



# Funding high impact programmes for PostDocs

## Examples from the German Research Foundation (DFG)

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Peer-learning for emerging researcher's knowledge and advancement (PERKA)

# Introducing DFG

An association under German private law

## The DFG

- ▶ Germany's central, self-governing research funding organisation
- ▶ Independently acting as an association under private law
- ▶ Members are
  - German universities (71)
  - Non-university research institutions (16)
  - German academies of sciences and humanities (7)
  - Scientific associations (4)



# Introducing DFG

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## The DFG is funded by

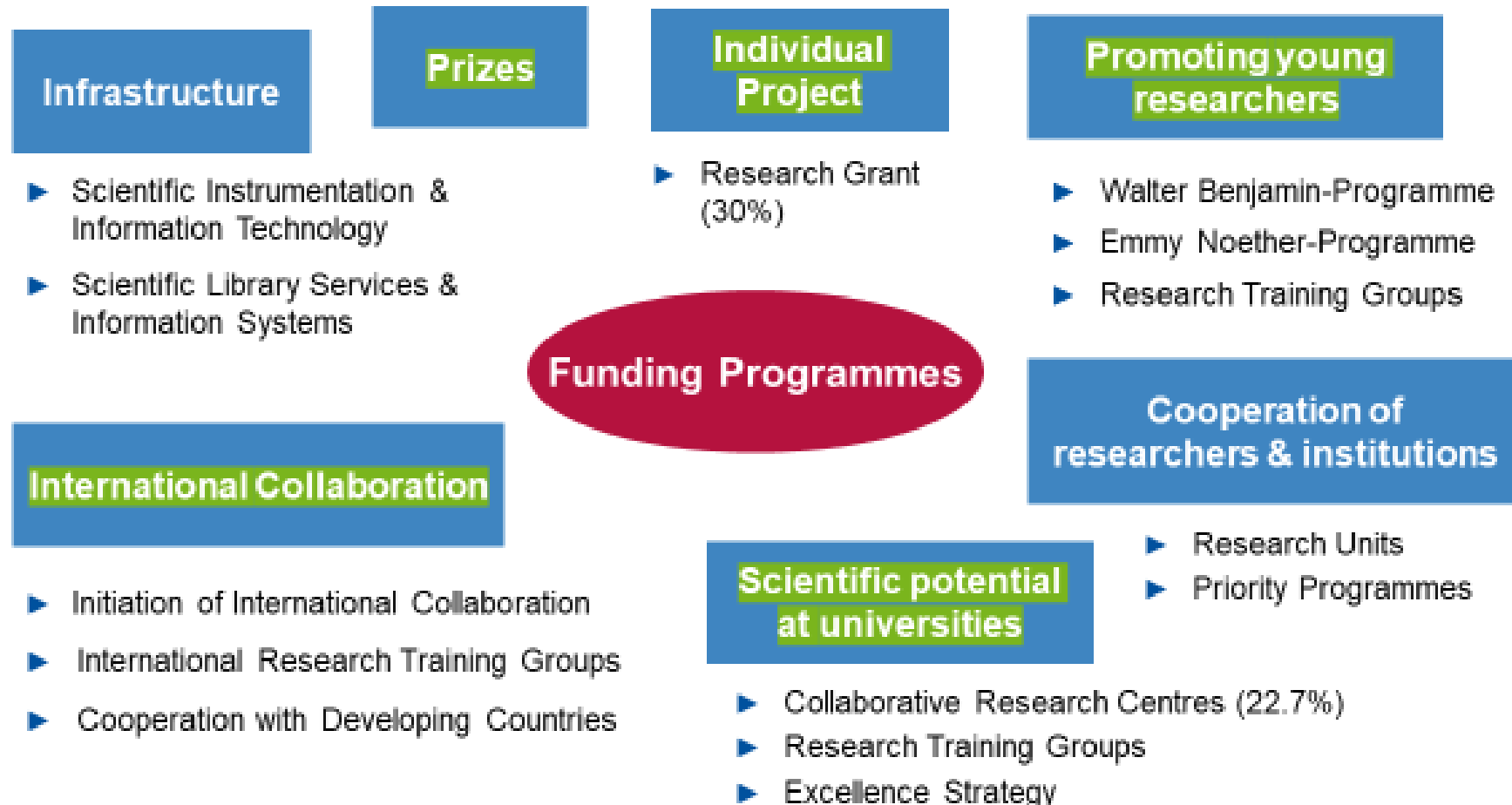
- ▶ German federal government (68,3%)
- ▶ Federal states (31.6%)
- ▶ Private sources (0.1%)
  
- ▶ Total budget ~3.6 b€ in 2021
  - Funding with a **focus on knowledge-oriented research**
  - ~90% to universities
  - ~10% to extra-university institutions

**In 2021, the DFG funded more than 31,600 new and ongoing projects**



# Introducing DFG

Amount of research funding awarded by programme for 2020



# Funding high impact programmes for PostDocs

Focus on early career researchers

## In the statutes

### Article 1 Purpose of the Association

(2) [...] *Excellent research requires a broad spectrum of ideas and pluralistic debate; for this reason, the DFG takes particular care to promote international cooperation, **early career researchers**, gender equality and diversity in science and the humanities.*



# Funding high impact programmes for PostDocs

## Typologies and models (Section 4)

### Three options

1. **Apply** in response to advertisements and for vacant positions to take part in DFG-funded projects or groups
2. **Submit** a proposal to an individual funding programme
3. **Submit** proposals for project funding or networking with other researchers



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## Typologies and models (Section 4)

### 1. DFG-funded projects or groups

- ▶ Collaborative Research Centres or Research Training Groups
- ▶ ECR benefit from assured quality: The project or group, the researchers involved and the environment have been reviewed and selected beforehand as part of a competitive process.
- ▶ This option offers the opportunity to gain further research experience and further develop a research profile **in the early post-doctoral phase**.



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## Typologies and models (Section 4)

### 2. Individual funding to support research careers

(a) **After completion of doctorate:** ECR moves on to another research environment: freedom to select the research institution where he/she would like to work, in Germany or abroad.

(b) **Two to four years of post-doctoral experience:** ECR can lead an independent junior research group for six years. This allows to quickly meet the requirements for a professorship or another senior academic role.

(c) **Meeting all the requirements for appointment to a professorship:** allows to acquire further academic merits for an academic leadership role.





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## Typologies and models (Section 4)

### 3. Individual Research Grant and networking

- ▶ Enables to implement a research idea as an individual project at a research institution in Germany
- ▶ The *Initiation of International Collaboration* funding programme allows to carry out research visits and joint events with international researchers and prepare joint activities.

**Eligible after PhD degree and expected to write competitive proposals!**



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## Scientific and complementary skills (Section 6)

### International collaboration and networks

- ▶ Reducing barriers for ECR to participate in international collaboration and matchmaking/networking events
- ▶ All programmes can accommodate international elements.

### African-German collaboration

- (1) Two-stage integrated calls
- (2) TWAS-DFG Cooperation Visits Programme
- (3) German-African Cooperation Projects in Infectiology
- (4) International Research Training Groups (e.g. *Transformative Religion*)



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## Incentivising good practice (Section 10)

### DFG's engagement

- ▶ Holding institutions and Principal Investigators (PIs) accountable
- ▶ Promoting equal opportunities and diversity
- ▶ Promoting inclusivity and equity, also internationally/globally (Global Research Council, Science Granting Councils Initiative etc.)
- ▶ Research Integrity and Good Research Practice



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Some improvement

## For example...

- ▶ Wording „Early career researchers“ in German relatively new
- ▶ New template for Curriculum Vitae
  - (1) additional research outputs
  - (2) provide details of special life circumstances or additional services to science
- ▶ Open discussion about too few permanent post-doc positions within the German scientific system



# Funding high impact programmes for PostDocs

Remaining gaps...

## ...from yesterday's discussion

- ▶ Laboratories/research infrastructure
- ▶ Mobility between African countries and scientific institutions
- ▶ Mentorship
- ▶ Equal opportunities for African French-speaking countries





# Thank you for your attention!

## For more information

- on the DFG: [www.dfg.de/en](http://www.dfg.de/en)
- on Research Careers: [www.dfg.de/research\\_careers](http://www.dfg.de/research_careers)
- on cooperation with Africa: [www.dfg.de/international/africa](http://www.dfg.de/international/africa)