

TWAS – BMFTR PROGRAMME

GRANTS TO YOUNG SCIENTISTS IN SELECTED ARAB DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIONS WITH GERMAN SCIENTISTS

“Grants for Transformative and Collaborative Research in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region” (GTCR-MENA)

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applicants are advised to read this document carefully to ensure that they fulfill all the requirements in preparing the application and are familiar with the general conditions and guidelines for the programme.

General Information

- **The German Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR)** – www.bmftr.bund.de – aims at enhancing Germany's innovative strength, creating sustainable employment and improving the quality of education and research. The Ministry provides institutional funding for research organizations (except for universities) and programmes, represents Germany internationally in R&D matters and coordinates overall public R&D spending and structures.
- **The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) – for the advancement of science in developing countries** – www.twas.org – is an autonomous international organization founded in Trieste, Italy, in 1983. Under a 1991 agreement, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) assumed administration of TWAS funds and personnel. TWAS represents the best of science in the developing world. Its principal aim is to promote scientific capacity and excellence for science-based development in the Global South.
- **GTCR-MENA** is fully funded by BMFTR and aims at providing seed opportunities for young researchers from a number of selected Middle Eastern and North African countries (see “Eligibility criteria” below), as well as for diaspora from these countries. It focuses on capacity building in science and education in the target countries, with particular emphasis on research and academic training, as well as interdisciplinary collaborations with German laboratories.

The aims of the programme are:

- strengthening the scientific capacity of young talented researchers with particular emphasis on the six key technologies of the '[High-Tech Agenda Germany](#)';
- training students in the context of research groups with the parallel fostering of a development vision guided by science;
- catalysing collaborations with German scientists for interdisciplinary and thus enhanced transformational research.

- The grant is offered to young researchers who:
 - a) have an academic research position in their home country, or are in the process of getting their research established or who are in a diaspora condition but are seeking to go back to their country and to contribute to their communities; and
 - b) have an ongoing collaboration with a German Science Institution or be in the process of establishing one via the programme.

Number of available awards - Within the framework of the multi-component GTCR-MENA programme, the BMFTR and TWAS will assign at least 20 awards to early-career scientists to set up a research project in selected Arab developing countries, and to strengthen their collaborative linkages with German scientists.

Components of the Programme

- Scientists can apply for several or all of the following 8 components of the programme:
 1. Equipment grant: up to USD 20,000; allowing scientists to equip their laboratories. Under this component, purchase of fuel, fees/ salaries for experts or consultants or labourers, laptops, tablets, drones and laboratory animals is not accepted and not covered.
 2. Consumables grant: up to USD 15,000; allowing scientists to acquire consumables for specific research projects. They may also request funds for fieldwork and maintenance of equipment. On another note, purchase of fuel, fees/ salaries for experts or consultants or labourers, laptops, tablets, drones and laboratory animals is not accepted and not covered.
 3. MSc. training grant: up to USD 10,000; allowing scientists to train and teach M.Sc. students within their research group. For this component,

the MSc form (available in the annex below) must be filled and uploaded on the application portal.

4. International conference grant: successful candidates will be provided with up to USD 3,000; for participation in an international conference.
5. Open access international publication grant: each successful candidate will be provided up to USD 2,000 to cover fees for publication in reputable open access journals.
6. Skills-building workshop grant: each successful candidate will be provided with an opportunity to participate in a workshop which provides advice and guidance on a range of soft skills, such as: writing research proposals, presentation and communication, sustainable development, plagiarism, etc. The event will be organized by TWAS.
7. Collaboration with German scientist grant: worth up to USD 7,000; to cover travel to the collaborative laboratory, accommodation during the visit and laboratory bench costs. The research visit must be carried out by the Principal Investigator. Under this component, only the following form of collaboration is eligible for support:
 - Have an ongoing collaboration with a German Science Institution or be in the process of establishing one via the programme.

In both cases, a Letter of Collaboration from the German partner must be submitted with the application.

The programme has an additional component, which seeks to enhance the productivity of female scientists returning to academia after a maternity leave:

8. Female “scientist-after-child” grant: support for a research assistant (up to 12 months) may be offered to women scientists in the following cases:
 - i. Scientist with a child up to 12 months of age;
 - ii. Scientist going through a pregnancy at the time of the application.
- One award may include several or all of the components outlined above: it is granted for a period of 24 months. The first 12 months to procure all items. The following 12 months for all remaining components of the grant, including submission of final report.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to apply in year 2026, candidates must fulfill the following criteria:

- Be nationals of and preferably residing in one of the following countries:
Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen.
- Have a PhD degree;
- Be no more than 40 years in age, for women scientists candidates with children 2 additional years per child can be considered in the age limit requirement for a maximum of 3 children. For example, a female applicant with two children may be 44 years of age;
- Submit research proposals focusing on one of the six key technologies relevant to [the 'High-Tech Agenda Germany \(HTAD\)'](#):
 - Artificial Intelligence (AI)
 - Quantum Technologies
 - Microelectronics
 - Biotechnology
 - Fusion and Climate-neutral Energy Transition
 - Technology for Climate-neutral Mobility
- Alternatively, research proposals may address one of the following strategic research fields highlighted by the HTAD:
 - Aerospace
 - Health research
 - Marine, climate and sustainability research
 - Humanities and social sciences (one of the following only):
 - Economics
 - Finance and Trade
 - Political science
 - International relations
 - Human geography
- Have a position or securing a position at an academic and/or research institution (including international research centres) in one of the eligible countries listed above;
- Have an ongoing collaboration with a German Science Institution or be in the process of establishing one via the programme. In both cases, a Letter of Collaboration from the German partner must be submitted with the application.
- Applications from women scientists are especially encouraged.

How to apply

- Applications must be submitted online via the link at the relevant page on the TWAS website: <https://twas.org/opportunity/grants-transformative-and-collaborative-research-middle-east-and-north-africa-gtcr-mena>
- Only applications submitted online will be considered.
- Candidates applying for must provide a clear and explicit justification for each component for which they applied: the applicants will need to explain how each component supports the overall aim of the research project.

When to apply

- The **deadline for receiving applications is Thursday, 16 April 2026 (11:59 Central European Summer Time, CEST)**. No applications will be accepted after the deadline: therefore, we strongly recommend that you submit your application as early as possible.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.