

IVAC – International Virtual Academic Collaboration (2020-2021)

Programme objectives

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) finances the programme “IVAC – International Virtual Academic Collaboration” with funding provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

Access to education and participation in academic dialogue have taken on an increasingly global dimension. Digitalisation opens numerous opportunities for academic access and collaboration which far exceed the geographical, political, and social boundaries of traditional teaching and learning. Academic collaboration promotes the development of problem-solving approaches in teaching and research, and thereby helps students acquire fundamental skills during their academic qualification. Internationally networked and digitally-based teaching directs the focus to student-instructor dialogue and helps build intercultural competence and teamworking skills.

The current crisis has enabled universities and research organisations to rapidly expand their capabilities in the fields of digital learning and working. In the future, we will have to examine more broadly what (new) models of mobility can be developed and institutionalised in the medium term.

Virtual exchange represents an interactive and cooperation-based bridge to the world and serves to systematically intensify international higher education efforts and shape them around new models of (blended) mobility. The student-oriented focus of this programme encourages engagement with the cultural context of “others” and makes the digitally-based investigation into “foreignness” a subject of the teaching-learning experience. The programme’s didactic implementation will determine how deeply students immerse themselves into a different culture and to what extent their self-probation in international situations is supported and supervised.

With regard to the courses being offered within a semester, instructors and students of at least two universities shall work together in an international context and use digital media to communicate, collaborate and document their working results. Co-teaching, peer-oriented learning and jointly offered courses comprise the central components of the virtual exchange scenarios. Project- and research-oriented approaches can serve to embed intercampus collaboration in virtual seminar rooms and digital learning environments. Not only do such digital environments enable project partners to involve different groups of students and instructors, but also different disciplines and academic levels of qualification (BA, MA, PhD). These innovations in collaborative teaching can potentially encourage participants to test new forms of learning analytics, especially with regard to skill acquisition (digital competence, intercultural competence, teamworking problem-solving skills etc.).

This programme grants funding to **teaching concepts** with the following regional focuses:

1. transatlantic virtual academic cooperation
2. international virtual academic cooperation (European and worldwide)

The programme promotes greater flexibility in degree programmes offered at German Higher Education Institutions and their foreign partner universities and contributes to equal opportunity by expanding access to international higher education.

The IVAC programme aims to simultaneously achieve the following goals:

Programme Objective 1:

German lecturers and their international partners have integrated digital collaboration formats into their courses and plan to integrate them into the curriculum.

Programme Objective 2:

Students and lecturers apply the digital skills acquired through virtual cooperation.

Programme Objective 3:

Processes in the areas of study, teaching and blended mobility are digitised across universities and contribute to the development of interoperable student data ecosystems (in the interest of the Groningen Declaration).

Programme Objective 4:

International digital cooperation formats are accessible to further target groups, which makes intercultural experiences possible, for example, for students whose financial or family situation hinders physical mobility.

Programme Objective 5:

A community of practice has formed.

Based on the objectives stated above, the programme aims to achieve the following results within the framework of the funded projects:

- Universities have developed courses and especially hybrid formats for which students can receive credit points (ECTS).
- Projects have proved and tested the use of digital education technologies and concepts for international, teaching-based cooperation between researchers and university instructors.
- A broad-based university community is familiar with international digital collaboration formats.
- IT services for teaching and administration are coordinated and adapted/developed.

Based on the transformation potential and scalability of the submitted concepts, the participants may apply for additional funding to expand digital cooperation formats, e.g. certification programmes, jointly offered micro degrees, and structured international degree programmes. Decisions on further funding will be announced within the first year of the project period.

Eligible measures

Bi- and multilateral collaborations are eligible for funding. Instructors from more than one German university can participate in developing and implementing international collaborative events.

The instructors and students of the foreign partner universities are encouraged to share their academic, teaching and learning culture and practical experience with virtual teaching formats. The joint projects allow participants to engage in intercultural encounter, share their experience with teaching and learning methods, and jointly develop collaborative virtual teaching formats using modern concepts and technologies.

- **(Further) development of digital collaborative formats in teaching by German instructors and their international partners**

- creation of methodical-didactic teaching-learning concepts for courses offered as part of the regular teaching operations (academic year, semester, terms) with supplementary formats (e.g. virtual/hybrid workshops/conferences/summer schools) and the possibility of earning additional credit points

- development of digital teaching-learning materials and examination formats (e.g. digital audio and video materials, gaming approaches, e-portfolio concepts etc.)
- development of a communication concept highlighting campus life, learning, and everyday culture, including enhancing foreign language skills
- **Development of a supervision concept** (e.g. virtual mentoring, digital support services for international students)
- **Development of assessment tools and accompanying measures** (learning analytics) to obtain information on the knowledge and competence acquired by the students
- **Holding coordination meetings** (e.g. e-workshops, webinars, virtual conferences)
- **Advanced training measures** (e.g. “train the trainer” programmes, online seminars)
- **Project-specific adjustments to the IT infrastructure** (e.g. opening and expanding existing campus and learning management systems, joint usage of e-learning tools and educational technologies)
- **Development and coordination of digital documentation processes** for monitoring students’ individual learning achievements by the participating partners; particular consideration should be given to reciprocal recognition and automatic exchange of digital certificates in extracurricular co-operation formats.
- **Holding courses, both virtual and face-to-face** (e.g. as part of blended learning formats)
- **Target group-specific marketing and public relations activities** as part of the project, e.g. presentation of the students’ teaching-learning products

Grant expenditures eligible

Funding may cover all expenditures which are necessary and appropriate for carrying out the project (implementation of measures). These specifically include:

Personnel expenses of the German university for project implementation and management

- academic staff
- research assistants
- student assistants
- other personnel

Material expenses of the German university

▪ Fees

Please consult the DAAD table of fees for external staff (i.e. personnel not employed by the funding recipient) in Germany and the target region who are responsible for advising, moderating meetings, holding workshops etc. The fees listed within the table are considered reasonably calculated.

Mobility and accommodation expenses are also fundable in accordance with the principles of efficiency and economy if the respective receipts and invoices are provided (for air travel only economy-class).

- Mobility expenses for project staff

	<p>Funding can be requested to cover vehicle/air travel expenses in accordance with federal and state travel expense laws (BRKG/LRKG).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Accommodation expenses for project staff</u> Funding can be requested to cover the costs of accommodation (overnight accommodation and subsistence allowance) in accordance with federal and state travel expense laws (BRKG/LRKG). ▪ <u>Material resources (domestic/foreign)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consumable goods (conference materials etc.) - room rental (for conference rooms, office leases etc.) - print media/publications/advertising and public relations materials (e.g. social media, newsletters, flyers etc.) - external services (e.g. for developing digital teaching-learning materials etc.) - other expenses (e.g. software licenses, participation fees) <p>Funded individuals</p> <p><u>Mobility of funded individuals</u> Status-dependent and country-specific mobility lump sum can be requested to cover the costs of holding courses in accordance with Attachment 2.</p> <p>In addition to covering expenses for round-trip travel, the mobility lump sum can also be used to cover subsidiary expenses related to travel (e.g. visa fees, expenses for vaccinations, excess luggage, luggage insurance etc.)</p> <p><u>Accommodation of funded individuals</u> Status-dependent and country-specific accommodation lump sums can be requested to cover the costs of accommodation of up to one month in accordance with Attachment 2.</p> <p>Non-fundable expenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ hardware and infrastructure
Type of financing	The funding is implemented as full financing.
Funding period	The funding period begins on 1 September 2020 at the earliest and ends on 30 September 2021 at the latest.
Disciplines	This programme is open to all disciplines and subject areas.
Target group	Students in bachelor's, master's, and state examination programmes, doctoral, post-doctoral and professorial candidates, researchers, professors
Eligibility	Public and state-accredited German higher education institutions are eligible to apply for funding.
Application	The funding application must be submitted in full and on time via the DAAD online portal (www.mydaad.de).
Application requirements	<p><u>Application documents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project application (available on the DAAD portal) • financing plan (available on the DAAD portal) • project description (attachment type: project description)

Following the application deadline, the DAAD will neither request missing documents nor consider documents submitted or changes made at a later time. Incomplete applications will be excluded from the selection process.

Please note:

The proportion of funding which comprises fees and services should not exceed 50 percent of the total funding requested from the DAAD.

Application deadline

The application deadline is 16 July 2020.

Selection process

Selection of applications for project funding

Funding applications are selected based on evaluation of a DAAD-appointed selection committee.

Besides the general plausibility of the proposed project, the following selection criteria are considered:

- project objectives according to SMART criteria
- overall concept and its integration into the digitalisation and internationalisation strategy of the participating Institutes of Higher Education
- (media) didactic concept
- involvement and commitment of the foreign partner institution(s) within the framework of the didactic concept
- inter-university applicability and use of platforms, interoperability and use of standards
- consolidation potential of the digital-collaborative teaching offer
- scaling potential of the technical and pedagogical solutions and the digital tools into the university network and into other Higher Education Institutions

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Attachments


1. Impact-oriented structure of the programme
2. Country-specific residence and mobility lump sums
3. DAAD table of fees

Important information and form templates

- Project description
- Information on mobility for persons with a disability or chronic illness

Networking measures of the DAAD community

Funding recipients and their respective projects participate in DAAD measures to build and interconnect the DAAD community. These include expert workshops and exchange formats. The DAAD also supports its community by providing a digital platform which project coordinators may use if they wish. This technical option facilitates *virtual exchange* and helps to promote the community of instructors. Instructors at German universities and their international



colleagues can network via the DAAD platform, hold joint courses, and engage in collaborative teaching with a strong international-curricular and intercultural dimension. In the DAAD virtual exchange community, instructors can share experience, information, materials (e.g. helpful tools) and examples of good teaching practice. The functionality of this partnership-oriented service helps expand networks and develop new, jointly organised courses. In this digital environment, the DAAD provides instructors and students access to a global community of practice, and in so doing, contributes to strengthening digital competence in teaching.

The DAAD Regional Office in New York is responsible for providing support and consultation for transatlantic IVAC projects, particularly for networking measures in the USA and Canada.

A group of experts has been assigned to accompany the work of the [Hochschulforum Digitalisierung](#) (HFD). Based on the programme's goal to develop virtual exchange formats, the HFD is committed to creating the framework conditions for embedding digital learning services into university curricula and sustainably developing international, digital collaborations in higher education.

An extensive continuing education programme of the international DAAD Academy (iDA) supports instructors with organising and applying media-didactic design features to virtual exchange formats.

Financed by:

