



Call for proposals for research clusters within the Palestinian-German Science Bridge

Background

At the 4th cooperation workshop of the Palestinian-German Science Bridge from 6-11th April 2019 in Ramallah, we had the opportunity to hear about many excellent research and collaboration projects. Contributions from both students and supervisors clearly demonstrated the extent of hard work and motivation that has gone into making the science bridge project so successful.

Now it is our task to maintain and build on that success as the Science Bridge Project by ensuring that the research cooperations continue to develop into sustainable two-way collaborations driven by a growing network of participants and alumni.

An important step in the continuation of the science bridge project will be expanding partnerships from the individual level to long-term, multifaceted partnerships between researchers working on similar topics. In several of the more longstanding cooperation projects, clusters of scientists with various affiliations but within similar research fields are combining their expertise to develop joint research platforms. In pooling their resources, these clusters are able to look at the bigger picture of research interests and needs within Palestine and can therefore better focus on meeting those needs. This is not limited to research, and extends to the dissemination of knowledge.

Current Development and Call

At the meeting in Ramallah, many possibilities for focus groups or research clusters were envisioned. The already existing clusters in the fields of Neuroscience and Plant and Geosciences were given a platform to discuss their future plans with all cluster participants, as well as the advisory committee and representatives from several relevant funding sources. In this call, we ask you to submit a clear sketch of the future of your research activities, when possible identifying a topic which a cluster of scientists from multiple research institutions can contribute to.

The advisory committee has identified the following questions, which must be addressed at all levels (government, PALAST, research institutions and universities and individual researchers) in order to further the long-term goals of creating lasting research partnerships and helping to build a scientific infrastructure in Palestine:

- What steps are being taken to create career perspectives for alumni, specifically are there clear commitments from FZ Jülich, PALAST and the Palestinian Universities or government?
- What are the infrastructure needs of your research area, and how can they be met?
- What are the perspectives of your research activities in Palestine? Do they meet the needs of society there? How well do the research interests in Jülich and Palestine align?
- How would a sustainable research group in your field of research look in Palestine? What important partners are necessary and are they already active participants?
- Who are the partners in your cluster (Palestinian Universities and institutions, Institutes in Jülich)

Your proposals will be reviewed by the advisory committee and those selected will form the basis of discussions of follow-up activities during our next workshop, tentatively planned for 15-19th June 2020. This will include direct feedback from representatives of funding agencies and experts in third-party funding. In addition to competing for funding in follow-up projects, the selected cluster topics will also be eligible for further funding from the current science bridge project, for example for Post-Doctoral Researcher positions.

Who is eligible to submit a proposal?

This call is open to ideas from all areas of research fitting into the scope of the PGSB. All current participants in the Palestinian-German Science Bridge, as well as scientists interested in future research collaborations, are invited to submit a proposal.

Format

We ask you to propose models for future research cluster activities by submitting an outline of no more than 5 pages including the following information:

- Topic and members of cluster, including ideas for future contributions. The research cluster should include researchers from at least two Palestinian academic and research institutions and researchers from Jülich, with affiliation to at least one German university.
- Which research topics/activities are included
- Current activities and results achieved to date, if a cooperation already exists.
- Develop a model of how your focus group could successfully build up a scientific infrastructure in Palestine and a lasting cooperation between Jülich and Palestinian scientists, specifically focusing on the questions listed above.
- Please include any ideas for possible funding, and also any joint funding applications that have already been submitted/are planned. However, at this point, we would like to develop a successful model for future cooperations BEFORE looking into future funding for the project as a whole

Submission and selection procedure

Please submit your proposals electronically to Cate Morgan (c.morgan@fz-juelich.de) by **29.02.2020**. Proposals will be evaluated by the advisory committee and chosen based on quality of research plans, feasibility of the model for future activity and successfully addressing all questions listed above regarding the long-term goals of the science bridge.

All research projects that have already formed into larger groups are asked to select a German and a Palestinian speaker to submit their project sketch and represent the group.

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On behalf of the Palestinian-German Science Bridge



Prof. Dr. Ghaleb Natour
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Prof. Dr. Marwan Awartani
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