculty

Fields of research

(Mechanical) Engineering

- Low-cost automation concepts in Tunisia's industrial production in the area of conflict between increased efficiency and sustainable employment
- Embedding artificial intelligence in corporate business processes in the areas of business valuation, preventive maintenance and human resources
- Development and implementation of remote engineering concepts in the industrial development of emerging countries



3.2 Students of the following degree courses may join the exchange programme:

Scholarship holders with a profile in IT and/or engineering disciplines may apply.

3.3 Tuition/semester fees (if applicable):

At SUAS, there is no tuition or participation fee to be paid to the university. However, any student enrolled at a German public university has to pay a “semester contribution”, which the universities forward to service providers. It covers e.g. the semester ticket, which allows for the free use of local train transportation all over Thuringia. The semester fee at SUAS is currently at approx. 170 EUR per semester.

3.4 Near-by companies with which co-operations are withheld:

There are numerous small and medium-sized enterprises cooperating with SUAS. The company “Adtran Networks SE” is one cooperation partner in SUAS QUEST. Your supervisor will involve companies suitable for your project.

3.5 Established partnerships with the following Tunisian higher education institutions and faculties (if applicable):

Tunisian students are the largest exchange group at SUAS. There have been partnerships, mobility flows and projects with several Tunisian universities in the IT and engineering sectors, especially TEK-UP University and ESPRIT University in Ariana, but also ISET Tozeur and ISET Rades and others. SUAS has been successfully running winter school and short term mobility projects with Tunisian universities for six years.

3.6 Interest in exchange with the following Tunisian higher education institutions (please specify faculties, if applicable):

There is a high interest in further cooperation and exchange with institutions that offer excellent IT and engineering study programmes. Students from any Tunisian university, including the SUAS partner universities, are welcome to apply.

3.7 Further remarks or special services (e.g. about the housing situation):

SUAS provides a broad range of inbound services. All of them are organised in a SUAS Incoming App targeting exclusively inbound students. The onboarding process is supported by buddies as well as a housing team supporting finding appropriate accommodation.

4. Responsible contact person(s)

4.1 Contact person at university-level and/or at faculty level

Prof. Dr. Uwe Hettler, Professor at the Faculty for Computer Science and Vice-President:
u.hettler@hs-sm.de

4.2 Contact person student coordinator/advisor

Dr. Paul Voerkel, Head of the Department for Studies and International Relations:
p.voerkel@hs-sm.de