



# Press release

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## **Federal Minister Karliczek: We are creating attractive prospects for young researchers in Africa**

### **The German Research Ministry is funding a new UNESCO programme for sub-Saharan Africa**

The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is funding a new programme of UNESCO's World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) entitled Seed Grant for New African Principal Investigators for which young scientists from sub-Saharan Africa can now apply. The programme aims to support African scientists who have obtained their PhDs abroad and would like to return to their home countries. Germany's Federal Research Minister Anja Karliczek explained:

“Many young scientists from sub-Saharan Africa left their home countries to get the best possible training, for example here in Germany. The expertise and international experience of this generation of scientists is of outstanding importance for their home countries and their development. I think it is the right approach that Germany should support this knowledge transfer and contribute towards ensuring that scientists from sub-Saharan Africa are provided with attractive prospects in their home countries after completing university or doctoral studies abroad. With their potential and commitment, this generation of scientists will play their part in expanding the scientific capacities of African universities and research institutions. This is why the Federal Research Ministry is funding UNESCO's Seed Grant for New African Principal Investigators.”

#### **Background:**

The Seed Grant for New African Principal Investigators programme is one of a range of various measures of the BMBF to strengthen science systems on the African continent and in the Middle East.

The BMBF will provide more than 5.6 million euros to the UNESCO-TWAS programme over the next seven years. More than 20 fellowships will be funded every year with up to 68,000 US dollars. Researchers can use this funding, for example, to provide training to Master students enrolled at their institutions, to purchase technical equipment such as lab instruments, to set up collaborations

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with companies aimed at enhancing the employability of graduates, and to foster international exchange by organizing research stays and workshops. One part of the programme is specifically aimed at young women scientists who resume their scholarly work after taking a break due to pregnancy.

The UNESCO-TWAS programme complements the BMBF's Research Partner Groups for Alumni that specifically support African researchers who have spent research periods in Germany.

The BMBF is funding TWAS under a cooperation agreement with UNESCO. TWAS is a non-governmental science academy that is based at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy. The Academy was founded in 1983 by a group of scientists around the Pakistani Nobel laureate Abdus Salam. Its aim is to promote science and sustainable development in the countries of the Global South.

Further information on the programme, application requirements and contact persons can be found at:

<https://twas.org/opportunity/seed-grant-new-african-principal-investigators-sg-napi>

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**Further information (in German):**

[BMBF Research Partner Groups for Alumni](#)