



Department of Science and Technology
Government of India

DFG Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft
German Research Foundation

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DST – DFG announcement on funding opportunity for Indo-German Research Training Groups (IRTG)

Background and Description of International Research Training Groups

International Research Training Groups (IRTGs), in which German universities cooperate with research institutions in other countries, combine innovative top-level research and the structured promotion of excellent early career researchers. As bilateral collaborations set up by experienced scientists, IRTGs promote systematic scientific cooperation through joint research programmes and corresponding qualification measures for (post) doctoral researchers.

A central feature of International Research Training Groups are coordinated and reciprocal research visits by doctoral researchers at the respective partner institutions. IRTGs can only be established by universities and research institutions entitled to confer doctoral degrees.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, and the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) have agreed on a joint application and funding scheme to support Indo-German International Research Training Groups.

Structure of Indo-German Research Training Groups

Applications for Indo-German IRTGs intended for DFG-DST funding are open to all subject areas covered by DST, and interdisciplinarity in joint projects is encouraged. An IRTG should be run by two teams of participating researchers in India and Germany, respectively. Each team should have approximately 5 to 10 members with proven expertise both in the IRTG's main research topic and in providing outstanding supervision to doctoral students.

The participating researchers' expertise at the two locations should be complementary and provide added value to the IRTG. Each team of participating researchers in an IRTG should be based at a single institution in India and Germany, respectively. In convincingly justified cases, an IRTG may be based in more than two institutions.

The Indian and German teams in an IRTG should jointly formulate a high quality and coherent research and training programme to be implemented on both sides. The teams should have common research interests and objectives and these must be

reflected in a common framework and joint project. Applications are submitted by the host institutions.

For every IRTG, one member of the team on each side serves as spokesperson, being responsible for the proposal and the scientific coordination of the IRTG. This also includes responsibility for reporting to DST and DFG, respectively.

The programme should provide for regular exchanges of academic staff and doctoral students for the purposes of joint research and training. Doctoral students should spend a period of at least 6 months (and up to 1 year) in total during their PhD project at the respective partner institution for research and training and each doctoral student should have both an Indian and a German supervisor. On the German side, approximately 10 to 15 doctoral researchers will be funded within a single IRTG in parallel. The partner site in India should support a group of doctoral researchers of roughly the same size.

Funding guidelines for Indo-German Research Training Groups

Both the DST and the DFG will provide funding for IRTG project-specific costs incurred by their respective partner institutions. In accordance with respective internal policies of the DST and the DFG, funds can be requested for the following activities:

- Funding for PhD positions/fellowships up to 48 months per doctoral researcher,
- Project-specific funding for dissertation research projects (e.g. consumables),
- Longer-term, coordinated and reciprocal research visits (one or more with an overall duration of 6-12 months) by doctoral students to the respective partner institutions,
- Joint workshops, conferences and seminars,
- Short-term visits, lectures and workshops by the participating researchers.

As an additional support mechanism, both the DST and the DFG will make funds available to support preparatory meetings for IRTG applications.

Duration of Funding for Indo-German Research Training Groups

Indo-German IRTGs will be supported for a potential maximum of 9 years, divided into two funding periods, with a mid-term evaluation on whose outcome the grant of the second period depends.

Both parties will accept only joint proposals by Indian and German institutions. All joint applications are to be prepared according to the respective DST/DFG guidelines for IRTGs and have to provide separate budget requests for the Indian and the German part of the project.

Application and Evaluation of Proposals

The Indo-German consortium will **firstly need to submit a joint IRTG draft proposal** simultaneously to DFG and DST. (For DFG, the proposal needs to be submitted by the German university.) **There are two deadlines per year: 1 February and 1 August.**

DFG and DST will evaluate the **draft proposal** independently. On average, around 6 to 8 months are needed for the review.

If both agencies conclude their review with a positive decision, DST and DFG then invite the consortium to submit a joint full proposal according to a mutually agreed timeline. Again, the joint full proposal must be sent to DST and DFG simultaneously.

Submission must be in accordance with the respective funding organisation's guidelines and through the established submission systems.

Renewal proposals for the second funding period are submitted 12 months before the end of the first funding period. They are submitted by the German host university to DFG and by the Indian spokesperson /host institution to the DST in parallel. Submission must be in accordance with the respective funding organisation's guidelines and through the established submission systems.

Full proposals and renewal proposals will also be evaluated separately by DST and DFG.

The reviews of all proposals will be based on the DFG criteria for International Research Training Groups.

Preparatory Workshops

For new Indo-German IRTG initiatives, the DST and the DFG provide for the possibility to **support a workshop** for the preparation of an IRTG proposal. Funding can be granted only if research cooperation is already established and plans for the IRTG have already been consolidated. The workshop funding may either be applied for prior to the draft proposal submission, or – after positive evaluation of the draft proposal – prior to submission of the full proposal.

Application process for Indian Scientists:

Formats for draft proposal as well as full proposal submission are at annexure -1 and annexure -2 respectively. The details on how to fill the application format are given in the links provided at next page. However, for the project formulation Indian Coordinators have to follow IRTG guidelines in consultation with German coordinators. The project formulation has to be completed as per the IRTG Guidelines and also in consultation with German coordinators. The jointly agreed project will be submitted by Indian Scientists on DST- EPMS portal as per the link attached <https://onlinedst.gov.in/Login.aspx>

Participating agencies will be requested to submit the full proposal after the evaluation of the draft proposals by the Scientific Expert Committees from both sides.

Application process for German Scientists:

German coordinators will be submitting the same joint proposal document at IRTG website.

Further detailed information

Comprehensive information about Research Training Groups is available on the DFG website: www.dfg.de/gk/en.

The “Guidelines for Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups” provide a concise overview of the funding programme: www.dfg.de/formulare/50_07.

Draft proposals shall be prepared according to DFG form 1.303en (“Draft Proposal Preparation Instructions for Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups”): www.dfg.de/formulare/1_303.

Full proposals shall be prepared according to DFG form 54.05en (“Proposal Preparation Instructions for Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups”): www.dfg.de/formulare/54_05.

Renewal applications consist of the renewal proposal and the progress report on the first funding period, prepared according to forms 54.07en and 54.08en: www.dfg.de/formulare/54_07, www.dfg.de/formulare/54_08.

It is advisable to consult the “Guidelines for Differentiating International Research Training Groups from Research Training Groups”: www.dfg.de/formulare/1_312.

Information on how to apply for funding towards preparatory workshops can be found in DFG form 1.306en: www.dfg.de/formulare/1_306/

Information on the review criteria are specified here:

for draft proposals: www.dfg.de/formulare/1_304

for establishment and renewal proposals proposals: www.dfg.de/formulare/1_305

Good Research Practice

Please note that according to a resolution of the DFG General Assembly, as of 1 August 2019, DFG funding may only be awarded to institutions that have implemented the guidelines laid down in the Code of Conduct for Safeguarding Good Research Practice in their own regulations in a legally binding manner. This means that also for international proposals, funding from the DFG can only be received if the guidelines for safeguarding good research practice (see link below) have been implemented by the German applicant’s institution. If you have any questions on this subject, please contact the Research Integrity team at the DFG Head Office (see contact below). Further information regarding the implementation can be found on Research Integrity website (see link below).

Equity and Diversity

The DFG strongly welcomes proposals from researchers of all genders and sexual identities, from different ethnic, cultural, religious, ideological or social backgrounds, from different career stages, types of universities and research institutions, and with disabilities or chronic illness.

The DFG’s electronic portal “elan” can be found at:

- <https://elan.dfg.de>

Further general information on elan:

- www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/principles_dfg_funding/elan

Please note the DFG's data protection notice on research funding and for reviewers:

- www.dfg.de/privacy_policy

As part of the assessment procedure, the necessary personal data must be exchanged between the organisations involved. This requires the transfer of personal data between India (DST) and Germany (DFG). Further information can be found in the data protection notices of the respective organisations (DST – www.dst.gov.in). If necessary, please also forward this information to those persons whose data the DFG processes because they are involved in your project.

Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice – Code of Conduct:

- <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3923601>

Information on the implementation of the Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice (Code of Conduct):

- <https://wissenschaftliche-integritaet.de/en/notes-on-implementation>

Contact of the DFG's Research Integrity team (Good Research Practice)

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