Enhancing institutional cooperation: DAAD’s Programme „Strategic Partnerships“

ACA/DAAD/SIU – Internationalisation matters!
Brussels, 28 February 2018
Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks

Programme Line A: Strategic Partnerships

→ Cross-disciplinary partnerships
→ Encouragement of comprehensive partnerships at the level of HEIs

Programme Line B: Thematic Networks

→ Research-oriented, multilateral networks
→ Inclusion of non-university research institutes
→ Establishment of competence centres
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Funding Instrument</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short-term visits and guest lectures</td>
<td>Flexible and combinable</td>
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<td>Participation at conferences</td>
<td>Personnel costs for coordinating or managing the partnership</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>Study and research visits</td>
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<td>Summer Schools</td>
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<td>Exchange of Administrative Staff</td>
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<td>Expenses for joint scientific publications</td>
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<td>Cost of materials for advertising, presentations, etc.</td>
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<td>Strategy Meetings</td>
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Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks

Programme Goals

- Support the strategic internationalisation of German HEIs
- Establish competence centres
- Enable and foster exchange
- Strengthen cooperation between the best researchers (build sustainable networks beyond individual contacts)
- Identify “best-practice models/partnerships” and factors of success
Key findings of the evaluation accompanying the first round of projects:

• Positive effects of the programme extend beyond the individual projects and can be observed university-wide
• Adequate cooperation structures have been established
• Success in terms of quantitative performance indicators: Substantial increase of third party funding, publications, exchange and mobility, organised events, qualification works etc.
• Flexibility of the programme allows for the realisation of very different forms of cooperation and goal-setting
Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks

- The programme Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks combines both inclusion of all types of HEI (classical comprehensive universities, universities of applied science, Schools of Art and Design) as well as excellence.

- The framework is highly flexible (with regard to partner countries, partner institutions, subjects of cooperation, funding measures, goal alignments...)

- The programme allows for the realisation of innovative and digital teaching and learning concepts.

- The programme helps building up joint study programmes (dual degree programmes have been hardly institutionalized though, a longer funding period is recommended).
Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks – examples in Europe
Example Strategic Partnership: U4 Network
Example: European Partnership for Project and Innovation Management - EuroPIM
Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks

Dr. Birte Seffert, Coordinator, “Strategic Partnership RWTH – Tsinghua”, RWTH Aachen

- **First**: A relationship to the partner university built on trust, respect and mutual benefit.
- **Second**: Regular – and binding – communication with all stakeholders within the university community; this should include “face-to-face” time.
- **Third**: Willingness to invest time, energy and manpower in advocacy, lobbying, networking and relationship building with the goal of establishing new joint projects or expanding existing projects in an innovative way.

“Our strategic partnership works because the universities in the network have similar profiles but are different enough to inspire and enable collaborative research.”

*Dr. Uwe Muuss, Project Lead, “Strategic Partnership U4 University Network”, Universität Göttingen*
Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks

"The key is having highly engaged and open-minded researchers and staff at both locations who are interconnected via a strong network, and who share a common vision. Sufficient resources to realise project goals are essential; and it’s important to allow creative leeway and recognise joint efforts."

Nataliya Butych, Coordinator “Strategic Partnership with SPbSPU, Russia”, Universität Hannover

Anne-Sophie Lohmeier, Coordinator, “AWARE”, TH Ingolstadt

- Every university must recognise lasting value in the profile/offering of the partner institution.
- Project coordinators with a strong understanding of the partner universities and their cultures is a prerequisite for avoiding misunderstandings and building a collaborative relationship based on trust.
- When selecting a partner, attention should be paid to a university’s joint research needs. An important success factor for us was to make sure our focus issues – mobility and sustainability – match up with current social issues and thus have political support."
Thank you for your attention!

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