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General questions

What is the GERLS program?

As an outcome of success achieved during the German-Egyptian Year of Science & Technology 2007, a cooperation agreement has been signed between the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt (**MHESR**) and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (**DAAD**), from funds made available by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to create a program offering up to 81 postgraduate scholarships for Egyptian doctoral candidates.

This agreement runs within the framework of the long-standing cooperation between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Federal Republic of Germany and in partial fulfilment of the MHESR and DAAD aims and objectives as well as in consideration of the funding resources and regulations of both parties.

How many scholarships will be offered every year?

The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research offer up to 81 postgraduate scholarships to Egyptian doctoral candidates within the GERLS program every year.

Who belongs to the target group of the GERLS program?

The target group for the GERLS program comprises Egyptian researchers holding a M. A. or M.Sc. degree which should generally not be older than 3 years.

Which types of scholarships will be granted within the programme?

“Full Ph.D.” Scholarship:

Target: in all fields of study except the ones mentioned under specialization.
 Degree: Ph.D. will be awarded by a **German university**.
 Duration: up to 42 months.

“Channel” Scholarship:

Target: in all fields of study except the ones mentioned under specialization.
 Degree: Ph.D. will be awarded by an **Egyptian university**
 Duration: up to 24 months.

“Specialization” scholarship:

Target: for the study of medicine, fine and applied arts, architecture and music
 Degree: without resulting in a degree
 Duration: up to 24 months.

Who is responsible for the administration of the GERLS program?

The GERLS program is administered by the DAAD in close cooperation with the MHESR and German universities.

Is GERLS open to all disciplines?

The program is open for all subjects; nevertheless, preferences will be given to the following fields: water, renewable energies, medical sciences, material sciences, biotechnology, ICT, social sciences and humanities. “Preferences” means that these topics are encouraged without neglecting any other discipline.

Questions regarding required qualifications

Is the GERLS program open for everybody or only for faculty members of an Egyptian university?

The GERLS program is also open to non-university staff members and applicants from private research institutes and private universities.
 For these candidates the following will be required:

- a motivation letter by the applicant,
- a declaration from the applicant to assure that he/ she will settle the matter of his/ her needed vacation with his/ her company/ university. It is the responsibility of the applicant to acquire the needed leave form from his/her institution.
- an endorsement/support letter, signed by the employer, to assure his/ her support and agreement.

Do I have to speak German to apply for the GERLS program?

It is not necessary to know German beforehand. Each scholarship holder is entitled to receive German language and intercultural training, partly in Egypt and in Germany (up to two months of German language courses in Egypt

followed by a course of up to six months in Germany) at a suitable institution before the beginning of study.

Is the TOEFL certificate required for an application?

The TOEFL certificate is not required for your application; however additional language tests could be applicable.

I achieved my Master degree 3 years prior to the year of the current call.

Can I apply for this year's call?

Yes, you can apply. The target group of GERLS comprises Egyptian researchers holding M.A. or M. Sc. degree which should generally not be older than three years. Please notice that the date of employment should generally be at least two years before the year of application.

I achieved my Master degree in the same year as the year of the actual call for the GERLS program. Can I apply for this call?

Yes you can apply but if the date of employment at your home institution is less than two years ago please notify the DAAD Cairo office in writing.

What are the additional requirements for candidates applying for the Channel scholarship?

Candidates applying for the Channel-System must fulfill the following requirements:

→ Candidates must hold a M.A. or M.Sc. degree.

→ Candidates must be registered for a Ph. D. program at their home university.

All Channel applicants should bring a proof of communication between both German and Egyptian professors and a proof of affiliation to the Egyptian university. and what proofs that they opened a scientific channel (فتح قناة علمية) in the Egyptian university.

Field studies during the scholarship

Is it possible to do field study within the GERLS program outside Germany?

In the context of the German Egyptian Long term Scholarship Program (GERLS) abroad field studies needed by GERLS candidates during their residence in Germany could be funded on the following conditions:

1. The candidate is kindly asked to inform the pre-selection committee about the needed field study for his/her research. Accordingly, the pre-selection committee will have to approve the necessity of the field studies taking place during the time of the scholarship. However, if the candidate decided after the pre-selection to include a field study for his/her research, a member of the pre-selection committee has to be consulted and provides DAAD with the committee decision in writing.

2. An official letter signed by the GERLS candidate's German supervisor indicating his/her approval on the necessity of the field study for the research should be submitted to DAAD.

3. Within the full PhD program the duration of the field study abroad should not exceed a quarter of the entire scholarship duration, however the field study can not exceed the duration of 12 months. For candidates who require more than one field study trip the duration of all field study trips should not exceed the above mentioned limit. A total of 3 funded months (that includes the full scholarship rate and other subsidies) will be paid for the field study trip, whether it was used during one field trip or several trips. If the duration of the entire field study trip/trips will take more than 3 months, then neither the scholarship rate nor the subsidies will be further provided to the candidate. As for the travel allowance it will be provided only for one field study trip, whether it was used to travel to the candidate's home country of origin or to another country or as a replacement of the return home journey during the scholarship.

4. Candidates of the Channel program should conduct their field study either before the beginning of their stay in Germany or after their stay.

Questions concerning the application documents

What are the required documents for my application?

- 1- C.V including a complete list of publications, if available.
- 2- Copy of passport.
- 3- A recent photo.
- 4- Acceptance letter or an email from a German professor showing that the research project in preparation is feasible and can be conducted in Germany under his/ her supervision. The acceptance letter should state the title, time frame and objectives of the project. The acceptance letter should not be older than six months.
- 5- Endorsement letter from the applicant's home institution. (A template is available on the GERLS website.) A signed and stamped form or any other letter offered by the applicant's institution is acceptable.
- 6- Statement of employment history (بيان حالة) issued from the applicant's institution.

Please upload all copies of signed and stamped letters in the fields appointed in the electronic application form.

What exactly is a "statement of employment history" (بيان الحالة)?

The statement of employment should be written by your institute and NOT by yourself.

It should include the name of the institute, a statement that you are employed there, your position and the date you started to work.

Without a "statement of employment history" (بيان الحالة) your application will not be considered.

Which language should the "statement of employment history" (بيان الحالة) be written in?

It can be written in Arabic or in English.

Can I apply without the endorsement letter of the Egyptian university?

Kindly notice that the endorsement letter is one of the GERLS requirements, so please fill it in and upload it on the application form. Without an endorsement letter your application will not be considered.

How many pages should the endorsement letter have?

Normally the endorsement letter is one page long, signed and stamped from your home institution.

Do I need an endorsement letter OR a motivation letter? I can't have an endorsement letter because I am not a staff member of any university.

The endorsement letter is essential for the university staff members while the motivation letter is required from non-university staff members.

Research proposal**How can I ideally write my research proposal?**

Please refer to the guideline for research proposal that you will find online via: http://cairo.daad.de/imperia/md/content/kairo/stipendien/guideline_research_proposal.pdf

What exactly is meant by “abstract of the proposal”? What is meant by “background”?

The “background” is a statement of the problem and a brief explanation of its importance. The importance may be practical and economic, but for researchers, the importance is usually in its usefulness to other researchers (high impact factor). Is it a problem that others have been working on unsuccessfully? Does it provide useful techniques? Does it confirm or refute conjectures? You will probably have to refer to other researchers' papers to make clear that your work is important.

The “abstract” is a summary including a list of steps in your research plan. You could indicate a number of results you plan to achieve that will merit a Ph.D..

In which language should I submit my research proposal -Arabic, English or German?

The research proposal should be submitted in English except for applicants from the field of German studies (Germanistik). In this case only German research proposals will be accepted.

Is a detailed time plan required?

Yes. Information about the estimated time plan, if possible in form of a table, should indicate the sequence of all research phases and the time that will probably be needed for each phase.

Many applicants neglect the importance of this part of the application.

Please consider the time line of the program while planning your research in Germany:

- **Call for application:** from 01.07.2009 till 31.10.2009
- **Pre-selection Procedures:** 15.11.2009 till 15.12.2009

- **Final selection Procedures:** January/February 2010
- **Start of Language course in Egypt:**
 - **For Channel and Specialization:** March 2010
 - **For full PHD:** May 2010
- **First travel date for the start of the language course in Germany:**
 - **For Channel and Specialization:** June 2010, start of semester October 2010
 - **For full PHD:** October 2010, start of semester April 2011
- **Kindly note that all above mentioned dates are subject to change without prior notice.**

Applying to different programs at the same time

If you have any questions regarding applying to different programs at the same time please consider the following matrix:

Dual Application and Funding Matrix						
Programs			dual application	dual funding	same proposal	Conclusion
GERLS	GERSS		no	no	no	Research proposal can not be identical. Applicants can apply in the April call for GERSS.
GERSS	WAP	WE	yes	no	yes	No problem, as it increases the chances of the applicant
GESP	WAP	WE	yes	no	yes	Could be looked at as an extension of work
GERF	GESP		yes	yes	yes	No problem, comprehensive programs
GESP	GERSS		yes	yes	yes	
GERSS	PAROWN		yes	no	no	
GERLS	PAROWN		yes ¹	no	no	
GERSS	Alumni ²	GERLS	are encouraged to apply			
PAROWN						
GESP	GERLS		yes	no		Under the condition that if the applicant receives the GERLS grant he/she should give up the function in GESP.

Can I apply for a short-term scholarship and a long-term scholarship at the same time?

It is not possible to apply for long- & short term programs at the same time.

May I apply for a full PhD and the Channel system at the same time?

¹ Please notify that dual application is only allowed with different proposals.

² GERSS Alumni as well as PAROWN Alumni are encouraged to apply for GERLS. Everybody who completed a GERSS or a PAROWN scholarship is considered as Alumni.

The applicant should choose one of the two program possibilities. You can not apply for both at the same time.

May I apply for the GERLS program even if my PhD courses are already funded by a German university?

Candidates can select adequate structured PhD courses or PhD supervisors in Germany themselves in order to join the GERLS program. However, dual funding from universities offering such courses and the GERLS program is NOT permitted.

Can I apply for GERLS and ParOwn at the same time?

You could apply for GERLS and ParOwn, but with different proposals. If you were accepted in both scholarships you will be asked to choose only one of them.

The history of your previous applications within the GERSS, GERLS and ParOwn programs will be automatically considered and presented to the evaluation committee. Please consult as well the above mentioned table.

Do I have to open different accounts for each application for different DAAD scholarship programs?

Please use the same account and update your contact details on the following website:

<http://www.mhesr-initiatives.org>

May I prepare and apply for different projects at the same time?

Not within the same program.

Finding a German professor as a research supervisor

How can I find the right German research partner/supervisor and how can I get in contact with a German professor?

In order to be successful with your application for research funding/PhD studies, you will need a proof of contact with a German professor. Please read the leaflet on the DAAD homepage "guideline sv" which will give you some ideas of how to find and to get in touch with professors at German universities.

However, make sure you also study carefully the general information on doctoral studies in Germany on the DAAD website:

www.daad.de/deutschland/studium/promotion/04669.en.html

I haven't found a German supervisor yet. What can I do?

To search for a German professor you can as well check the following web sites:

http://research-explorer.dfg.de/research_explorer.en.html

http://www.dfg.de/dfg_im_profil/struktur/geschaeftsstelle/abteilung_iii/graduierte_nkollegs_nachwuchsfoerderung/index.html

http://www.academics.com/science/about_academics_30521.html

<http://www.mpg.de/instituteProjekteEinrichtungen/schoolauswahl/index.html>

<http://www.daad.de/deutschland/forschung/promotion/04673.de.html>

<http://www.daad.de/deutschland/studienangebote/internationalprogrammes/07535.de.html>

<http://cairo.daad.de/en/studyingresearchgermany/research/>

<http://www.research-in-germany.de/>

Can I choose the professor and university as I like?

You can work with any professor from a publicly funded university who is active in your field of research.

I haven't found a supervisor yet. Can I hand in the application without an acceptance letter from a German professor and provide it at a later point of time?

Without an email or an acceptance letter your application can not be considered.

Acceptance letter (invitation letter) of the German supervisor

What needs to be written in the acceptance letter?

The acceptance letter or the email from a German professor should show that the research project in preparation is feasible and can be conducted in Germany under his supervision. The acceptance letter should state the title, time frame and objectives of the project. The acceptance letter should not be older than six months.

Must the signature of the German supervisor be a real signature or can it be electronic?

It would be better if the invitation letter is signed by the German professor, however, if the time does not permit submitting the signed one, your letter can be considered until you hand in the original.

I found a German supervisor but I haven't received the acceptance letter yet.

If you are in contact with a German supervisor and he has sent you an email mentioning his willingness to supervise your research proposal, you can attach his email as an initial acceptance. Please note that pre-selected candidates have to submit their final acceptance letters with the final application form prior to the interview dates or the date set by the DAAD Cairo team.

I have two (or more) acceptance letters from several German professors. Shall I submit them all?

No, please hand in only one acceptance letter. You should decide which acceptance letter is more suitable for your research plan and upload it accordingly. Please refrain from uploading more than one letter as it causes unnecessary confusion.

Other questions concerning the application

What should I write in the (Grade) part for Master degree? There is no degree for Master thesis in our field.

In this case you can write NA (not available) in the field.

What does the field “GERLS grant title” in the endorsement letter mean?

The name of your research proposal should be stated in this field.

I have downloaded the recommendation letter from the GERLS website, but it seems there is no uploading browser for it.

The recommendation letters are not required during online application procedures; therefore there is no upload option. You will need the recommendation letter after the pre-selection result.

Is it important for me to come to the DAAD office in Cairo to apply or is it enough to fill the electronic application only?

Please do only apply online. There is no need to hand in a hard copy at the DAAD office.

Technical Issues / online application process

I encountered a problem while uploading my data. What can I do?

Please contact Mr. Mohamed Mostafa who is the contact person for all technical questions.

Email: mohamed.mostafa@mhesr-initiatives.org

Mobile: 0100277100 (Please call Mr. Mohamed Mostafa only during working hours between 10am and 5pm)

Questions concerning the field of medicine

Can applicants specialized in clinical medicine apply within the GERLS channel system?

You can apply for both, Channel or full PhD, if your PhD research is academic and not clinical. Please note that if your PhD research will be clinical and requires contact with patients, you have to apply for the specialization program and the DAAD has to apply for a special work permission for you in order to practice medicine in Germany. Please plan in advance together with your professor if your research requires contact with patients or not and inform us accordingly.

I will apply for the scholarship to do a research project in the field of medicine but I won't be in direct contact with patients and won't practice medicine in Germany. Do I still need to submit the papers mentioned in the “Additional Information for Applicants from Medical Fields”?

If your PhD will be solely academic you don't have to apply for specialization and accordingly you won't need to submit the documents required from applicants who will need the license in Germany to practice medicine.

What level of German language is required in order to apply for the specialization program?

Most authorities issuing the needed license to practice medicine require the B.2.2. level before you can pick up your work as a guest doctor. Without the required language knowledge that has to be achieved by September the latest, you will not be able to start work.

What kind of acceptance letter do I need for my application if I would like to work in a hospital?

The acceptance letter should be issued from a German professor in a hospital related to a public university. The professor should work in the same field as your planned research topic.

Do you have a list of available hospitals or can I apply to any of the German hospitals e.g.: Charité?

To search for a German professor you can check the following web sites:

http://research-explorer.dfg.de/research_explorer.de.html

http://www.dfg.de/dfg_im_profil/struktur/geschaeftsstelle/abteilung_iii/graduierte_nkollegs_nachwuchsfoerderung/index.html

http://www.academics.com/science/about_academics_30521.html

<http://www.mpg.de/instituteProjekteEinrichtungen/schoolauswahl/index.html>

<http://www.daad.de/deutschland/forschung/promotion/04673.de.html>

<http://www.daad.de/deutschland/studienangebote/internationalprogrammes/07535.de.html>

<http://cairo.daad.de/en/studyingresearchgermany/research/>

<http://www.research-in-germany.de/>

Do I need my documents for the medical permission in German or in English?

The documents need to be in German. Each Federal State of Germany has its' own rules regarding these documents; therefore you will be notified well in time about the applicable rules.

German language course in Egypt

I already know German. Do I still have to attend the language course in case I am accepted?

There will be a placement test regarding your language skills.

How long does the course take?

The course takes place over a period of two months.

Your stay in Germany

When will I start working with my German supervisor? Do I have any contact to my German professor during the period of the language course?

You will start working with your German supervisor after you completed the language course.

Does the GERLS program cover lab costs and bench fees?

The GERLS program does not cover lab costs and bench fees.

**When will the 6 months German language course take place in Germany?
Will these courses be held parallel to the doctoral research itself, or will it take place the first six months without any other activities?**

The six-month language course will take place prior to the Ph.D. course.

What is the main target of the German language course?

The overall target of the language course is that you will be able to communicate in German whilst living and studying there. It is vital - even if many people will be able to speak English - that you are able to express yourself in daily life at university, but also at other occasions outside of the campus life.

Moreover, DAAD pays the full PHD GERLS scholarship holders a 6 months language course in order to pick up their PhD studies in Germany. DAAD requires in return a result of each scholarship holder which will be a passed language course certificate, whether it will be the TestDAF, the DSH or a language institute certificate.

DAAD signed you in for a test at the end of your course in Germany and will pay for it as well. So, attending the test at the end of your language course is obligatory.

You will have to attend a language evaluation test at your language institute in order to attend the right level of language course for you in Germany. If you passed the A.2 level in Egypt, then usually you will pass on to the B.1 level as soon as you start in Germany.

Does the final level in the German course have influence on the matriculation in the German universities or any other administrative aspects?

Many German universities require a language course certificate in order to enroll. Not all of them do, but it is always advantageous to have passed it if they ask for it.

Besides these reasons it is always an asset to your career to be able to mention on your CV the TestDAF or another language course certificate which is valid in Germany. Think about possible future co-operations with German universities/professors/working groups that may result from your PhD in Germany. Having taken such a step in your career is always of great value.