

Egyptian German Research Fund Call for Proposals

Joint announcement

by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt (MHESR) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for regulations governing the funding of joint innovative projects in the field of applied research through the 'Egyptian-German Research Fund' ("Deutsch-Ägyptischer Forschungsfonds") as a follow-up to the 'German-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology 2007'

1. Objectives and legal basis

On the occasion of the closing event of the 'German-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology 2007' in Berlin on 6 December, the Egyptian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Hany Helal and the German Federal Minister of Education and Research Annette Schavan signed an agreement on the establishment of an Egyptian-German research fund for the support of joint application-oriented projects, to which each side will contribute €300,000 (equivalent to around 2.500.000 Egyptian Pound) per year. The grants are intended to give researchers – including young scientists - an opportunity to address new areas of scientific research and to promote bilateral research cooperation between the two countries in areas of mutual interest. In addition, the grants aim at helping networks applying for funding from the EU 7th Framework Programmes or from national funding schemes.

As part of the long-standing partnership between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Federal Republic of Germany in the fields of science and technology, and under consideration of the available resources and the existing regulations for funding, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt (MHESR) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) have agreed to issue this joint call for proposals for innovative, application-oriented research projects.

The bases of this announcement are the intergovernmental agreement on 'Bilateral Cooperation in Science, Research and Technology' (S&T cooperation agreement) of 1979 and the 'Declaration Concerning the Establishment of a Joint Fund in the Field of Applied Research' of 2007.

Funding will be awarded in accordance with the national project funding regulations of Egypt and Germany respectively.¹ To implement this call, MHESR and BMBF have assigned the Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF) for Egyptian applicants and the International Bureau of the BMBF (IB) for the German applicants, as well as the Cairo office of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Applicants are advised to contact these organizations at early stages of preparing their proposal.

There is no legal entitlement to funding. A decision on the award of funding will be made after due assessment of the proposals and within the limits of the available budget funds.

2. Object of funding

The aim of this announcement is to support innovative and application-oriented joint projects in areas that correspond to the specific research priorities of the MHESR and the BMBF. The thematic priorities of the German-Egyptian Science Year² will continue to be important for the research and development policies of both countries in the future.

Joint proposals in all fields of science and technology are solicited, however, the following fields are encouraged:

- Biotechnology and agricultural research, in particular food production under environmental stress and in relation to climate change
- Energy savings, and renewable energy, in particular wind turbine technologies.

Special emphasis will be put on cooperation between different partners in the area of R&D, on special scientific skills, and on industry participation. If possible, the networks should include basic research institutions, R&D institutions, and companies responsible for commercial application.

Measures for the promotion of export activities will not be funded under this call.

¹ Project grants will cover the necessary operating costs (personnel costs, physical resources, investments relevant to the project in exceptional cases).

Egyptian applicants will be awarded in accordance with this call, STDF's standard terms and conditions for grants shall apply.

German applicants will be awarded in accordance with this call, the BMBF's standard terms and conditions for grants on an expenditure basis and the administrative regulations under section 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO) shall apply.

²The thematic priorities of the GESY are biotechnology, materials sciences, medicine, renewable energy, social sciences and water. Available at <http://www.internationales-buero.de/en/841.php>

3. Eligibility for funding³

Teams of researchers consisting of at least one Egyptian and one German researcher are eligible for funding.

The teams have to be based at Egyptian or German research organizations, state and non-state institutions of higher education, non-university research institutions or commercial enterprises, particularly SMEs. These institutions have to sign and stamp a declaration form (template attached to the application form).

The project partners on each side are bound to set up their cooperation in the following way: One of the partners acts as the authorized applicant; the other partners should participate in the joint application by concluding a cooperation agreement with the authorized applicant.

In addition, the project partners among each other and between both sides are obliged to conclude legally binding agreements and agree on appropriate measures for the protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) according to the laws of both countries and the rules and regulations of the funding agencies on both sides.

4. Type, scope and level of funding

Funds will be awarded in the form of non-repayable grants according to justified expected activity expenditure and financing plans. Grants can reach a maximum of up to €200,000 per project. The maximum duration of a project is up to a period **of 24 months. Egyptian applicants will be paid by the STDF in Egyptian Pounds and German applicants will be paid by the IB in Euros.**

5. Procedure

5.1 Submission of applications

Applications must be drafted in English with the guidance of the “Guidelines for Applicants”. The application form must be submitted electronically, together with a project description of preferably 10, and up to a maximum of 15 A4 pages (Arial, 11 character, 1.5-spaced, 2 cm margin).

³ The following special regulations apply for German applicants:

Grants for universities, research establishments and similar institutions are calculated on the basis of the eligible project-related expenditure (or, in the case of the Helmholtz centres and the *Fraunhofer Gesellschaft* (FhG), on the basis of the eligible project-related costs).

The European Commission's Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development must be taken into account when fixing the rates of funding.

The application form and guidelines for applicants are available at the following websites:

http://www.ewa.internationales-buero.de/?project_cat=3

and

www.stdf.org.eg

The deadline for receiving the online applications is **September 25, 2008**.

The International Bureau will only accept applications that have been finalized in the electronic version and that have been printed and send by post with all the necessary signatures.

The German partners have to send a German translation of the application (also with the necessary signatures) to the International Bureau via post.

In addition, the supporting documents (Partnership agreement, declaration and IPR agreement) have to be sent by express registered mail to the International Bureau (IB) of the BMBF or the Science & Technology Development Fund (STDF) no later than **October 7, 2008** (as evidenced by the date of postmark).

There is no specific template for the project description. However, the applicant has to describe the objectives and the actions necessary for implementing the project as clearly as possible, addressing the following headings in the same sequence:

- Cover Page with project title in Arabic and English on Egyptian side and in German and English on German side
- Abstract in Arabic and English on Egyptian side and in German and English on German side
- Background
- Project description & methodology
 - Description of the scientific objectives (and of the project's relevance to any national and/or regional funding programmes under which funding is to be applied for)
 - Nature and extent of the proposed collaboration
 - Activities that will be undertaken
 - Expected results and prospects of commercializing/profiting from the envisaged project results
- Project Partners
 - Qualifications and experience of the project partners
 - Most important relevant publications/patents
 - Added value of cooperation of partners
 - Previous cooperation

- Structured financing plan
 - A detailed budget (in Euros) with break down of expected expenditure which should be justified and relevant to the proposed activities
 - Details of the applicants' own funding contributions and of the total volume and funding volume of the proposed project
- Work plan
 - Time schedule and milestones
 - Break down of the work load between the partners
- Dissemination and sustainability of results
- Assumptions, risks and contingency planning
- List of References (on Egyptian side)
- Bibliography (latest relevant publications for the field of the proposal)
- Appendices
- Other information

5.2 Selection and decision-making procedure

Funding will be provided for projects that have high potential for realization and success in line with the objectives of this call.

The submission of an application does not establish a legal claim to funding.

The applications will be evaluated by both the German and the Egyptian sides.

Only applications that are approved by both sides will receive funding.

Applications will be considered on the basis of the following criteria:

- Quality and originality of the envisaged research approach
- Qualifications and previous experience of the project team
- Quality of the planned collaboration and recognizable value added for the partner institutions
- Prospects of success and sustainability of the project
- Prospects of commercializing the envisaged project results
- Quality of the budget plan and its justification
- Cost effectiveness in view of the requested grant amount
- Relevance of the research topic to the research policy objectives and priorities of BMBF and MHESR and the objectives of the call

The applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the evaluation.

5.3 Contracting and Reporting

The STDF and the IB will conclude the grant agreements under the relevant governing laws⁴ with the selected applicants. Contracts signature is envisaged **before the end of 2008**. The projects starting date shall be **within 3 months after the contract signature**. Mid term and final reports must be submitted on the dates indicated in the contracts.

6. Further information

For further information, applicants may refer to the following contact points:

Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF)

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⁴ The approval, payment and accounting for the funds as well as the proof and examination of the proper use and, if necessary, the revocation of the award and the reclaiming of the funds awarded are governed: on the German side by the administrative regulations pertaining to section 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO), unless deviation is allowed under the present funding regulations and on the Egyptian side by the administrative regulations of STDF.

7. Entry into force

These funding regulations will enter into force on the day of their publication⁵

Cairo, Bonn, **8th of August, 2008**

Ministry of Higher Education and
Scientific Research
Arab Republic of Egypt

Federal Ministry of
Education and Research
Germany

⁵ In Germany, this announcement will be published in the Bundesanzeiger.