

# Proposal Writing Courses for Research Grants



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## Preface



**Marc Wilde**

Head of Section  
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**German Academic Exchange  
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The aim of the training course “Proposal Writing for Research Grants” (ProGRANT) is to support upcoming academics from Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Southeast Asia to develop their proposal writing skills according to international standards and to design, write and budget a competitive proposal for national and international research funding. ProGRANT courses are organised within the scope of the programme “Dialogue of Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES)” which is financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Universities throughout the world are operating in an increasingly dynamic environment characterised by global challenges. They face intense competition for students, highly qualified researchers and third-party funding. This holds true for developing countries too, where the demand for tertiary education has been skyrocketing over the last decades. In light of these developments, higher education management in all its particulars is becoming more and more important in the field of international development cooperation. The DIES programme, jointly coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors’ Conference (HRK), assists universities in developing countries with a bundle of measures to tackle these challenges. All DIES components have in common that they pursue a practical approach, facilitating change by means of developing skills and competencies of individuals.

DIES training courses are one of the key instruments for this. The implementation of DIES proposal writing courses started back in 2005 when the first course took place in Nairobi, Kenya. During the following decade, the training course has been successfully offered in different regions of the world and the steadily increasing demand for this type of training has led the DAAD to scale up its efforts and entrust a German university with the coordination of the DIES proposal writing courses.

Since 2013, the International Office of the University of Cologne is responsible in close cooperation with partner institutions in the regions for designing and implementing every year proposal writing courses in different regions of the world.

This booklet provides useful insights in the conceptual framework of ProGRANT, its main achievements and future perspectives. We wish you a joyful reading! Further information about the DIES programme in general or other training courses can be found on our website: [www.daad.de/dies/en](http://www.daad.de/dies/en)



**Dr. Stefan Bildhauer**

Head of International Office  
**University of Cologne**

I still have in mind the friendly, cooperative and good atmosphere among the 30 participants from four different countries which I experienced during the last ProGRANT - Seminar.

Besides the hard work during the seminar where we had captivating conversations and discussions, we also had a lot of fun together. The feedback of the participants in the emails and WhatsApp-group continues to be overwhelming, such as “amazing course which successfully could break the barriers of countries, languages, religions and cultures and raise the concepts of care, concern, cooperation, passion and building up the knowledge”, as one of the participants put it.

Seven years ago, the University of Cologne applied for the DIES Proposal Writing Programme because it fits perfectly into our Internationalisation Strategy. Combining our primary objective to be a top international university in research, teaching and study, and our ambition to take on global responsibility, by holding ProGRANT Seminars, the University of Cologne contributes to knowledge generation and exchange as a capacity building measure.

The cooperation with universities in the United States, in Europe and also in Japan has a rather long tradition. However, more and more countries in the so-called Global South come into our focus. In 2013, the Global South Studies Center (GSSC) was founded, a key profile area in the University of Cologne’s application in the Excellence Initiative with a focus on research on topics related to social, economic, cultural and political transformations in countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The ProGRANT - Seminars give us the chance to enhance the presence and reputation in those countries and to deepen and extend our networks.

I am sure that the sense of responsibility of scientists and of science itself is a crucial point for the planetary welfare – all the more in a world as irrational, as chaotic and partly as inhuman as today. In my vision, science, as well as education and particularly cooperation in science and education worldwide, are of fundamental importance to build a better and peaceful world.

All this is only possible because of the enthusiasm, the hard work and the openness and fruitful cooperation of all those involved. Thus, we very much appreciate the good cooperation with the DAAD - in Bonn and all over the world. I feel honoured and very glad to be a part of this growing team of inspiring and interesting people and I am looking forward to many more seminars in many different countries and to many successful applications for third party funding by the participants.

# Overview



Research is an intrinsic part of the higher education landscape worldwide. Knowledge production and teaching, as well as the innovative character that distinguishes higher education, are products of strides made in research. However, research is not done and produced all over the world in an equitable way. Research, like most other things, has a cost. Funding agencies have specific evaluation criteria that have created unfair advantages for researchers in the global north. This advantage has led to inequities in the distribution of funds, access to information, and journal publications (among other areas). This inequity has resulted in a distortion in the kinds of perspectives and voices that carry knowledge forward, limiting the scope and complexity of academic discourse. The DIES ProGRANT program (ProGRANT) at the University of Cologne (UoC) is a program that is bringing more voices into the conversation by having researchers from the global north and south come together to develop successful research proposals. The program also shows potential as a tool in furthering gender equality.

The UoC took over the coordination of the DAAD DIES Proposal Writing Courses at the end of 2013. Since 2014, 22 courses have taken place with participants from over 50 different countries. The past six years have proved ProGRANT and the UoC to be a perfect match. On the one hand, the UoC is one of the largest and oldest universities in Europe and has decade-long experience in international exchange. Thanks to its excellent reputation, the UoC can draw on a well-established network boasting more than 200 research partnerships and collaborative projects all around the world. This experience and these contacts are integrated into the project with the aim to create fruitful synergies for the participating researchers and institutions in the global south.

On the other hand, ProGRANT supports the advancement of goals in the UoC's internationalisation strategy. Successful research requires international partners for; transnational research themes, the regular exchange of current results, collaborative projects, creating synergies and procuring third-party funding for joint research projects. Through the project, the strategic development of international contacts and the international network of the UoC are being further developed. ProGRANT also complements the efforts of the University of Cologne to create platforms for international scientific exchange and the quest for collaboration with the best academics from around the world.

# The ProGRANT Concept

ProGRANT participants are upcoming researchers and PhD-holders from four regions of the Global South: South-East Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. ProGRANT is open for researchers from all disciplines which makes each course grouping an interdisciplinary experience for the 30 participants from the respective region.



Using a blended learning approach, a ProGRANT course is structured in three phases: Two on-site seminars (Seminar I and Seminar II) and an intermediate, trainer guided E-Learning phase.

The goal of ProGRANT is to support researchers during their proposal writing process, by transferring knowledge on general proposal writing skills and through engaging in a peer-review process to further perfect their research idea and text. At the end of the course, researchers should have a fully developed proposal and a budget plan that is ready for submission to research funding agencies.

During Seminar I the ProGRANT trainers share knowledge on important principles of grant writing that are applicable across all disciplines. They also shed light on fundamental structural elements that are required by most international funding organisations. The ProGRANT trainer teams consist of head trainers and regional experts. These teams also cooperate with researchers and professors from the University of Cologne in order to provide participants with multi-disciplinary guidance. Seminar I is characterized by lectures, group work and exercises. The next phase is the E-Learning phase, which is specifically designed to turn theoretical knowledge into practical skills.

## The ProGRANT Concept

During the E-Learning phase, participants work on their proposal (including the creation of a work plan and a budget plan) at their home institution in order to further develop it. Personalised online support is offered to all participants by the ProGRANT trainer team. This includes a virtual classroom for meetings and discussing with peers and trainers.

During the second seminar, the proposal drafts are presented, discussed, evaluated and fine-tuned in a participative review process. The objective of this seminar is to engage in a collaborative feedback process between trainers and participants and ultimately develop a final version of the proposal.



## Experience our Courses

The following section will give a small tour of the 22 ProGRANT courses that took place from 2014 to 2019. A brief introduction to the host country will set the stage, and highlights from some of the courses, as well as the voices of our alumni will help give a taste of what the ProGRANT experience is about.

## Testimonial

“This event was the most fruitful and productive one in my life. Not only [did] I learn how to write a convincing proposal, but also [...] how to teach [the materials] effectively and professionally. I’m deeply grateful to all the organizers of this.”

— ProGRANT participant from Iran  
Tehran, Iran, 2018

# ProGRANT by the Numbers



20  
COUNTRIES



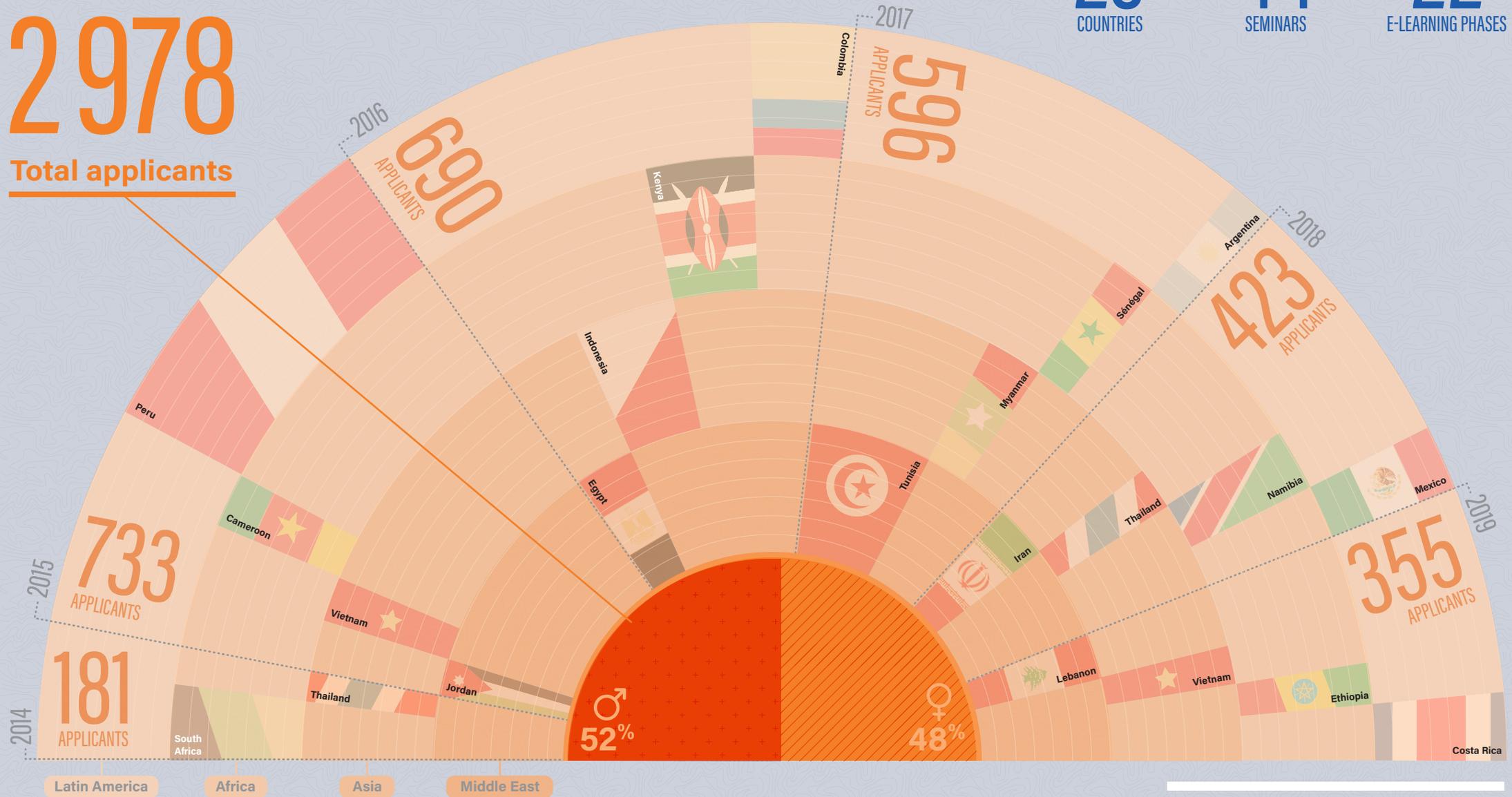
44  
SEMINARS



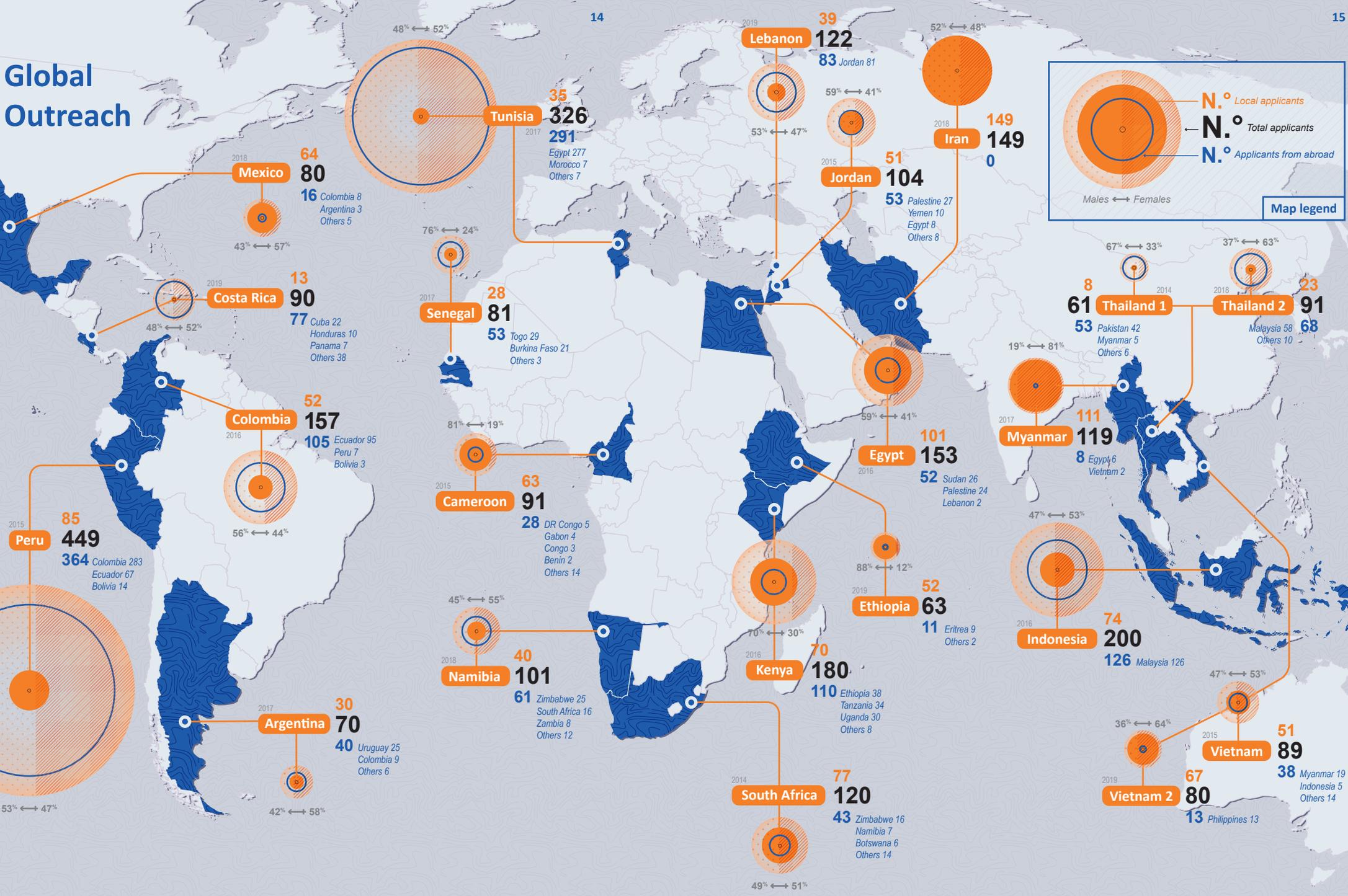
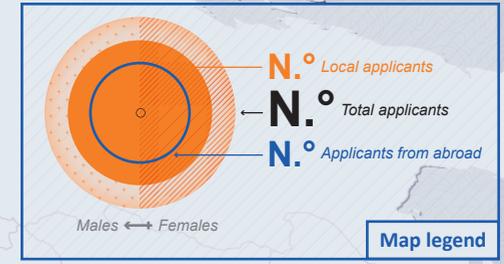
22  
E-LEARNING PHASES

# 2978

Total applicants



# Global Outreach



# Year by Year

2014

DIES ProGRANT  
Proposal writing courses for Research Grants



## Thailand

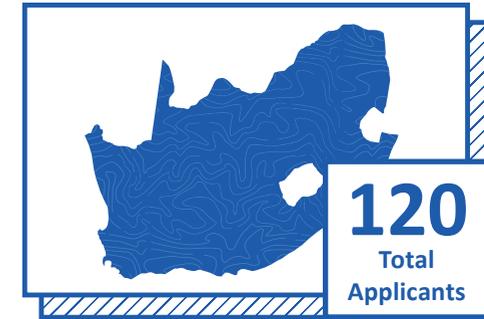
In cooperation with Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The non-private universities in Thailand are categorized into Public universities and Colleges, Autonomous Universities, “Rajabhat Universities” and “Rajamangala Universities of Technology”. Previously known as Government universities due to them being erstwhile fully government-controlled, public universities are nowadays independent with governmental support and influence being vastly reduced. Autonomous universities, on the other hand, are totally self-governing, with their administrative and budgeting systems being devoid of governmental influence. Both elevated to university status in 2005, the Rajabhat Universities and Rajamangala Universities Technology systems comprise of 40 and 9 universities respectively. Thailand’s top 3 universities are highly ranked in Asia and constantly rank in the top 1000 universities in the world, according to the Times Higher Education World University Ranking (2020)

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Development
- Technology
- Resources
- Biology
- Education
- Migration
- Science
- Gender
- Management
- Economy
- Animals
- Disease



## South Africa

In cooperation with the University of Cape Town

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The public tertiary education system’s landscape consists of traditional universities that specialize in theoretically oriented university degrees, the Universities of technology where the focus of their diplomas and degrees is on vocational education and Comprehensive universities which combine both the technical and theoretical degrees. One of its foremost universities is the University of Cape Town, which is well renowned on the African continent and was ranked #136 in the world according to the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for 2020. This ranking also featured 4 other South African universities in the top 500 Universities in the world.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Educational
- Health
- Entrepreneurship
- Food
- Children
- Violence
- Marketing
- Community
- Climate
- Molecular
- Energy
- Water



## Jordan

*In cooperation with the University of Jordan, Amman*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has one of the highest levels of education in the Middle East. The country has 10 public and 19 private universities as well as 50 community colleges. The University of Jordan ranks as number one university in the country and 8th in the Arab world in the 2016 QS University Rankings

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Biology
- Medicinal
- Chemistry
- Agriculture
- Food
- Textiles
- Urban
- Pharmacy
- Sociology
- Postcolonial
- Medical
- Psychology



## Peru

*In cooperation with Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The education sector of Peru includes 31 public and 45 private universities. The institutions with the highest level of learning and research are located in Lima as well as in regional centres such as Arequipa and Piura – so is the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru (PUCP) where the ProGRANT course was hosted.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Engineering
- Economy
- Administration
- Social
- Education
- Geography
- Sociology
- Management
- Science
- Energy
- Public
- Systems
- Development



## Cultural Evening

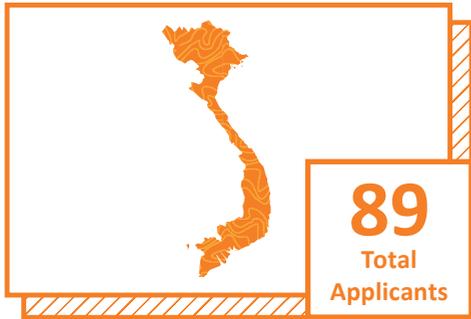
During Seminar I in our Thailand 2014 course, the regional expert from Indonesia, Professor Leenawaty Limantara, suggested we organize a “cultural evening” during the second seminar. The event centers on learning about the different regions our participants and trainers come from. Everyone is invited to prepare a five-minute presentation, either individually or in groups, in which they will present a song, typical dance, poem, historical fun facts, or whatever they can think of, that tells about their home country and region. From a didactic point of view, the cultural evening has proved to be a valuable tool allowing participants and trainers get to know each other better on a personal level, and build trust. The participants feel more at ease the next day when it comes to presenting their grant proposals and receiving criticism and feedback from trainers and peers.



## Team Building

The most important prerequisite for a successful ProGRANT course is that the participants grow together as a team. Several techniques are employed that facilitate and promote team building. Among those techniques are several so-called “ice-breakers” and an introduction to “intercultural awareness”, which we define as the ability to be more aware of one’s own culture and of other cultures and how these interact. As participants and trainers do not only come from different countries and cultures but also from different academic disciplines, it is important to become aware that we – at an unconscious level – see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways. This helps in supporting mutual understanding and thoughtfulness.

During all courses, the regional experts have been key players in achieving true intercultural communication. They have not only supported the course by presenting on the regional characteristics of research funding but have provided vital information and counselling on the intricacies of giving and accepting feedback.



# Vietnam

Held in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Since the end of 1993, numerous small universities in Vietnam merged in order to form larger multi-disciplinary universities. This was one of the steps included in the Vietnamese government's "Higher Education Reform Agenda". The program's objective is to transform Vietnam into a knowledge-based society by the end of 2020.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Biology
- Management
- Engineering
- Agriculture
- Contract
- Chemistry
- Aeronautical
- Food
- Culture
- Processing
- Water
- Civil



# Cameroon

In cooperation with the Université de Yaoundé

## COUNTRY PROFILE

The Republic of Cameroon has two education systems, the British system and the French system, the languages of instruction are accordingly English and French. Cameroon has 168 institutions of higher education, of which 52 are public, while 116 are private.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Literature
- Anthropology
- Education
- Biology
- Sociology
- Resources
- Public
- Linguistic
- Virology
- Physiology
- Climate
- History
- Biochemistry



# Egypt

In cooperation with Cairo University

## COUNTRY PROFILE

With the foundation of the Al Azhar University in 975, Egypt has had a long academic tradition and is the most important country in the Arab world in regards to research. There are 24 public and 23 private universities in the country. At the moment, approximately 2.5 million students are enrolled. The plan, however, is to increase the number of students to 3.5 million until 2030.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Science
- Engineering
- Computer
- Biology
- Textiles
- Urban
- Pharmacy
- Zoonotic Diseases
- Education
- Politics
- Security
- Biopolymers



# Kenya

In cooperation with Karatina University and Kenyatta University, Nairobi

## COUNTRY PROFILE

In Kenya, the number of university enrollments has massively risen over the last years. While in 2000, only 41,000 students were enrolled in universities, by 2015 it was 440,000. Simultaneously to the growing number of students, new institutions of higher education are also founded regularly. As of now, Kenya has 67 institutions of higher education, 22 of those are public universities, 14 are 'Constituent Colleges', and 17 are private institutions.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Linguistics
- Science
- Management
- Social Studies
- Education
- Anthropology
- Botany
- Virology
- Urban Planning
- Biochemistry
- Chemistry
- Medicine

“As a researcher, I always have the need to train and improve my research skills to perform better. I had applied to DIES ProGRANT because it was my interest to learn more about research methodology. Research is an area in which you never finish being good enough.”

— ProGRANT participant from Colombia

Lima, Peru, 2015

Testimonial

2016

DIES ProGRANT

Proposal writing courses for Research Grants



## Indonesia

Held in Jakarta

### COUNTRY PROFILE

Indonesia has one of the most heterogeneous systems of higher education in the world with a total of 4,338 private and public institutions. Of those 472 are universities, 2,082 are institutes, and 1,130 are academies or polytechnic institutions. Some of the institutions are headed by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, while others are directed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

Biomedicine  
Engineering  
Microbiology  
Chemistry  
Electricity  
Design

Biotechnology  
Geography  
Medicine  
Lipids  
Civil



## Colombia

In cooperation with the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The Colombian landscape of higher education consists of 288 institutions of higher education, including 82 universities, 32 of which are public and 50 private. Additionally, 120 institutions exclusively offer Undergraduate programs and 86 focus on technical-oriented training. The National University of Colombia ranks amongst the 500 best universities in the world.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

Engineering  
Organic Chemistry  
Sciences  
Adoption Models  
Latin Am. Studies  
Psychology

Anthropology  
Ecological Urbanism  
Ergonomics  
Toxicology  
E-Learning



# Tunisia

Held in Tunis

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Tunisia has a dense and well-equipped university network of 310 higher education institutions, including 229 in the public sector. The Tunisian state guarantees every high-school graduate access to a free course of study at one of the 270 Tunisian state higher education institutions.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Food
- Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Microbiology
- Biotechnology
- Virology
- Plants
- Nanotechnology
- Geosciences
- Sports
- Archaeology
- Manufacturing



# Myanmar

In cooperation with Yangon University, in Kamayut, Yangon

## COUNTRY PROFILE

The political opening process of the country offers general opportunities for expanding and deepening existing cooperation and partnerships, including in the higher education sector. Germany and the University of Cologne also benefit from the fact that the former Education Minister Prof. Dr. Khin San Yee and the current Education Minister Prof. Dr. Myo Thein Gyi are DAAD alumni, since this serves as a perfect starting condition for Myanmar-German cooperation in higher education.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Geology
- Chemistry
- Organic
- Geography
- Engineering
- Environmental
- Biomaterials
- Economics
- Polymers
- Agriculture
- Semiconductors
- Renewables
- Socio-cultural
- Mathematics



# Argentina

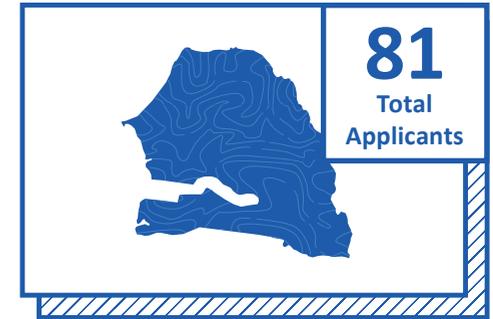
In cooperation with the Universidad de Buenos Aires

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Argentina currently has 130 higher education institutions, of which 111 are universities, with around 2 million enrolled students. About half of the universities are public institutions that do not charge any fees - which makes Argentina an interesting place to study for students from the surrounding Latin American countries.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Education
- Biology
- Sciences
- Engineering
- Molecular
- Law
- Agriculture
- Chemistry
- Food
- Psychology
- Agronomy
- Neuroscience
- Oceanography
- Veterinary
- Literature



# Senegal

Held in Saly

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Since the introduction of the French LMD reform in Senegal in 2011, three degrees are awarded at institutions of higher education: The degree of "licence" (i.e. Bachelor's), that of "master" (i.e. Master's) and that of "doctorate" (i.e. PhD). In addition to the "formal" education system, Senegal also has a widespread and important "informal" system. This includes various measures in the areas of literacy, municipal schools, professional training for farmers, etc.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Economics
- Chemistry
- Geography
- Biology
- Environment
- Agronomy
- Energy
- Agriculture
- Immunology
- Policies
- Mathematics
- Agroforestry

## Peer Feedback

One of the highlights during Seminar II was the presentation of the revised proposals. The group is split into teams and participants evaluate the proposals of another team and prepare thoughtful feedback. After the evaluation takes place, each participant must present their proposal in front of the whole group and receive the prepared feedback.

This process is limited to 20 minutes per proposal. Each project is presented, feedback from the evaluating team is given, the plenum has the possibility to give additional feedback, and trainers comment on both proposal and presentation style. The second seminar in Cairo was an outstanding example of vivid participation. Through their qualified comments and professionalism participants from all disciplines demonstrated they had learned to adopt a reviewer's perspective.

## Collaborative Learning

The ProGRANT Course in Yaoundé is the perfect example that collaborative activities like group work and peer reviews are effective training tools that create opportunities for the participants to learn from each other, share knowledge and to support each other. For that reason, the ProGRANT courses build upon group work and peer reviews to a large extent.

During Seminar I, for example, participants evaluate both their own and group members' proposals by asking critical questions like "Is the research aim clearly stated?" They must also prepare presentations on a first provisional budget for their projects.

In Seminar II, participants from diverse disciplines evaluate the proposals of another group in reviewer teams. By grouping together researchers from different disciplines, they are "forced" to reflect very intensively on the contents of the proposal as they have to explain their project to somebody, who is not a specialist in the field.

In Cameroon, we saw that these peer reviews and group work sparked participants' enthusiasm so much, that they consistently worked on their grant proposals far beyond the end of the seminar day.



## Thailand

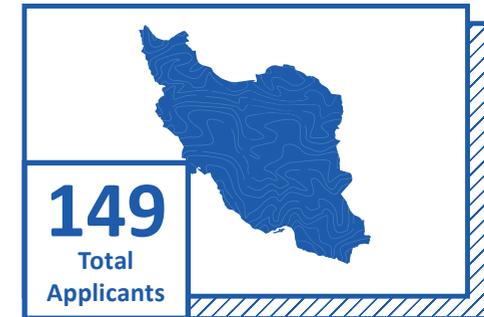
*In cooperation with Chulalongkorn University and Mahidol University, Bangkok*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The non-private universities in Thailand are categorized into Public universities and Colleges, Autonomous Universities, "Rajabhat Universities" and "Rajamangala Universities of Technology". Previously known as Government universities due to them being erstwhile fully government-controlled, public universities are nowadays independent with governmental support and influence being vastly reduced. Autonomous universities, on the other hand, are totally self-governing, with their administrative and budgeting systems being devoid of governmental influence. Both elevated to university status in 2005, the Rajabhat Universities and Rajamangala Universities Technology systems comprise of 40 and 9 universities respectively. Thailand's top 3 universities are highly ranked in Asia and constantly rank in the top 1000 universities in the world, according to the Times Higher Education World University Ranking (2020)

### RESEARCH TOPICS

**Chemical Engineering** **Environment**  
**Education** **Health**  
**Economics** **Computer Science**  
**Medicine** **Counseling**  
**Chemistry** **Humanities**  
**Development Studies**



## Iran

*In cooperation with the University of Tehran*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

All Iranian leading universities are state universities, apart from the Islamic Azad universities in the larger cities of the country, such as Tehran, Isfahan or Mashhad. The currently 63 state universities are under the direct supervision of the Ministries of Science and Health/Medical Education. The University of Tehran, which hosted the ProGRANT course, is one of the oldest institutions for higher education in Iran and especially known for civil and structural engineering, as well as architecture.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

**Chemistry** **Physics**  
**Biology** **Management**  
**Mechanical** **Electrical**  
**Engineering** **Artificial Intelligence**  
**Toxicology** **Environment**  
**Psychiatry** **Genetics**  
**Neuroscience**  
**Virology**



## Namibia

*In cooperation with the University of Namibia, Windhoek*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

The University of Namibia (UNAM) is the largest and leading national institution of higher education in the country. Although a relatively young university, it has grown to support a student population of 24,759 in 2017. During 2006, UNAM was rated as the best higher education institution in Namibia by the Professional Management Review of South Africa and won the Golden Arrow Award. The previous year a Geneva based Foundation for Excellence in Business Practice nominated UNAM to be the recipient of the Foundation's Gold Medal for Excellence in Business Practice.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Education
- Agriculture
- Entrepreneurship
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Biodiversity
- Gender Studies
- Literature
- Genetics
- Biochemistry
- Education
- Psychology



## Mexico

*In cooperation with the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla*

### COUNTRY PROFILE

In Mexico, the most powerful research institutions are the autonomous universities of the individual states and the Institutos Tecnológicos, where basic research and applied research are carried out intensively. The nearly 30 federal research institutions, the Centros de Investigación, have a special position. Due to their research capacity in the field of basic and applied research, they are very interesting cooperation partners for scientists from abroad.

### RESEARCH TOPICS

- Social Sciences
- Biotechnology
- Psychology
- Administration
- Biology
- Public Health
- Economics
- Education
- Sociology
- Sustainable Design
- Automation
- Architecture
- Robotics



## E-Learning

Immediately following Seminar I participants have the opportunity to further develop their grant proposals under the guidance and online counseling of the trainer team via digital means. The E-Learning consists of two main components, the online lessons and communication forums. Lessons cover the topics of Seminar I and offer additional in-depth information, including exercises and tests. The communication forums allow for chats between trainers and participants and between participants themselves.

Trainers can track participants' progress through various scheduled group chat sessions which can be used to address individual issues. The chats are also a great opportunity to keep in touch with each other as they allow for spontaneous, vivid discussions and help address important issues and answer pressing questions.

During the Lebanon course, participants went through the online reading material, filled out exercises and tests, and chatted with trainers and participants, on a regular basis. The feedback received was very positive. It gave new insights into the didactic requirements of the E-Learning, which always has to be adapted to regional conditions in order to fit specific learning cultures.



## Role Playing

In various ProGRANT exercises, participants are forced to play different "roles" and evaluate both their own and others' proposals from different perspectives. On the one hand, each participant adopts the role of a non-expert reviewer, evaluating proposals outside of their own discipline. On the other hand, each participant has to present their own project to non-expert reviewers from other disciplines. This task is very demanding and complex.

During the ProGRANT course in Costa Rica, this role-playing exercise proved to be an eye opener: Reviewing other proposals helped participants develop a keen eye and presenting their proposals with these different perspectives in mind helped them realize where potential pitfalls and areas of opportunity in their own projects were. These exchanges lead to inspiration- In Colombia, one participant was able to find creative ways of improving their work by adapting successful writing strategies from a colleague in another discipline.



# Ethiopia

In cooperation with University of Addis Ababa

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Ethiopia has experienced a huge growth of its educational landscape. In just 20 years, the number of state universities in the country rose from 2 to 37, while the number of students enrolled multiplied from 35,000 to 757,000. In sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia is a pioneer in improving education and expanding educational institutions. This includes school education, vocational training and higher education.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Agriculture**
- Animal Nutrition**
- Biology**
- Economics**
- Social Anthropology**
- Biotechnology**
- Physics**
- Agricultural Economy**
- Environmental Sciences**
- Sustainability**



# Lebanon

In cooperation with the American University of Beirut

## COUNTRY PROFILE

The Lebanese education system is closely linked to the French and the Anglo-American one. With the American University of Beirut (AUB, founded in 1866) and the Université Saint-Joseph (USJ, founded in 1875), Lebanon has the oldest universities of the region. The end of the civil war in the 90s led to a rapid expansion of the tertiary education sector, with currently 471 state-recognised academic institutions. Only 32 of them are "full universities", recognized as so by having at least three faculties, of which at least one belongs to the humanities and one to the natural sciences, and where the academic degrees are awarded at least up to the Master level.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Agriculture**
- Health**
- Water Resource Management**
- Computer Sciences**
- Electric Engineering**
- Public Health**
- Biotechnology**
- Marketing**
- Neuroscience**
- Business**
- Chemistry**
- Environmental Sciences**



# Costa Rica

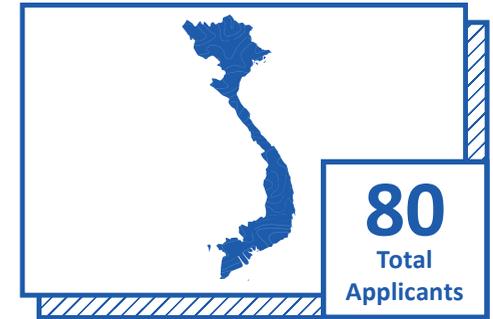
Held in San José

## COUNTRY PROFILE

According to UNESCO's statistics, over 392,000 students are enrolled in Costa Rica's tertiary education system. This represents about 7.8% of the country's total population. The five state universities enroll more than 102,000 students annually, while the 54 private universities in the country absorb 105,000 students per year. As of 2018, Costa Rica had two state universities and one private university considered among the best universities in Central America and Mexico. Many other Costa Rican universities, both state and private, hold privileged places within the world rankings.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Psychology**
- Biology**
- Computer Sciences**
- Social Sciences**
- Education**
- Mathematics**
- Engineering**
- Gender Rights**
- Environmental Sociology**
- Robotics**
- Economics**
- Water Resources Management**



# Vietnam

In cooperation with Foreign Trade University, Hanoi

## COUNTRY PROFILE

Since the end of 1993, numerous small universities in Vietnam merged in order to form larger multi-disciplinary universities. This was one of the steps included in the Vietnamese government's "Higher Education Reform Agenda". The program's objective is to transform Vietnam into a knowledge-based society by the end of 2020.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- Agriculture**
- Chemistry**
- Social Studies**
- History**
- Environmental Sciences**
- Biochemistry**
- Mathematics**
- Education**
- Physics**
- Biology**
- Sociology**

# Impact and Future Perspectives

ProGRANT takes a holistic approach to proposal writing. Research and knowledge management should not be considered as solely academic exercises but also be seen as an income-generating and team building activity for researchers and institutions.

The impact of ProGRANT goes far beyond capacity building and the improvement of soft skills. By offering a platform to exchange and interact, ProGRANT participants can create regional and international networks and gain intercultural experience. As a result, ProGRANT is also helpful with career development and opportunities, with a special significance on women. Although much can be said about the impact this project has had, our participants speak for themselves:

**“The course really empowered me. Amongst other things, the grant writing skills came with benefits beyond (...) successful grant applications. I have been appointed Head of School of Human and Community Development [at my University]”**

**Mzi Nduna, PhD** South Africa

ProGRANT regional trainers, for instance receive the chance to support their local research communities:

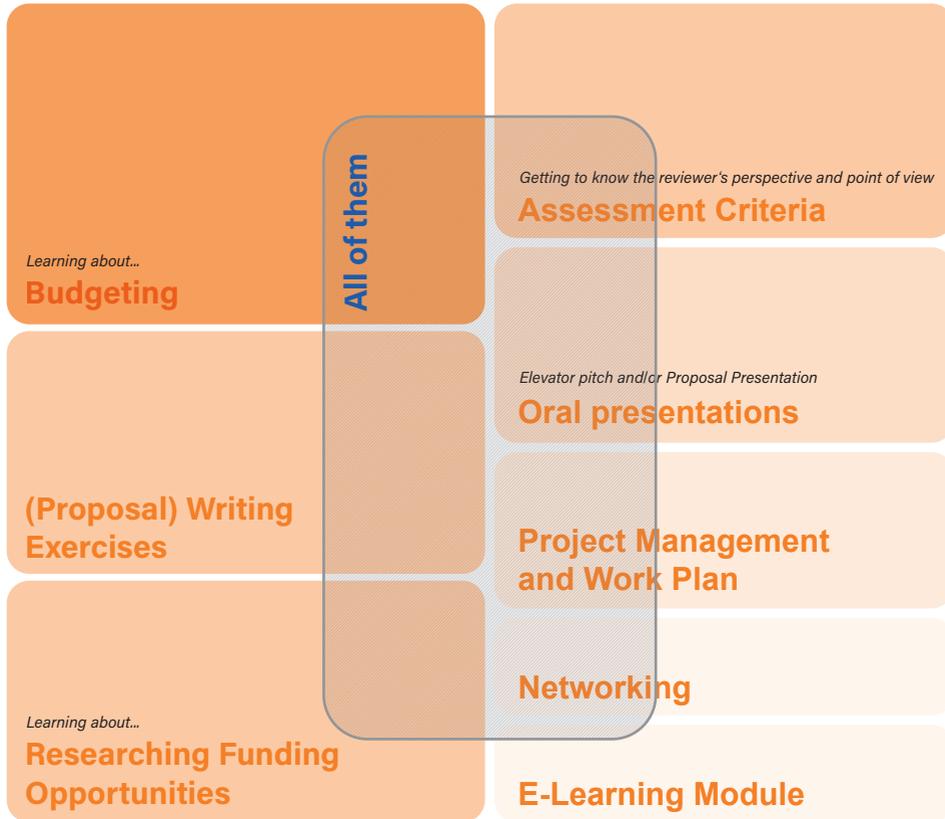
**“The ProGRANT training is an enriching research and cultural experience that exposes both the trainers and trainees to a wide range of innovative research ideas and provide a platform not only for learning but also for sharing and networking.”**

**Prof. Joy Obando**, Regional Trainer, Kenyatta University, Kenya

**“I have engaged [with] three programmes of ProGRANT, in Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia. [It] has been very successful, well attended by young, energetic and promising researchers from ASEAN countries. I believe ProGRANT has contributed greatly to sharpen the skills of all attendants, [training on] (1) how to write an excellence research proposal, (2) bridging a long-term network, and (3) how to contribute directly to the research career of the participants. I am proud to witness participants (...) getting national and international research grants and to be connected within ProGrant as a big family.”**

**Prof. Leenawaty Limantara**, Regional Trainer, Indonesia

## Most relevant modules



For the scientists at the University of Cologne, ProGRANT offers new ways of not only exchanging knowledge with researchers from the Global South, but also for building networks with view to possible common research projects:

**“ProGRANT is a great opportunity for researchers from the University of Cologne to establish and strengthen contacts with fellow researchers. This is very helpful for the development of international networks and common research exchanges. Ever since I have accompanied the seminars in Jordan and Tunisia, I have been closely working together with my research colleagues from those regions.”**

**Stephan Milich, PhD** Department of Oriental Studies, University of Cologne

ProGRANT also enables Project Managers to enhance professional skills:

**“In general, the experience of being a local administrative officer for the ProGRANT Workshop in Jakarta in April and November 2016 [gave me] an opportunity to sharpen my collaborative project management skills.”**

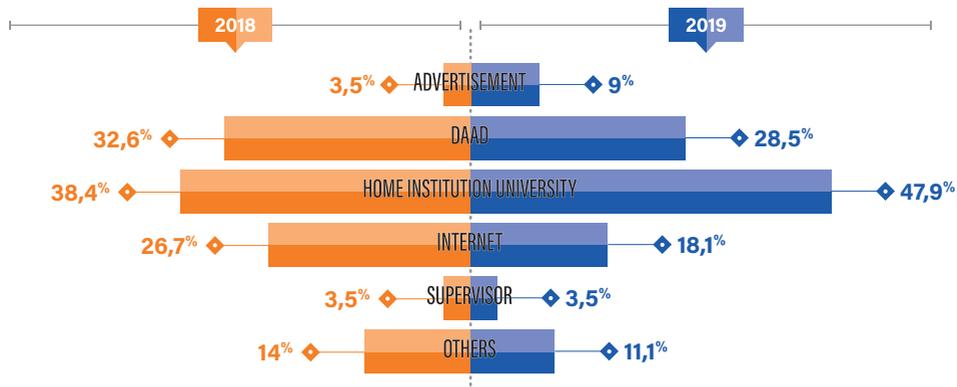
**Gita Widya Laksmi Soerjoatmodjo**, Regional Managing Assistant, Indonesia

Cooperating Institutions receive the chance of collaborating with and welcoming a group of international researchers when hosting ProGRANT courses:

**“One of the biggest challenges faced by universities in Africa is the professional development of the next generation of researchers. For this reason, the University of Cape Town’s collaboration with the University of Cologne has proved to be particularly beneficial, as exemplified through the co-hosting of a Grant Proposal Writing Course for Postdoctoral fellows and emerging researchers. The 33 participants came from universities in seven Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and represented a wide range of disciplines. The importance of this event lay in that it not only provides practical-oriented training for young researchers, it also strengthens south-south links among scholars, with financial and academic support from the north.”**

**Marilet Sienaert, PhD** Executive Director Research, University of Cape Town

## How did you find out about ProGRANT?



## Impact and Future Perspectives

The work and impact of ProGRANT continues after the courses. The University of Cologne manages the ProGRANT Alumni Network which is made up of more than 280 international researchers. From December 6th to December 9th, 2017, the first ProGRANT Alumni Workshop was hosted in Cologne. Thirty alumni of the ProGRANT program took part in a three-day workshop. While the ProGRANT courses focus on grant proposal writing, those alumni participated in a training course on “Teaching Approaches in Higher Education” with interactive units on cultural aspects, didactical concepts, as well as teaching methods. In 2018, a Regional Experts Workshop was held at the University of Cologne. Experts from all DIES training courses were present during the three-day event.

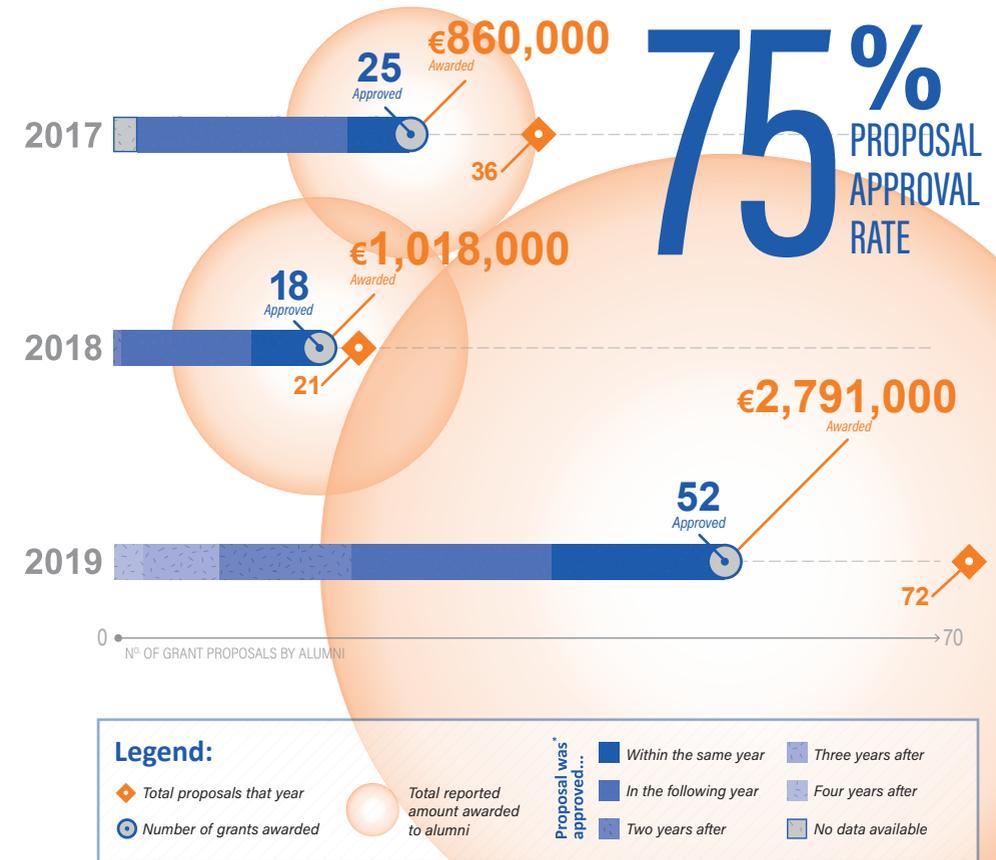
The workshops were a great opportunity for strengthening the network of both highly professional and culturally diverse ProGRANT Alumni and Regional Experts training them as international multipliers for the program. Apart from the academic program of the workshop, participants also got to explore the city of Cologne on a guided city tour, and learn about its culture during a visit to a traditional German restaurant.

DIES ProGRANT regional expert for South America, Juan David Guzmán Vasquez, argues that

**“The DIES ProGRANT seminar is extremely useful for any researcher aiming to finance a research project on a local, national or international setting. The seminar is organised so that the attendants have the opportunity to present the project and hear comments and valuable critics from colleagues and experts from other areas of study. I have witnessed that this activity significantly enhances the projects. In addition, the seminar promotes communication between the participants, and occasionally the networking ends up in research collaboration boosting the research and linking different areas of study. I sincerely recommend the DIES ProGRANT seminar to any serious researcher aiming to strengthen a research proposal.”**

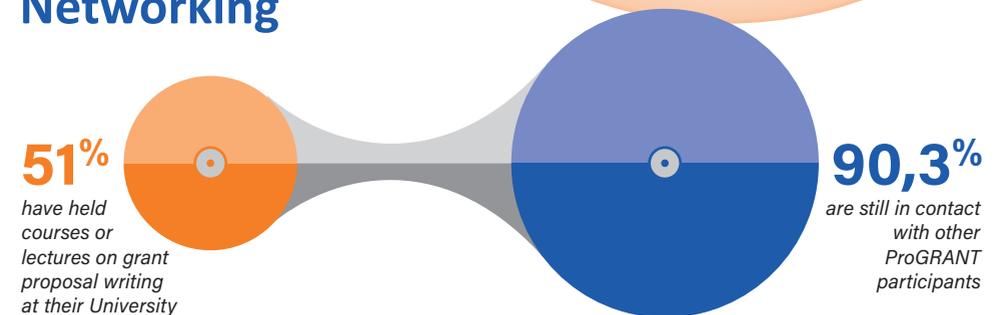
**Juan David Guzmán Vasquez, PhD** Regional Trainer, Universidad Nacional de Colombia Medellín, Colombia

## Proposals and Awards for Alumni



\*In relation to the participation in the ProGRANT course

## Networking



## Success Stories

The feedback of participants has been a central part of our strategy. Beside the benefits of helping in the optimization and constant improvements in every facet of the ProGRANT course, this has also provided us with the opportunity to keep up with the progress of our alumni, particularly regarding the impact of the expertise gathered during the course of the ProGRANT training on their respective proposals. Over the last 6 years, various alumni have kept in touch to let us know that they have obtained funding for their research. An example is illustrated below with 5 alumni from Costa Rica reporting their approved grant proposals in 2019.

ALUMNI NAME	FUNDING INSTITUTION
Jenny Cepeda Marte	Fondos Nacionales del Ministerio de Educación, Dominican Republic
Sergio Paniagua	Office of Naval Research, USA
Maria Dolores Castro Rojas	Universidad de Costa Rica
Gilkauris Rojas	FONDOCYT (Fondo Nacional de innovación y desarrollo científico y tecnológico), Dominican Republic
Sahira Vasquez Baez	PhD Scholarship at Libera Università di Bolzano, Italy

The course has also thrived in terms of its multiplier effect. Some ProGRANT alumni have reported that they organized training courses using the course contents in their home institutions with highly positive feedback. We hope that our alumni continue to be as motivated and as aspiring in future so we can constantly work together on spreading the word about ProGRANT.

**“[I am very thankful] for your comments and suggestions during the training, those really helped improved my research proposal.”**

**Rolando T. Candidato Jr, PhD** Researcher, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Tibanga, Philippines, after getting his proposal approved in November, 2019.

**“My sincere thanks goes to you all for your support, most especially for Dr. Birte who sowed this seed in 2015 and continued (with Dr. Reinhard), to nurture it.”**

**Dr. Jude Ndzifon Kimengsi, PhD** Professor of Tropical Forestry, TU-Dresden, and alumni from Cameroon 2015, got his proposal approved in November 2019.

## ProGRANT Core Trainers

proWiss is a private research consulting firm supporting scientists - individuals and research teams - in raising external funds for research projects, capacity building and international cooperation. proWiss workshops, E-Learning courses and individual consultings cover topics like grant writing, project design, project management and research funding. In the context of ProGRANT, the experts from proWiss are responsible for the contents and the training-related aspects of the courses <http://www.prowiss.com/>



**Birte Kathage, PhD (Germany)**

Head trainer for the ProGRANT courses. Together with Reinhard Klein-Arendt she is the author of the didactical concept and in charge of coordinating the course contents and the other ProGRANT trainers. She is a research consultant at proWiss Consulting Services for researchers and expert in the fields of grant proposal writing, research funding and research (project) management.



**Reinhard Klein-Arendt, PhD (Germany)**

Head trainer for the ProGRANT courses with a focus on research funding and research proposal writing. Together with Birte Kathage, he is the author of the didactical concept. He is a research consultant at proWiss Consulting Services for researchers, a research funding expert, certified project manager, and associate professor at the Institute for African Studies, University of Cologne.



**Prof. Lizette Jacinto, PhD (Mexico)**

ProGRANT trainer with the regional focus and expertise for the Spanish ProGRANT courses in Latin America. She obtained her PhD in History in 2010 (University Witten-Herdecke, Germany). From 2009 to 2014 she was a lecturer at the University of Cologne and the University of Düsseldorf. She is Professor of the Theory of History at the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities “Alfonso Vélaz Pliego” at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla and is a member of the National System of Researchers (SNI) in Mexico.

## Regional Experts



**Prof. Nguyen Thi Tuong Anh, PhD (Vietnam)**

Regional Expert for ProGRANT courses in South-East Asia. She is a senior research fellow at the Development and Policy Research Center (DEPOCEN) and a lecturer at the Faculty of International Economics at the Foreign Trade University, Vietnam.



**Prof. Leenawaty Limantara, PhD (Indonesia)**

Regional expert for ProGRANT courses in South-East Asia. She is a principal investigator at Ma Chung Research Center for Photosynthetic Pigments (MRCPP), a national center of excellence in Indonesia for Chlorophylls and Carotenoids, as well as Rector of Universitas Pembangunan Jaya (UPJ), Indonesia.



**Nisrine Machaka-Houri, PhD (Lebanon)**

Regional expert for ProGRANT courses since 2016. For the future courses in French-speaking regions, she will join the team as a regional trainer. Since 2015, Nisrine Machaka-Houri is an Honoree of the Women in Science Hall of Fame Award from the Lebanese Department of State. She is an environmental consultant for national and international organizations as well as a scientist and researcher who has published several books, papers and chapters. She teaches plant biology and environmental health at Saint Joseph University (USJ) and Modern University for Business and Sciences (MUBS), Lebanon.



**Jude N. Kimengsi, PhD (Cameroon)**

Regional Expert for ProGRANT courses in Africa. Initiative Teaching and Research Fellow at the Technische Universität Dresden (Germany). Between 2012 and 2015, he was Consultant on Sustainable Development and Coordinator of Research, Consultancy and Publications Division at the Pan African Institute for Development – West Africa (PAID-WA). Prof. Kimengsi has over 65 publications on linked issues of natural resource management. He held the position of Director of Research (2019-2020) and Head of Department of Geography and Environmental Studies (2014-2017) at CATUC. Prof. Kimengsi is recipient of the German Research Foundation (DFG) Grant. He is consultant with WWF Cameroon and Germany on conservation, livelihoods and development.



**Juan David Guzmán Vasquez, PhD (Colombia)**

Regional Expert for the ProGRANT courses in Latin America. He has experience in writing grant proposals and he has been the recipient of a number of research grants on national and international settings. He is currently a lecturer in chemistry at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia, and he teaches both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.



**Julián Rafael Dib, PhD (Argentina)**

Regional Expert for the ProGRANT courses in Latin America. Currently, he is Adjunct Professor in the Institute of Microbiology at the National University of Tucumán, and Researcher in PROIMI-CONICET. He has given numerous international lectures and is a consultant for companies involved in fruit postharvest technologies. Dr. Dib has received international awards and scholarships, including from the Fulbright Commission, DAAD, European Commission, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He was visiting professor at the Technische Universität München, (Germany), Universidad de la República, (Uruguay), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (Malaysia), and University of Innsbruck (Austria).



**Prof. Joy Obando, PhD (Kenya)**

Regional Expert for the ProGRANT courses in Africa. She holds a PhD in Geomorphology from King's College London. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Geography, Kenyatta University. Prof. Obando is a mentor, researcher and is involved in training and community outreach. She has won several national and international research grant awards and has published widely. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the International Geographical Union (IGU) Geomorphology and Society Commission; and also a member of the International Advisory Board of Water Resources Research Center (WARREC), Kenya.

## Team

## Strategic Planning and Management: The University of Cologne Capacity Building Team

The Capacity Building Team which is part of the International Office at the University of Cologne is responsible for the ProGRANT project management. The team is in charge of strategic planning, logistics, network activities, researcher contact, marketing and branding of the courses, technical development, financial planning and controlling, evaluation of the course, quality management, participant support, project-internal communication and alumni engagement.



**Susanne Preuschoff, PhD (Germany)**

Head of Department "International Students \* Global Responsibility \* Academic Cooperation with Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East". With her senior experience in higher education management, internationalization, intercultural communication and regional expertise, Dr. Preuschoff serves as a key advisor for ProGRANT. She is the Director of the ProGRANT project.



**Sarah-Marleen Dannenberg, M.Phil. (Germany)**

Team Lead of the Capacity Building Unit and Head of the ProGRANT project at the International Office. This includes the overall management of third party-funded projects in the field of capacity building, strategic coordination, event organization, and scholar support. Her regional focus is India and South-East Asia. Ms. Dannenberg obtained her Master's degree in Linguistics from Trinity College Dublin.



**Thilo Zimmermann, PhD (Germany)**

International Project Manager for third-party funded projects at the International Office. He serves as advisor for ProGRANT. Studied economics at the University of Cologne and holds a PhD in International Political Economy from the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa, Italy. He went to Harvard University and Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris for short research stays. Before, he worked at the German Embassy in Rome, Italy, where he coordinated several projects. After his PhD he was a consultant for Tavla, a start-up company in the digital sector that was back then hosted by the Gateway incubator at the University of Cologne.



**Jens Funk, M.Sc. (Chile-Germany)**

ProGRANT Project Coordinator and contact for the project administration including project logistics and scholar support. Additionally, he is an expert for digitalization and blended learning related issues at the International Office. Mr. Funk obtained his Diploma's degree in Regional Sciences of Latin-America from the University of Cologne and his Master's degree in International Relations and Development Policy from the University Duisburg-Essen.



**Benjamin Chardey, PhD (Togo)**

ProGRANT Project Coordinator at the International Office. This includes management of the applicants and participants as well as project logistics support. Additionally, he coordinates the university partnerships in northern and sub-Saharan Africa, especially through ERASMUS+ cooperations. Mr. Chardey did his PhD at the University of Cologne. His research area is migration and its institutional arrangement as well as qualitative and quantitative research methods.



**Raul Zorger, B.Sc. (Romania)**

Project Assistant in the area of financial administration within the Capacity Building Unit. He holds a degree in Business Administration from the University of Cologne.



**Henry Okolie, M.Sc. (Nigeria)**

Project Assistant for the ProGRANT courses. He pursued the International Master of Environmental Science (IMES) degree at the University of Cologne.



**Till von Pock (Germany)**

Till is a member of the International Office's Global Responsibility Unit. He is currently pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Integrated Design and therefore assists with design-related tasks in the ProGRANT project.



**Marcelo Andregueti, B.A. (Brazil)**

Graphic Design Intern at the International Office since mid-2019, provides the visuals and layouts for ProGRANT and other projects from the Global Responsibility unit. Currently pursuing a Master's degree on Integrated Design at Cologne International School of Design.



by Dargel Gonzalez  
for ProGRANT  
Costa Rica 2019

Fue cuando abril comenzaba  
que todos aquí llegamos.  
A Costa Rica arribamos  
pues el DAAD invitaba  
y el Park Inn nos alojaba  
para un curso singular  
pues nos iban a enseñar  
como escribir las propuestas  
de investigaciones, si estas,  
querían éxito alcanzar.

Este curso reunió  
a latinos de almas puras  
de Costa Rica y Honduras,  
Venezuela se sumó  
y El Salvador asistió  
México y Dominicana  
súmense a la caravana  
que completan Guatemala,  
Panamá, Argentina y va la  
lista com Cuba se allana.

Aprendimos ante todo  
como se hace un Metaplan.  
Fue como comerse un pan:  
trabajando codo a codo  
juntos hallamos el modo.  
Las palabras se ordenaron,  
y en columnas se formaron  
para dar la imagen viva  
de aquellas expectativas  
que con nosotros llegaron.

Más tarde llegó el momento  
sobre cómo organizar  
una propuesta formal  
y su estructura por dentro.  
Título, Resumen y cuento  
Objetivos, Presupuesto,  
Estado del Arte y a esto  
añada un Plan de trabajo  
y coloque más abajo  
los Anexos, por supuesto.

El e-learning fue una fase  
que nos trajo hasta aquí,  
pero está claro que sí,  
son distintas ya las clases;  
pues nos enseñan las bases  
que un experto evaluador  
utiliza en su labor  
difícil y complicada,  
donde entrega más que nada  
tiempo, experiencia y sudor.

¡Gracias a los profesores!  
Son docentes de excelencia  
que dominan bien su ciencia,  
son muy buenos, ¡los mejores!  
Gracias por ser los mentores  
de este curso DIES ProGRANT.  
Reinhard, Lizette y Julián  
reciban nuestro respeto  
y el afecto más completo.  
¡Son alumnos se los dan!

A este team de profesores  
Ricardo ya se incorpora,  
aconseja y asesora  
junto a colaboradores  
que son muy merecedores  
de nuestro agradecimiento.  
Daniela por su talento  
para hacer coordinaciones  
y Priscilla por sus dones  
de retratar los momentos.