



Ministry of
Higher Education
and Scientific Research



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

TUNISIAN- GERMAN
CALL FOR BILATERAL S&T COOPERATION
INVOLVING SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
(2+2 projects)

Joint Announcement

(1) Funding purpose

The aim is establishing long-term research and development collaboration between German and Tunisian participants in science and industry. The funding will be provided jointly by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for the German project partners and by the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) for the Tunisian project partners.

Under this call for proposals, funding can be provided for joint projects involving at least one German and one Tunisian research institution or university as well as one German and one Tunisian enterprise. It is expected that the funded projects will produce insights and exploitable research results leading to new technologies, products and/or services. The benefits for Germany and Tunisia should be clearly identifiable.

Joint innovation oriented projects would be highly welcomed. Innovation oriented projects are joint R&D projects designed to lead to innovative products, services or processes of significant economic and/or societal value (TRL 4-7).

This call for proposals offsets out to support joint research projects in the area of application-oriented research and development in the following fields:

This call for proposals offsets out to support joint research projects in the area of application-oriented research and development in the following fields:

- a. Water Management
- b. Farming Systems
- c. Biotechnology for health and nutrition, healthcare biotechnology, plant biotechnology, industrial biotechnology, and environment

- d. Digitalization
- e. Green economy / circular economy
- f. **And other topics.**

The funding is intended to enable the foundations to be laid for a lasting R&D innovation partnership.

Cross-sectoral bilateral mobility between the project partners –the exchange of Tunisian and German researchers and innovation staff to German and/or Tunisian enterprises – is highly welcomed in order to further strengthening the bilateral partnerships between the German and the Tunisian institutions in research and industry. The aim of this cross-sectoral mobility is to strengthen cooperation between German and Tunisian academia and non-academic institutions. The transfer of knowledge is intended to promote science and the development of innovations and to help to transform creative ideas into innovative products, services and processes. Support will be provided for the exchanges of both Early Stage Researchers (ESR) and Experienced Researchers (ER). The person concerned must have been employed by the sending organization for at least six months before the first posting and be active in the field of research and development (R&D). The assignments to the partners can last up to three months. After the end of the posting period, the staff will return to the original institution in order to apply and extend the knowledge gained.

In addition, funding can be provided for the implementation of a bilateral Innovation Forum. The Innovation Forum aims to develop a concrete long-term partnership between the German and Tunisian project partners as well as a broad transnational network with further German research and education institutions and innovative companies as well as with corresponding institutions in Tunisia to initiate future research cooperation or business relations. The partners should jointly determine their position in the (national/international) competition and develop an implementation strategy for future cooperation and common innovation goals. The main output of the Innovation Forum will be a jointly elaborated strategy for the development of new products, applications and procedures for a sector, sector or technology-specific cooperation between science, business, politics and society across the entire innovation chain as well as a corresponding action plan. Accordingly, the term “Innovation Forum” describes a networking, dialogue and agenda setting process following the general triple- (or quadruple-) helix format containing a series of public or closed events that will be implemented over 2-3 years. As a rule, an Innovation Forum should include several smaller events which can be held in Tunisia or in Germany and one final public event to be conducted in Tunisia. Eligible activities (for further specifications see sec. 4) for the implementation of the Innovation Forum are in particular the promotion of (i) work and services for the further design, organization and evaluation of the supported project, (ii) business travel, (iii) business and communications expenditures, (iv) the organization of events in Germany and in Tunisia; (V) accompanying public relations work. In case of overriding importance for the entire Innovation Forum, the acquisition or development of cross-company market and potential studies can be supported in individual cases. Only

projects are whose project outline shows that the envisaged network will be open to non-discriminatory participation and participation by other interested actors from business, science, politics and public administration will be selected for funding.

(2) Funding recipients

On the German side:

German universities, research institutions and enterprises (particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)) are eligible for funding.¹

On the Tunisian side:

Tunisian public higher education and scientific research institutions are eligible for funding.

(3) Prerequisites for funding

It is a prerequisite that projects include the participation of at least one German research institution/university and one Tunisian public research institution/university as well as at least one German and one Tunisian enterprise.

Interested institutions/organisations in Germany and Tunisia can use the web-based PT-Partnering platform: <https://partnering.pt-dlr.de/tunger20>

to express their interest in project cooperation and for setting up a consortium for application.

The German and the Tunisian project partner must submit the jointly formulated proposal as described below (see sec. 5).

It is recommended that all project partners formalize their cooperation by concluding a cooperation agreement.

(4) Type, scope and amount of funding

On the German side:

¹In accordance with the EU's definition of SMEs: The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 employees and which have an annual turnover not exceeding € 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding € 43 million. Within this category the following definitions apply: small enterprises are defined as enterprises which employ fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed € 10 million. A micro-enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed € 2 million. In general, most SMEs are autonomous since they are either completely independent or have one or more minority partnerships (each less than 25 %) with other enterprises, which have one or more minority stakes (see 2.3.1, p. 16). If that holding rises to no more than 50 %, the relationship is deemed to be between partner enterprises (see 2.3.2, p.20). Above that ceiling, the enterprises are linked (see 2.3.3, p.23).

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/sme_user_guide_de.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm

As a rule, German partner consortia that are eligible for funding can receive up to €250,000 of funding. Eligible German partner consortia that include the implementation of an Innovation Forum can receive up to €350,000 in funding.

The duration of the projects will generally be up to 36 months.

The following expenditures/costs are eligible for funding German partners:

a) Staff costs/expenditure

Project-related costs for student, administrative and/or scientific staff are eligible for funding.

b) Equipment:

Project-related subsidies will be granted on a limited scale (as a rule: maximum of 20% of total funding) for equipment (expendable items, devices, business needs, transportation expenses, literature, rents, orders, subcontracting in duly justified cases, etc.).

c) Exchanges of experts and researchers / cross-sectoral exchanges of research and innovation staff

The following applies to the funding of travel by German project partners:

Funding is provided to cover the costs / expenses for travel to the final destination in Tunisia, including necessary visas (for airline tickets: economy class). The Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research will cover the expenses for accommodation – in full board - in a hotel in Tunisia for visiting German project partners. Further costs incurred for visits to Tunisia will be covered in accordance with the travel expenses regulation of the German sending institution.

Additionally, support can be provided to cover the costs / expenditures for project-related domestic travels.

The following applies to the funding of travel by Tunisian project partners:

Daily allowances and project-related domestic travel expenses: as a rule, per person a fixed lump-sum of € 104 per day and/or € 2,300 per month (for stays of between 23 and 31 days) will be paid annually for stays of up to 3 months in Germany under the funding agreement. A daily allowance of € 77 per day will be paid for single days of a following month. The days of arrival and departure together are counted as one day only.

d) Workshops

Workshops with existing partners or aimed at opening up new potential for cooperation may be eligible for support.

With regard to the organization of workshops in Germany and in Tunisia, grants can be provided towards expenses such as the accommodation of the (foreign) guests, catering, transfer within Germany and Tunisia, preparation of workshop, and rental of the venue. The exact amount of the grant depends on the

size of the event and the number of (foreign) guests. In such cases, no per diem allowances (see c) above) will be provided.

e) Flat-rate project grants

Universities (both public and private) and university hospitals (irrespective of legal form) can additionally apply for a flat-rate project grant equivalent to 20% of the main grant.

As a rule, **no funding** will be provided to cover normal basic equipment such as:

- Expenses for office supplies, communication, etc.
- Laboratory and IT equipment

On the Tunisian side:

The duration of the projects will generally be up to 36 months.

As a rule, Tunisian partner consortia that are eligible for funding can receive a global budget per project of up to 300,000 DT over 36 months (duration of the project).

The following expenditures/costs are eligible for funding:

a) Staff costs/expenditure:

As a rule, the Tunisian enterprise should cover the mobility costs for its innovation staff.

The project-related costs for the attendees' partners in the project are eligible for funding:

- Senior researchers, administrative and/or scientific staff, subcontracting students or Post Docs

b) Exchange of Tunisian experts and young scientists:

The MHESR covers travel expenses for the Tunisian researchers and young scientists from the research centres and higher education institutions.

The travel expenses of Tunisian project scientists include: air tickets (economy-class) to and from the location of the German project partner, travel insurance, visa and travel stamp expenses. Daily allowances will be paid by the host country.

The hosting German project partner is principally responsible for granting daily allowances to visiting Tunisian project partners (research institution and/or enterprise) in Germany (see 4 c) above).

The following applies to the funding of the travel expenses of German project partners:

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research will cover the expenses of accommodation – in full board - for visiting German project partners (see 4 c) above).

Project related domestic travel expenses are covered by the host Tunisian partner in the project (research institution and/or enterprise).

c) Equipment:

Project-related subsidies will be granted for equipment (expendable items, devices, business needs, transportation expenses, literature, rents, orders, etc.) in duly justified exceptional cases and on a limited scale (as a rule: maximum of 20% of total funding)

d) Workshops:

Workshops with already known partners or workshops aimed at opening up new cooperation potential can be supported in the following ways:

Grants will be provided towards material expenses incurred in the organization of bilateral workshops in Tunisia including the accommodation of foreign guests, their transfer within Tunisia, the preparation of the workshop, entertainment and the rental of the venue.

The amount of the grant depends on the size of the workshop and the number of foreign guests.

No daily allowances will be paid in such cases.

e) Lump-sum for projects

Public universities and university hospitals (irrespective of legal form) can additionally apply for a flat-rate project grant equivalent to 20% of the main grant.

As a rule, **no funding** will be provided to cover normal basic equipment such as:

- Office supplies, communication, etc.
- Laboratory and IT equipment

(5) Submission and selection of project outlines

The application procedure consists of two phases:

1. In the first phase, jointly elaborated project outlines are to be submitted. The project outlines received will be evaluated.
2. In the second phase of the procedure, applicant institutions whose project outlines have been reviewed positively will be invited to present a formal application for funding.

5.1 Submission of project outlines:

In this first phase, jointly elaborated project outlines are to be submitted in English

until **08.05.2020**

by using the online project outline tool "PT-Outline" (<https://ptoutline.eu/app/tunger202plus2z2>).

Delayed proposals will be considered as non- eligible!

All proposals that are double submitted are ineligible.

Should the applicant wish to address the cross-sectoral exchange and/or the Innovation Forum the project description should include respective passages in each section, and especially in the work plan, with comprehensive and assessable information.

The project outline must show how all partners are involved in the tasks and outcomes of the project. With regards to the valorisation/exploitation of the project results, the protection of intellectual property (intellectual property) plays an important role.

The project outline should include descriptions of the following aspects of the project:

- I. Information about the German project coordinator and the Tunisian and German project partners
- II. Meaningful summary (objectives, research priorities, exploitation of results)
- III. Detailed description of the proposed project
 - a. Planned measures and activities for the implementation of the objectives of the funding objectives as specified in section 1 of the announcement
 - b. Presentation of the project goals
 - c. Information on the state of science and technology
 - d. Participation of further partners, if applicable
- IV. International cooperation within the framework of the project
 - a. Added value of international cooperation
 - b. Contributions from the Germans and Tunisian partners, access to international resources and networks
 - c. Experiences of the partners involved in international cooperation, previous cooperation
- V. Sustainability of the measure / exploitation plan
 - a. Expected (scientific) results
 - b. Potential for the implementation of the project results
 - c. Plan for the continuance of the cooperation with partners in Tunisia/ Germany
 - d. Planned cooperation in follow-up projects
 - e. Planned extension of cooperation to other facilities and networks
- VI. Description of the planned work packages and tasks
- VII. Estimated expenses / costs
- VIII. Annexes

This project outline must be uploaded as a single document in PT-Outline (zip-archive or pdf-document).

The project outline is the object of the scientific and specific evaluation of the project. The project description should therefore contain comprehensive information on all positions of the outline (see structure for project description above). The outline should not exceed 12 pages without annex.

5.2 Evaluation and selection of draft project descriptions

The evaluation of the project outlines received will be conducted on the German as well as on the Tunisian side according to the following criteria.

- I. Compliance of the proposal with the formal eligibility criteria
- II. Compliance with the funding objectives of the announcement as specified to in section 1 in this announcement
- III. Technical criteria
 - a. Quality and originality of the proposed project
 - b. Reference to the program of the BMBF / MoHESR in the specified topic(s)
 - c. Qualification of the German and Tunisian applicants and of further partners involved
 - d. Scientific benefit and usability of the expected results, quality of the description of the exploitation plan
- IV. Criteria of international cooperation
 - a. Experience of the applicant in international cooperation
 - b. Quality of cooperation and added value for the partner institutions
 - c. Initiation / establishment of new international partnerships
 - d. Continuance of existing bilateral / international partnerships
 - e. Promotion of young scientists
- V. Plausibility and feasibility of the project (financing, working steps, time frame)

Funding decisions will be made after a final review of the applications based on the evaluation criteria mentioned above. Only applications that are approved by both sides will receive funding. Applicants will be informed in writing about the result of the selection process.

(6) Official announcements in Germany and Tunisia

The official version of the call text as published in the Bundesanzeiger is legally binding for German applicants.

Contact person for German applicants:

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has commissioned the DLR Project Management Agency (DLR PT) with the implementation of this funding announcement:

Mr. Stephan Epe

E-mail: stephan.epe@dlr.de

Phone: +49(0)228-3821-1904

Fax: +49(0)228-3821-1490

For German applicants the official version of the call text as published in the Bundesanzeiger is legally binding (see websites of Bundesanzeiger, BMBF and International Bureau of the BMBF https://www.internationales-buero.de/en/current_announcements.php)

Contact person for Tunisian applicants:

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR), General Directorate of Research Valorization

Ms. Rim Saied (General Director)

E-mail : Rim.SAIED@mesrs.tn

Ms. Besma Ben Mesbeh (Director)

E-mail : benmesbeh.besma@gmail.com

Phone: +216 71833378

Fax : +216 71 833 415

For Tunisian applicants the official version of the call text as published in the MoHESR site (<http://www.mes.tn/index.php>) is legally binding.



Funding distribution between partners in the cooperation program

Type of expenses		Funding structure		
		MoHESR	BMBF	Enterprise partner
Procurement of research valorization equipment's for the benefit of :	Tunisian Research Structures	X		
	German Research Structures		X	
Researchers' mobility				
Tunisian research staff	Per diem in Germany		X	
	Costs of air travel (Tunisia-Germany-Tunisia)	X		
German research staff	Accommodation in full board in Tunisia	X		
	Costs of air travel (Germany-Tunisia-Germany)		X	
Mobility of enterprises staff				
Tunisian enterprise	Per diem in Germany		X	
	Costs of air travel (Tunisia-Germany-Tunisia)			X
German enterprise	Accommodation in full board in Tunisia	X		
	Costs of air travel (Germany-Tunisia-Germany)		X	
Organization of the "TUNGER Innovation Forum" in Tunisia:				
Material expenses	Location, catering, logistics ...	X	X	
German attendees	Accommodation	X		
	Costs of air travel (Germany-Tunisia-Germany)		X	
Tunisian attendees	Accommodation	X		
Organization of the "TUNGER Innovation Forum" in Germany :				
Material expenses	Location, catering, logistics, ...		X	
German attendees	Accommodation		X	
Tunisian attendees	Accommodation		X	
	Costs of air travel (Tunisia-Germany-Tunisia)	X		