STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND REGIONAL PRIORITIES IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
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INTRODUCTION

Internationalization is an essential part of the self-image of the University of Bonn (UoB). The professional, institutional, and regional diversity of its international Collaborations as well as their continual development form the basis for all internationalization activities of the university. They also describe one of the main goals of the university’s internationalization strategy. Based on this diversity, the Rector’s Office has identified a number of strategic partners as well as priority countries to engage in international Collaborations. In addition to choosing appropriate partner universities and priority countries, the university management is especially interested in establishing Collaborations with countries from the so-called “Global South”.

This brochure contains details on the university’s strategy for establishing such partnerships and the regional priorities it involves. The first section explains the guidelines employed to define and choose these partnerships and priorities, whereas the second part explicitly specifies the university partners and priority countries. The third part in turn discusses the particular conditions necessary for creating academic cooperation with countries from the “Global South”; the latter section is to be expanded with concrete measures over the coming year to form a strategy.
GUIDELINES – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

PREAMBLE

Section 1: Diversity of Collaborations as a Basis for Internationalization

Internationalization has become a central element in the character of the UoB. Yet, internationalization is basically a process that is intrinsically created by the actors and institutions of the university through their close Collaborations with partners around the world. The academic, institutional, and regional diversity of these Collaborations as well as their continual development form the indispensable foundation for all acts of internationalization carried out by the university. Independent of the guidelines given below, these actions play the greatest role in creating the international reputation of the UoB and enable its work to be seen and appreciated in an international context.

Section 2: Prioritization Based on Diversity

On the basis of this diversity, the university management has defined a number of strategic priorities for its international cooperation. These priorities in turn adhere to some basic principles (Sections 4–7) and serve to establish stable infrastructures in the international cooperation by enabling synergetic, sustainable cooperative relationships (Sections 8–9). They receive special support by the university management to facilitate the university’s international profile (Section 10–11). The guidelines quoted here form the basis for selecting and designing such strategic priorities.

Section 3: Bilateral-Institutional and Multilateral-Regional Priorities

The UoB maintains its strategic priorities in international cooperation on two levels: First, on the bilateral-institutional level, it creates strategic university partnerships distinguished by comprehensive Collaborations in teaching, research, and administration (Section 9a). Second, on the multilateral-regional level, it designates priority countries for international Collaborations, that is, countries with which the UoB maintains close contacts based on the overall positive conditions and the scientific goals represented by their respective scientific institutions (Section 9b).
PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS AT THE UoB

Section 4: Reciprocity
The strategic priorities of the UoB serve to establish collaborations that are of mutual benefit to all parties. This enables the reciprocal exchange of scientific resources, particularly of knowledge and personnel (brain sharing, not brain drain). This succeeds best when there is a nearly equal symmetry between the partners regarding the strength of their respective academic systems. The special challenges created by asymmetric relations between the UoB and select partner institutions is addressed in special guidelines (see paragraph “Strengthening Global Partnership: Cooperation with Countries of the ‘Global South’” on page 10).

Section 5: Common Values
The strategic priorities of the UoB are based on a common orientation toward a minimum of central (political) values. The most salient of these values are the freedom to carry out research and teaching, the freedom of expression by researchers, and a strict orientation to the standards of scientific integrity.

Section 6: Location Loyalty
The UoB is specially connected and bound to its location and orients its strategic partnerships to reflect this location. In Bonn, which for many years served as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic of Germany, the cornerstone was laid for a united and integrated Europe based on German-French reconciliation. This tradition demands a special awareness of the responsibility that ensued from World War II and is reflected in the choices made for cooperation priorities. In addition, the UoB receives the continual support of the government of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) to maintain partnerships with its neighbor countries as an essential component in its internationalization strategy. Further, as home to a number of UN organizations, Bonn has assembled excellence and expertise regarding sustainable research, which also reflects its international partnership strategy.

Section 7: Long-Term Focus
The strategic priorities of the UoB are witness to its long-term focus and its conviction that only the continual support for outstanding partnerships can produce the desired synergy and sustainability effects in its mutual exchanges. At the same time, the priorities selection process should be in the position to react to the strategic goals laid down by the university management. For this reason, the selection of strategic university partnerships and the prioritized countries is subject to review every five years and renewable only if proven successful.
GOALS OF THE STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Section 8: Developing an International Profile

The goal of the strategic priorities is for the UoB to develop an international profile and furthermore to increase its competitiveness both in Germany and abroad. The process of developing an international profile is achieved by systematically establishing and prioritizing cooperative relationships in accordance with the existing guidelines as well as by implementing clear cooperative structures.

Section 9: Establishing Sustainable Structures of International Cooperation

The goal of the strategic prioritization thus lies in creating synergies both in the conception and implementation of new internationalization projects and in setting up sustainable structures within its international Collaborations:

(a) Strategic university partnerships guarantee reliable paths of communication and forms of cooperation at the management, academic, and administrative levels; they also enable well-tested conditions of higher learning for cooperation as well as the establishment of empirical values and best practices for common activities. They facilitate stable infrastructures of cooperation which are independent of individual persons and individual external funding sources. A necessary prerequisite for this to succeed is that the cooperation be broadly based and encompass a variety of capacities present at the university (research, teaching, administration, transfer). Further, it should be multidisciplinary in nature and utilize the entire bandwidth of cooperative activities. A strategic university partnership is the most intensive form of international cooperation and should be implemented only in individual cases where success may be expected.

(b) Focusing on priority countries sharpens the profile of the university regarding its scientific policies. It allows knowledge to be collected concerning the optimal legal, economic, and cultural conditions for cooperative activities at the university level. And it enables the pooling of experiences of favorable conditions for Collaborations (e.g., a sound command of national funding agencies in the priority countries, which can also contribute to supporting the cooperation, if need be together with German institutions). Every priority country should choose and continue to develop its own meaningful portfolio of exemplary cooperation projects with outstanding partner institutions. This goal of being orientated toward priority countries also serves to establish an extensive counseling expertise at the UoB regarding the countries chosen.

SUPPORT FOR THE STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS

Section 10: Financial Support/Incentive Systems

In order to achieve the goals of the strategic university partnerships and to implement the Collaborations in the priority countries, the university management provides support in the form of dedicated resources. Every year these funding opportunities are tendered anew for the entire university. Support is offered for measures that serve to establish long-term cooperative structures in the individual performance dimensions of the university.

Section 11: Activities of the University Management

The university management provides both tangible and intangible support for the strategic university partnerships and Collaborations in the priority countries. It assumes the responsibility for various partnership-specific cooperation formats, among others, meetings and other activities to advertise the strategic partnerships at the UoB and at the partner universities. Further, it establishes common offices to facilitate exchange programs and reciprocal visits by the respective delegations. The university management appoints at least one renowned Bonn University Ambassador from each priority country and from each partner university, i.e. a former visiting scholar who will represent the cooperation personally.
Setting strategic priorities in its international cooperation helps the university to better define its scientific and political profile, to enhance the quality of its international Collaborations (by increasing mobility options and by making both teaching and research activities more international in scope), and to better concentrate its financial and administrative resources (see the Guidelines for Selecting Strategic Priorities in International Cooperation). To this end, the Rector’s Office of the UoB has chosen three strategic university partners at the bilateral-institutional level as well as seven priority countries for international Collaborations at the multilateral-regional level. The third part of this handout introduces those countries that represent the priority countries for Collaborations with the “Global South.”

**STRATEGIC UNIVERSITY PARTNERS OF THE UoB**

1. **The University of St Andrews (UK)**

The University of St Andrews was founded in 1413 and is a public university in Great Britain. It is the oldest university in Scotland and, after Oxford and Cambridge, the third oldest in the English-language world. It has always been considered by the most prestigious international rankings to be one of the five best universities of the entire United Kingdom. Presently (2018), there are some 9,000 students registered at the university. The UoB and the University of St Andrews are connected by a long tradition: In 1913, on occasion of the 500th anniversary of St Andrews, they declared themselves to be sister universities. On 6 December 2018, the UoB and the University of St Andrews signed a cooperation agreement that foresees wide-ranging collaboration in research, teaching, and administrative matters. Both teachers and students shall have the opportunity to visit the other campus to engage in research, teaching, and studies. Furthermore, it is planned that common course and research programs will be adopted and the mutual exchange of administrative personnel enabled. The goal of this cooperation is to further the mutual understanding of the respective university structures as well to intensify the exchange of scientific information and promote cooperation in international networks.

2. **Waseda University, Tokyo (JP)**

Waseda University was founded in 1882 and is a comprehensive private university. Presently (2018), it is home to approximately 43,000 undergraduate and 8,300 graduate (Master’s) students. It is one of the most important Japanese universities. Together with the Keio University (also situated in Tokyo), it is regularly ranked among the best private universities in the country. The UoB has had close relations to Waseda University since 1960. On 10 October 2017, this cooperation was brought to a new level when the Rector of the UoB, Prof Dr Michael Hoch, was presented with an honorary doctor title from Waseda University. In addition, on this occasion it was formally resolved to have regular Bonn-Waseda and Waseda-Bonn Days at the respective sites. The two universities also set up funds to promote the mutual exchange of scientists and other personnel at all levels.

3. **University of Melbourne (AUS)**

The University of Melbourne was founded in 1853 and presently has 48,000 students (2018). It is a member of the so-called Group of Eight, a consortium of the eight leading universities of Australia. In 2019, the Times Higher Education Ranking designated the University of Melbourne to be 32nd among all universities worldwide, and the QS World University Rankings saw it in the 39th spot. The UoB and the University of Melbourne adopted a broad Memorandum of Understanding on 30 October 2018, with the goal of developing common research projects in various disciplines and implementing a more intensive exchange of junior researchers, particularly by establishing new common doctoral programs.
PRIORITY COUNTRIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AT THE UoB

1. Australia

The Australian university system consists of 41 individual universities as well as two institutions of higher education outside the country. It has long been one of the best systems in the world and is regularly highly ranked in the most important rankings. For example, the Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2018 saw six Australian universities (University of Melbourne, Australian National University, University of Sydney, University of Queensland, Monash University, University of New South Wales) among the top 100 in the world (Germany: eight). The high level of research quality and the excellent scientific environment in Australia hold great potential for further close Collaborations with the UoB.

See the strategic university partnership with the University of Melbourne described above.

2. France

France was chosen to lend weight to the importance that Bonn played in the development of European integration, not the least through the German-French cooperation since the founding of the European Union. Today, this axis is as important as it ever was. By designating France as one of the priority countries, the UoB expressly wishes to emphasize its inherent orientation toward Europe. The researchers at the UoB have long had intensive ties to their French colleagues at various institutions of learning there. The fact that the French university policies have become more strategically and internationally oriented in recent years has opened up new paths of cooperation between the UoB and French universities.

3. Great Britain

The scientific relations between the researchers at the UoB and those at universities within Great Britain are excellent and diverse. In light of the complicated and historically impacted relations between Germany and Great Britain, it is important that close scientific Collaborations between German and British colleagues become a strong basis for shaping a concerted, sustainable future.

See also the strategic university partnership with the University of St Andrews mentioned above.

4. Israel

The choice of Israel represents a special commitment of the UoB to its responsibility for German history. On 12 May 1965, the state of Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany commenced official relations, a date that is considered a milestone in the reconciliation of these two countries following the Holocaust. Today, the relations are close and friendly. The most densely populated state in Germany, North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), began in the 1960s to initiate close contacts with Israel. Since then these have been cultivated by the State Parliament and all succeeding Chief Ministers of NRW. The UoB explicitly supports these efforts through the many close contacts held by its researchers and scientists with their colleagues in Israel.

5. Japan

Japan displays a number of significant parallels to Germany regarding modern social challenges, which has led to the establishment of many kindred research facilities, for example, concerning the aging population and its effects on the social and health systems, the limited availability of usable agricultural area for foodstuffs, and digitization. The bilateral relationship between Germany and Japan has traditionally been very friendly, and over the past decades the cooperation in foreign affairs has increased. In 2011, the two countries celebrated the 150th anniversary of their mutual diplomatic relations. Both are constitutional democracies and members of the G7 and G20 groups, which is reflected in their common values and connections in political, economic and social respects. For several decades now, the UoB has maintained close Collaborations between its own researchers and those of Japanese universities.

See the strategic university partnership to the Waseda University in Tokyo described above.
6. The Netherlands

Because of their territorial proximity and their high level of international relations, The Netherlands are promising partners for successful cooperation projects. The UoB and its researchers have extremely close contacts with their Dutch colleagues. This expressly includes representatives from the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, which has long actively supported European integration practices and established decades-long, intensive relations to its direct neighbors to the West. The Benelux countries were the pioneers of European integration and represent three of the original founding members of the European Economic Community. They are also home to a large number of the institutions of the European Union as well as many UN and other international organizations. Establishing The Netherlands as a priority country of the UoB may, upon successful evaluation, lead to all three countries becoming a focal region.

7. USA

An internal survey carried out at the UoB in 2017 revealed, to no one’s surprise, that researchers from the UoB have the greatest number of contacts to colleagues from the United States. These Collaborations have spawned a great number of excellent research projects and outstanding publications. The USA remains the hub of scientific innovation and creativity. Yet the university landscape in the United States is also complex and characterized by great diversity. Against this background it is not surprising that the researchers from the UoB maintain academic contacts with a large variety of American universities. The USA will in the future continue to be one of the most important strategic partnerships for the UoB.
STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP: COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES OF THE “GLOBAL SOUTH”

Along with the adoption of the “Guidelines on Strategic Priorities in International Cooperation” and the “Strategic University Partners and Priority Countries for International Collaborations”, the UoB also considers it necessary to present its position with partners in countries of the so-called “Global South”. The aim of this position paper is to reflect the numerous existing Collaborations of the university’s institutes with individual researchers, research institutions and universities. Additionally, the position paper is intended to provide assistance and orientation that can be used for cooperation projects and planned applications.

1. THE “GLOBAL SOUTH” – CONCEPTUAL CLASSIFICATION OF GLOBAL COUNTRY GROUPINGS

The UoB strives to cooperate with partners in all regions of the world and thus contribute to scientific progress and capacity building. The countries of the world and their citizens as well as their organizations are increasingly networked through trade, digitization, migration, media, art, culture and science. Sweeping country groupings such as “First, Second and Third World” or “Industrial, Emerging and Developing Countries” correlate with this just as little as the more recent groupings of “Global South” and “Global North”. We view such broad categories in a critical light. Although there is no doubt that many countries of the world have a common past, face similar current challenges, and are undergoing particularly rapid economic and cultural change, the above categories do not do justice to the diversity of development processes and allow too little differentiation.

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Research in and with the “Global South” has recently been challenged by critical voices that ask for a reconfiguration of relations between North and South, aiming at the decolonization of academia and an acknowledgement of Theory from the South. The UoB is aware of these new directions of scientific cooperation and willing to respond to them.

Despite this critical view, we use the term “Global South” in the following as a rough abbreviation for those countries that have comparatively low per capita incomes, are undergoing fundamental structural change, usually have high population growth, often have fragile institutions and legal systems, and are mostly located in the southern hemisphere of the world. We are guided primarily by the current list of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The term “Global South” focuses on the thoroughly asymmetric relations between North and South and emphasizes these structural differences within world society.

At the same time, an essentialization of territorial units should be avoided. Funding programs and network partners of the UoB are also based on this terminology, which ensures a uniform basis of understanding.

2. BASELINE SITUATION

Convinced that global challenges can only be solved together, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” in September 2015.

At the heart of the Agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 subgoals, covering all three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – equally. This comprehensive approach requires enhanced cooperation and will be further developed in the 17th Sustainable Development Goal “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development”.

The UoB is particularly committed to the subgoals of capacity building and multi-actor partnerships “to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise [and] technology”. We note that the very complex global agenda with its sometimes competing goals requires considerable scientific commitment, although an accompanying research agenda was not defined and established. The UoB wants to support this in a spirit of partnership.

The location advantage of the international federal city of Bonn, which is unique in Germany, is particularly valuable for existing collaborations and cooperation efforts of the university. For example, 20 United Nations organizations are active in Bonn. The university collaborates with many of them. Bonn is also home to numerous other governmental and non-governmental development policy and development cooperation institutions, including the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) and research institutions such as the German Development Institute (DIE), the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), Deutsche Welle (DW) and a large number of non-governmental organizations operating internationally. Due to the excellent networking of the UoB with these and other regional partners, there are numerous cooperation projects with universities and research institutions in countries of the “Global South”.

3. COLLABORATIONS AND COOPERATION POTENTIAL

There are currently a large number of Collaborations with countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Such relationships, some of which are intensive and long-standing, are cultivated by numerous institutes and departments of the UoB. The following institutions are particularly active: the Center for Development Research (ZEF), the Department of Geography (GIUB), various institutes of the Agricultural Faculty and the Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies (IOA). In addition, the Center for European Integration Studies (ZEI), the Interdisciplinary Latin America Center (ILZ), the Hausdorff Center for Mathematics (HCM), and various other institutes of the medical and mathematical sciences are active in and with countries of the “Global South”. The following is a brief overview of a selection of important collaborations:

• The ZEF, the Center for Development Research, which belongs to the UoB, plays an outstanding role, especially with regard to (science) capacity building. It is an international research institute that has been operating since 1997 and is active both inter- and transdisciplinary in cooperation with countries of the “Global South”. Its work combines science and research with practice and policy. It contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development not only with its research activities but also by training qualified scientists. The ZEF’s strong worldwide networking and cooperation with international development research institutions is also beneficial. Furthermore, it is listed in the Global Think Tank Ranking in several categories among the 100 best think tanks worldwide. The Program of Accompanying Research for Agricultural Innovation (PARI), funded by the BMZ, is one of the ZEF’s most important long-term research programs. In cooperation with research institutions in 15 countries of the “Global South”, it brings together partners from Africa, India and Germany to contribute to sustainable agricultural growth and food security in Africa and India.

• Furthermore, the UoB is significantly involved in large-scale cooperative projects with a focus on the “Global South”. One example is the Collaborative Research Center/Transregio (SFB/TRR 228) “Future Rural Africa. Future-making and social-ecological transformation”. In cooperation with the University of Cologne, in its first funding phase (2018–2021) the SFB/TRR 228 addresses specific aspects of socio-ecological transformation and the shaping of the future in Kenya, Tanzania and Namibia in 14 scientific subprojects. The BICC, the University of Münster, the Charité and cooperation partners in Africa are also part of the network. Collaborating in partnership with scientists in Africa is a natural basis of the SFB/TRR 228 and serves to promote its strategic development into a center of scientific North-South cooperation. 8

• The NRW Progress College “One Health and Urban Transformation – Identification of Risks, Development of Sustainable Solutions” is a graduate school funded by the state of NRW. In cooperation with various institutes of the UoB, the ZEF, the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg and the UNU-EHS, various “dimensions and transformations of health-related systems in relation to human health, environmental health and agricultural production systems” 9 are investigated. By comparing the Ruhr area with the metropolitan regions of Ahmedabad/India, Accra/Ghana and São Paulo/Brazil, sustainable solutions are developed and synergy effects increased in cooperation with local research and scientific institutions. 10

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1 For further information see PARI https://research4agrinnovation.org/
2 For further information see https://www.crc228.de/
4 For further information see https://www.zef.de/onehealth.html.
The Geographical Institute of the UoB and UNU-EHS offer a joint Master’s program with a focus on Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security. To support students from the “Global South”, the DAAD finances six scholarships for each academic year.\footnote{For further information see \url{https://www.geographie.uni-bonn.de/studium/im-studium/master/unu}.}

Since 2003, the Agricultural Faculty of the UoB has been offering a Master’s program in Agricultural Sciences and Resource Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ARTS). The aim of the program is to create a clearly profiled vocational training course for graduates for whom there is an increasing demand in the labor market, especially in the fields of international research and development cooperation. The target group are graduates who hold a university degree from countries of the “Global South” as well as other applicants who are seeking a professional career in the fields of development research and cooperation.

Countries with which the UoB is connected through long-standing and intensive cooperation are to be treated as priority countries in this position paper; these include Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Namibia, Peru, Thailand and Vietnam.

Generally, partnerships and Collaborations in the “Global South” are to be further promoted and expanded in the future in order to facilitate interaction with the local scientific systems, thus providing mutual benefits. In view of the initial conditions and the potential for cooperation, collaboration with scientific institutions in the “Global South” is particularly important for the UoB. The long-standing and trusting contacts that Bonn scientists maintain with their colleagues in the network regions provide a fertile ground for knowledge sharing and joint research projects, thus promoting internationalization in all its diversity and breadth.

The Bonn Innovation Campus “Sustainability and Global Change” (ICB) was founded in 2017 to consolidate expertise in sustainability research and further promote existing potential at the UN location of Bonn. The ICB is to establish a research infrastructure that interconnected a corona of university and non-university institutions even more closely: the UoB with its faculties and the ZEF, DIE, UNU-EHS, BICC and the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences.\footnote{For further information see \url{https://www.bonn-alliance.uni-bonn.de/de/innovations-campus-bonn}.}

The existing Collaborations make an important contribution to the identification of promising and forward-looking partners in the priority regions. For this reason, Bonn’s locational advantage is to be used even more strategically in the future and cooperation with the internationally operating institutions based in the city is to be expanded. The UoB sees it as its task to deepen and expand the exchange with cooperation partners of the “Global South” and to provide the best possible information, advice and support.
4. SPONSORS AND CONSULTING OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently various lines of support for project initiation and existing partnerships offered by national ministries and funding agencies. These are based on various position and strategy papers that concentrate on different research fields in the “Global South”. For instance, in 2002 the Federal Government presented the National Sustainability Strategy “Perspectives for Germany”. A program of measures adopted in 2010 named perspectives and tasks for achieving the sustainability goals in the Federal Government’s area of responsibility. The new edition of the Sustainability Strategy 2016 is based on the SDGs and was adopted by the Federal Cabinet in January 2017. In addition, in recent years various ministries and funding agencies have published guidelines and policy documents on cooperation with regions of the “Global South”, in particular with Africa; these include the Federal Government13, the Federal Foreign Office (AA)14, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)15, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)16, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi)17 and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)18.

As made clear by the BMBF’s current Africa Strategy (as of November 2018), scientific cooperation with Africa must face various challenges that are relevant for the future of the continent. This includes the fact that the population is expected to double by 2050 and that the proportion of young people in particular will increase disproportionately.19 The UoB also sees this as an opportunity to get young talents interested in scientific issues and to develop ideas together with them in order to meet these challenges in collaborative projects. In addition, the UoB agrees with the central objectives of the Africa Strategy “to further advance the internationalization of education, science and research, to use the means and instruments of education, science and research to strengthen future prospects and sustainable development opportunities in Africa [and] to strive for a new quality of cooperation”20.

To support projects in the “Global South”, the UoB offers advice on funding opportunities and program implementation support through the International Office and the Division for Research Management. Furthermore, EU programs are to be increasingly used for global cooperation, such as in the Erasmus+ program Key Action 107 “Mobility with partner countries” and in the program line KA2 “Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices” the funding line “Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education”.

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