

## ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

On behalf of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) the University of Kassel and DITSL Witzenhausen organise the

International Germany Alumni Seminar 2022:

Sustainable International Agricultural Value-Chains: Income and development perspectives for producers from the global south through access to high-price markets – the role of certification, quality management and marketing

13 - 20 January 2022 in Witzenhausen, Germany

followed by the

Participation in the International Green Week (IGW) 2022  
International trade fair of the food, agriculture and gardening industries

20 - 25 January 2022 in Berlin, Germany

### Seminar aims

In this seminar we put agricultural production and processing into the context of connection to international value chains. A dynamic and productive agricultural sector is best suited to reduce poverty in rural areas and to guarantee food security. The further development of agricultural value-chains contributes to connecting producers to high-price markets and thus to creating income and development perspectives in rural areas. In conceptualizing value-chains we consider all steps from production, through post-harvest treatment, storage, transport, distribution to marketing and particularly emphasize avoiding inefficiencies and losses (quantitative, qualitative, and economic). Especially international agricultural value chains are a good example to vividly illustrate the mechanisms of certification and labeling as prerequisites for accessing markets for high-value agricultural products.

The global market for organic and other food products with certified production process and/or product qualities has been growing continuously for many years. Consumer concern for healthy products, sustainable production and fair benefit sharing is increasing, particularly in urban areas worldwide. This creates income opportunities and offers potential for both creating local value chains and accessing the international export market. Organic farming and processing, climate smart approaches and fair trade are therefore concepts that we emphasize in value-chain development.

However, all these concepts face numerous challenges particularly in developing countries and particularly in remote rural areas with less developed infrastructure. We therefore place a special focus on local site-specific value-chain design and on decentralized provision of clean water and renewable energy to ensure high product quality and reduce losses.

The seminar will promote exchange between the participants in the field of agriculture and value chains, facilitate international scientific cooperation and qualify the participants in the field of quality management along sustainable agricultural-value chains. The seminar will foster exchange of experiences, establishment of international networks between the participants, scientific discourse on sustainable agricultural-value chains and international academic cooperation in this field. It will stimulate and promote ideas for joint research, strategy development and knowledge transfer.

The seminar and participation in IGW 2022 are offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in the framework of the program Alumni Special Projects ([www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects](http://www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects)). The International Germany Alumni Seminar is organized and hosted by the Department of Agricultural Engineering in the Tropics and Subtropics of the Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences of the University of Kassel (Prof. Dr. Oliver Hensel, [www.uni-kassel.de/fb11/agraar](http://www.uni-kassel.de/fb11/agraar)) and DITSL Witzenhausen ([www.ditsl.org](http://www.ditsl.org)). The costs will be mainly covered by funds from the DAAD provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The seminar is scheduled in the run-up to the International Green Week (IGW) 2022 (<https://www.gruenewoche.de/en/>) Berlin, an international trade fair and conference of the food, agriculture and gardening industries and the origin of the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA). In 2020 over 1,800 exhibitors (from 72 countries) and 90,000 trade visitors came together to share their interest in food, agriculture, and gardening and to exchange views. IGW 2022 offers excellent opportunities for successful networking with international policy makers, producers, and retailers from the international market and for exchanging information on recent developments in the sector. Our focus themes renewable resources, organic agriculture and the future of rural development continue to gain importance at the International Green Week.

## Seminar topics and content

- Quality of agricultural products – quality management systems, quality assessment and food safety standards
- Agricultural value chains in developing countries – reduction of losses (volume / quality / value) and opportunities for additional value creation
- Renewable energy and water provision appliances to reduce losses and add value in agriculture and food processing
- International and national standards for organic products and strategies for export market access
- Marketing of agricultural products including the role of business plan development
- Regional and international value chains and the role of certification and accreditation

The seminar program in Witzenhausen will include: Sessions and workshops, presentations by the participating Alumni, inputs, and case studies by invited experts, group work and group discussions, demonstrations and field trials at the Department of Agricultural Engineering in Witzenhausen, excursions and cultural events.

The final program in Kassel / Witzenhausen will be published once all applications have been reviewed. It is compulsory for participants to attend the entire program: seminar, trade fair, social events.

## Eligibility criteria for participation

This seminar targets Alumni of German universities

- that are citizens of countries listed on the OECD DAC list (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>)
- who spent at least 3 months in Germany on professional errands (study, training, teaching, research)
- who currently live and work in their home countries

You should have

- (1) a **proven background in academic fields relevant to the topics** of agriculture and quality management of agricultural value chains
- (2) **professional experience and personal interest in one of the following areas**: research, education, NGOs, government agencies, policy making, project development, local communities, and related stakeholders
- (3) the **requirements to act as a potential multiplier** who will present the seminar results in your home country and thus disseminate the acquired knowledge as well as develop ideas and projects for regional implementation
- (4) **adequate English language proficiency** to actively participate in the workshops and discussions

## **Eligibility for repeated attendances at Alumni Special Projects:**

Alumni are eligible to participate in up to two DAAD Alumni Special Projects within four years. The year of participation, not the year of application, is decisive for the calculation (this rule does not apply for attendance in a digital Alumni Special Project).

## Cost coverage

- International return ticket to Frankfurt and from Frankfurt/Berlin (lowest possible economy class airfare – regional ceiling prices: Latin-America 1.000€, Sub-Sahara Africa 800€, Middle East and North Africa 700€, South-East Asia 900€, Asia other countries 800€)
- Train tickets (2nd class): Airport to Witzenhausen – preferably Rail & Fly
- Travel health insurance (max. 30 Euro)
- Visa costs
- Accommodation and a contribution to the living expenses (half-board) during the seminar stay in Witzenhausen.
- Transport on excursions
- Transport from Witzenhausen to Berlin
- Accommodation and a contribution to the living expenses during the stay in Berlin
- Entrance fees at the trade fair in Berlin
- Transport from the hotel in Berlin to the departure airport

**Please note:** Any other than the above costs must be covered by yourself. This includes particularly:

- Transport between your place of residence and “your” airport
- Travel costs associated with your visa application in your country of residence
- Personal living expenses exceeding the provisions by the program (half-board) in Witzenhausen and Berlin
- Local transport in Germany for private errands not associated with the seminar

**Extensions of stays** before the seminar / after International Green Week in Berlin are possible only **up to 5 working days and upon submission of a comparison of flight ticket prices before you start organizing / booking your trip**. Any additional cost incurred by deviating from the official arrival / return date (see below) must be borne by yourself. This applies to the airfare and to additional further travel-, subsistence-, and other costs that may arise from an extension.

In exceptional cases, extensions beyond 5 days may be granted by DAAD, but only if they serve an official purpose, e.g. professional visits to universities, organizations, institutions, companies etc. Such extensions must be applied for well in advance and must be approved by DAAD before you start your travel. Applications must be substantiated by official invitations, agreed work plans and schedules of visits by the respective organisations that you wish to visit. Please communicate well in advance – possibly already with your application for this Alumni Special Project – should you plan an extension of your stay. For any extension you need to organize your accommodation by yourself, and, very importantly, you must make sure to have a valid health insurance for the extension days.

## **Travel dates:**

13	January 2022	Arrival in Witzenhausen
14 - 19	January 2022	Seminar in Witzenhausen
20	January 2022	Travel from Witzenhausen to Berlin
21 - 24	January 2022	Participation in the trade fair International Green Week in Berlin
25	January 2022	Departure from Berlin

**It is essential that you participate from the first day of the seminar in Witzenhausen to the last day of the trade fair International Green Week in Berlin.**

## Application procedure

Your application (in English language) must include the following documents in **one single pdf file**:

- a filled application form: The form is available on [www.ditsl.org](http://www.ditsl.org)
- a short CV with photograph and relevant documentation of Alumni status
- an **abstract on the subject of either** “Sustainable International Agricultural Value-Chains” or “Meeting Quality Challenges in International Agri-Value Chains” with reference to the participants' home country and self-involvement in the field of agriculture and/or agricultural value chains (the main topics are listed above; abstracts must not exceed one page; please use font type “Arial”, font size 11, 1.5 line spacing)
- a **short description of your present duties / position and your personal professional goals**, indicating your envisaged field of activities and duty level
- an **overview** on seminars, workshops or conferences visited in Germany after finishing your studies in Germany

You should emphasize your motivation and personal / professional benefit of your participation in the application form. Please illustrate how you are planning to imply the gained knowledge and which possible stakeholders for collaboration you may identify for your professional career.

The PDF-document should be named ‘Last name\_First name\_country’ (e.g. Anne\_Siegmeier\_Germany).

Please send your application, as one single pdf file, latest by **29 August 2021** via email to: [igw@ditsl.org](mailto:igw@ditsl.org)

**Please note: Completeness of personal data mentioned in the online application form will affect your eligibility as a participant.**

After the review by the local organizing committee and DAAD, the invited participants will be notified in end-September 2021 at the latest.

## Special note

Given the world-wide pandemia and the current status of uncertainty of its development, DAAD will decide in due course to replace the event by an online version. This will imply modifications of the program which will be announced to participants.

**For further questions**, please contact Anne Siegmeier ([a.siegmeier@ditsl.org](mailto:a.siegmeier@ditsl.org)).

Witzenhausen, June 2021



With financial support from the

**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development