

"Connecting worlds of knowledge" – a research and academic relations initiative

In 2009 the Federal Foreign Office plans to expand its support for international academic exchanges. For us research and academic relations policy is all about opening up new horizons for people and building bridges and links between societies. And we recognize how valuable this is in stimulating new thinking, innovations and hence also growth here at home.

Particularly in a globalized world in which education, knowledge and experience are universally available and instantly accessible, international networking is essential if Germany is to remain at the cutting edge of research and technological progress. International exchanges are an excellent way not only to develop joint responses to global issues of our time such as climate change, energy security and terrorism but also to foster greater understanding between societies and civilizations. And creating a global network of academics and researchers is also of course a sure way to gain friends and partners all over the world. So the aim of our research and academic relations activities is two-fold: to advance our general foreign policy goals and to promote Germany as a prime research and business location.

As part and parcel of the new Strategy of the Federal Government for the Internationalization of Science and Research unveiled in February 2008, the research and academic relations policy of the Federal Foreign Office is global in scope, with certain regional and thematic priorities. Its hallmark is excellence coupled with targeted yet broad support. The aim is on the one hand to raise Germany's international profile as a centre of learning and research and on the other to promote close cooperation with partners both in Germany and abroad.

Under the motto "connecting worlds of knowledge", the Federal Foreign Office plans in 2009 to expand its activities in this area. Existing policy instruments are to be further developed and new ones put in place. These will include a number of new scholarship programmes run by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the establishment – in cooperation with research organizations and companies with a strong research focus – of "German science fora" and the creation of new centres of excellence for teaching and research at universities abroad.

This new initiative will be launched at a conference to be held at the Federal Foreign Office on 19 and 20 January 2009. Together with distinguished academics and researchers from Germany and abroad Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Federal Education and Research Minister Annette Schavan will discuss research and academic relations goals and prospects in the global knowledge society.

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amt.de/diplo/en/Aussenpolitik/KulturDialog/Wissenschaft/HochWissFor.html](http://www.auswaertiges-
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