

9th DAAD South Africa Conference

Science Communication

Johannesburg, South Africa

5 – 8 September 2019

This annual conference grants the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), its partners and alumni the opportunity to get to know current DAAD scholarship holders in South Africa and to introduce the DAAD and its many facets to the current scholarship holders. During the conference the young researchers become a part of a far-reaching and active network that provides them with critical support in their ongoing careers. Alongside the possibilities for networking, the DAAD offers them information on study and research in Germany, a platform for discussion on relevant and topical subjects, and possibilities for further development in high quality workshops. The features of the conference should ideally provide the foundation for a successful international career.

This year the theme for the conference is “Science Communication” and thus communication within academia and the communication of research will be addressed throughout the weekend. Three full-day workshops will be on offer with each participant attending two of these. The results and findings of each workshop are to be presented to all participants and discussed by the group. The conference will be further enriched by a relevant Key-Note Address and a panel discussion. DAAD Alumni are to share their experiences of study and research in Germany with the participants, with DAAD rounding off the programme with a presentation on its funding opportunities. Twenty scholarship holders will have the opportunity to apply to compete in a **Falling Walls Lab** during the conference and are to receive training during the programme.

Key-Note Address and Panel Discussion:

Twenty-five years after Apartheid, many discussions in South Africa are still centred around inequality. How the country can attain a unity without neglecting diversity and experienced injustice is a frequent topic for debate. These discussions shape the country as well as its higher education institutions. The necessary advancement of previously marginalised South Africans and the transformation of society influence all facets of higher education: staffing, scholarship allocations, state funding for studies and application procedures at higher education institutions. Implicit rules of speech, grounded in a tacit understanding of speakers’ racially and historically determined contexts, underpin most discussions, seminars and informal interactions among students and staff of universities in South African higher education. Who may say what in which contexts? Who implicitly represents which group and what are the consequences of this representation for artistic and academic writing? How does the heterogenous group of international students from other African countries fit into this picture? What is the reasoning behind these **tacit rules of speech**? Where do they

lead? What influence do they have on scientific debates and the selection of study and research fields? A **Key-Note Address** and a balanced **panel discussion** would ideally engage with these topical and contentious questions and facilitate discussion among the diverse group of participants.

Workshop 1:

Young researchers from African countries often start their academic careers in strict **hierarchies**. Support and quality supervision in the scientific development of one's own research questions are not self-evident. There is a critical need for discussion on and the exchange of experiences surrounding **communication strategies** and how these strategies can open doors for oneself and advance one's own research. Are these communication strategies only useful in certain contexts or in international academic exchange as well? Which communication strategies can be used to communicate one's own research projects beyond the narrow circles of one's own institution? How can they be employed optimally? Which possibilities for the communication of research does social media offer?

Workshop 2:

Many students from African countries are the first in their extended families to have the opportunity to complete a tertiary degree. Like many students all over the world who are the first in their families to enter academia, these young talented students are faced with certain barriers, one of these barriers being their acquaintance with new, foreign communication strategies that mark tacit affiliations, enable alliances and allow access where doors seem closed. This often leads to fears that complicate or prevent the successful execution of presentations of one's own research projects in the scientific community. One of the planned workshops will engage with **learned communication behaviour** and the development or expansion of promising **presentation strategies**.

Workshop 3:

Young researchers from African countries often struggle to apply for international funding for their research because the conditions surrounding these international funding opportunities are not understood, but more importantly, because **research and science** are not recognised and addressed as a **particular communicative field**. Every **research exposé**, every scientific **publication** must be embedded in an ongoing scientific debate in order to be successful. How do I go about a literature research? Which digital resources can be used? How do I formulate my research question in the context of ongoing debates? How do I incorporate the remarks of other scientists in my own contribution? These questions must be clarified and addressed by every new scientific generation. This workshop provides information and practice opportunities for young researchers currently working on an exposé or a publication.