

BCGE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL FUNDS 2026:
Deepening cooperation and research with partners in the “Global South”

Call opens: January 15, 2026

Deadline: February 20, 2026

Mobilities can take place between May 1st, 2026 and November 14th, 2026.

The Berlin Center for Global Engagement (BCGE) supports the BUA member institutions (Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin along with Charité–Universitätsmedizin Berlin) in fostering international collaboration, emphasizing global openness, reciprocity, and responsibility. It focuses on promoting collaborative research with the so called “Global South,”¹ engaging in science diplomacy, and reflecting trends in internationalization. To foster research cooperation with the so-called “Global South,” BCGE offers both incoming and outgoing short-term travel grants.

Goals of the Funding

The mobility-funding provided by this program aims at supporting researchers from the four partner institutions of the Berlin University Alliance in deepening already existing cooperation in research and capacity building with partners in the “Global South” by

- strengthening and/or widening collaborative projects in research or in capacity building with universities and non-university research institutes in the “Global South”, and/or
- strengthening the exchange with relevant actors outside academia (such as policy-makers) from the “Global South” on topics including but not limited to the Sustainable Development Goals, and/or
- integrating local, national and international communities from the “Global South” into the process of knowledge production.

The output of the funded mobility should be a joint product, e.g. joint publication, joint application for third-party funding, joint project, etc. Innovative formats challenging hierarchies in the global science system are also welcome.

In November 2024, the Berlin University Alliance signed the [Africa Charter for Transformative Research Collaborations](#). We particularly welcome applications for collaborations which rely on (or plan to rely on) the principles described in the Charter.

¹ While the Center does not define the “Global South” primarily as a geographical area but rather as a term that challenges existing hierarchies in knowledge production, the German Research Foundation (DFG) country list might serve as a reference: <https://www.berlin-university-alliance.de/en/commitments/international/bcge/foerderung/Flex-Funds-2026/entwicklungslaender-liste.pdf>. Please briefly specify in your application why you consider a country as belonging to the “Global South”, if it doesn’t appear in the list.

Fundable Initiatives

Initiatives eligible for funding are the following types of mobilities for up to four-weeks stays:

- Incoming: In case of approval researchers or relevant actors based in the “Global South” receive a travelling fellowship grant (Reisestipendium) for a stay of up to four weeks at one of the BUA member institutions. Find more information on how the BCGE calculates the amount of the travelling fellowship grant [here](#). The grant can be transferred to the incoming researcher/actor once a copy of the approved Visa or a proof that no visa is required has been submitted to the BCGE.
- Outgoing: In case of approval, the BCGE can cover the costs for a flight (economy class only) as well as a subsidy for accommodation (lodging and board) based on the [lump sum scheme of DAAD](#). Outgoing scholars must go through the regular process for business travel at their home institution (Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, and Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin).

Granted funds have to be spent before November 15, 2026. The billing documents must also be submitted in full by November 15.

Within this call, the following activities **cannot** be granted:

- Mobilities shorter than a week or longer than 4 weeks
- Application strictly limited to field research and not directly related with deepening/widening an existing cooperation
- Travel to international conferences which are not directly related to an existing cooperation
- Projects strictly limited to teaching and learning
- Fact-finding missions to initiate entirely new collaborations

Please note that each applicant/host can only apply for one mobility.

Application Process

1. Register your application at the [online mask](#) until February 20, 2026.
2. Download the application form and the documents for calculating the funding amount (see important notes below).
3. Send the application form and supporting documents to the following address until February 20, 2026: bcge@berlin-university-alliance.de.

Funding applications must be submitted by postdocs and professors of Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, and Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin.

The application will be reviewed by the BUA Steering Committee Internationalization and two members of the BCGE Advisory Board according to the following criteria:

- Track record and originality of the cooperation
- Contribution of the mobility to deepening and/or widening an existing cooperation
- Specificity of the plans for a joint output
- Potential for further development of the collaboration for both of the partners

Should two or more projects be ranked equally on the basis of these criteria, we will favor applications by researchers who have not already received funding in the BCGE Flexible Travel Call 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

The funding call closes on February 20, 2026. The results will be announced by mid of April 2026. Mobilities can take place between May 1st, 2026 and November 14st, 2026.

Please submit the [application form](#) (see download section) along with further explanatory documents to the Berlin Center for Global Engagement: bcge@berlin-university-alliance.de.

Applicants are required to submit a short project report to the BCGE within six weeks of project completion.

Please be aware that **there are two distinct funding modalities**:

Incoming: In case of approval, BCGE can provide a Travelling Fellowship Grant for the incoming scholars, which is transferred once a copy of the approved Visa or a proof that no visa is required has been submitted to the BCGE. Find more information on how the BCGE calculates the amount of the [Travelling Fellowship Grant](#). Based on the recommendation of the BUA host researcher, the BCGE (as administrative host) will invite the selected scholars to be “BCGE Guests.” However, the hosting professor/unit is responsible for the preparation, facilitation, and organization of the scholar’s stay. The applicant on the Berlin side should consult his/her institution beforehand (one of the four BUA institutions) to clarify how to facilitate or organize the proposed stay and how the respective institution can support him/her here (e.g., work space, accommodations, welcome services).

Outgoing: For outgoing scholars, BCGE covers the costs for a flight (economy class only) and subsidize the costs for accommodation (lodging and board). BCGE can also cover other costs related with the short-term research stay (such as health insurance, visa costs, etc.) if appropriate. The subsidy for accommodation (lodging and board) is based on the [lump sum scheme of DAAD](#). In cases where the lump sum doesn’t cover the real costs for accommodation, BCGE advises the applicant to consider complementing the subsidy from BCGE with other funding resources at his or her disposal. The expenses need to be covered by the outgoing traveling scholar beforehand. BCGE refunds him/her after having provided the required receipts.

More generally, please keep in mind that:

- In case of approval, BCGE provides funding for the mobility, but cannot partake in the organization or execution of the approved project.
- The BCGE can provide an official invitation letter for the purpose of visa applications, but recommends the hosting scholar to do so.

- BCGE Guests are not covered for liability, health, or accident insurance. The traveling person will need to take out these policies by him-/herself.
- The BCGE can provide you with logos and can support the announcement of potential talks and presentations, etc.

Related Documents (see [download section](#))

1. Call
2. Application Form
3. For Incoming: BCGE Reisestipendium: Information und Berechnung
4. For Incoming: AvH Reisekostenpauschale
5. For Outgoing: DAAD Lump Sum

Contact

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