



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

PROGRAM

DAAD ALUMNI MEETING

Europe, Mexico, and the Region – New Common Paths

July 31 – August 2, 2024



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Wednesday, July 31, 2024

HOTEL BEL AIR, RESIDENCE

16.40 Departure from the Hotel Bel Air
Dakota 95, Col. Nápoles, Alc. Benito Juárez, 03810 Mexico City

18.00 **RECEPTION AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR
(For Alumni only)**
Avenida Paseo de las Palmas 1991, Lomas de Chapultepec

21.00 Return to Hotel

Thursday, August 1, 2024

HOTEL BEL AIR

8.00 **REGISTRATION**
[Lobby, 1st Floor]

9.00 **WORDS OF WELCOME**
[Collection]

Dr Kai Sicks (*Secretary General, DAAD*)

Tony Argelio Rojas Gil (*General Director for Project Execution Abroad,
AMEXCID*)

Dr Alfonso Martínez Muñoz (*Minister for Environment of the State of Nuevo León*)

Suvi Roponen (*Deputy Head of EU Delegation to Mexico*)

Wolfram von Heynitz (*Charge d'Affaires a.i., German Embassy in Mexico City*)

9.30
[Collection]

KEYNOTE SPEECH
Global Gateway Investment Agenda in Mexico

Dr Stefan Agne (*Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Mexico*)

10.00
[Collection]

KEYNOTE SPEECH
The Age of Pandemics

Prof Dr Jan Felix Drexler (*Research Professor, Institute of Virology, Charité Berlin*)

10.30
[Collection]

QUESTIONES AND ANSWERS

11.00

COFFEE BREAK

11.30
[Collection]

5 KEY AREAS, 5 IMPULSES

Digital Sector

Dr Ivan S. Razo Zapata (*Chief Technology Officer, COCOA Collaborative Innovation B.V.*)

Climate and Energy

Dr Víctor Ávila Akerberg (*General Director, Council for Science and Technology of the State of Mexico*)

Transport

Baldomero Garza García (*President, Railway Cluster of Mexicans in Germany*)

Health

Prof Dr Julieta Rojo Medina (*Scientific Counselor, Mexican Embassy in Berlin*)

Education and Research

Dr María del Carmen Villegas Hernández (*Counselor of the Vice Chancellor on Research and Postgraduate Studies Office, Instituto Politécnico Nacional and France – Mexico Alumni Association*)

MODERATION

Dr Katharina Fleckenstein (*Regional Director Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, DAAD*)

13.00

[Collection]

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

European Funding Options and Examples of Best Practice

The PACA Status of the DAAD (Pillar Assessed Contribution Agreement) and Funding Opportunities

Christoph Hansert (*Head of Division Development Cooperation and Transnational Programs, DAAD*)

Best Practice: The outstanding Collaboration between UNAM and the University of Gothenburg in the Field of Physics

Prof Dr Remigio Cabrera Trujillo (*Research Professor, Institute of Physical Sciences, UNAM*)

“Welcome to France”: The national Strategy to attract more international students and its translation in Mexico

Dr Emmanuel Eveno (*Attaché for scientific and university cooperation, French Embassy in Mexico*)

Best Practice: Universiteit Twente and ITESM: a partnership that works

Daniela Nuñez Zurita (*Public Diplomacy and Communication Officer, Embassy the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Mexico*)

Horizon Europe: the European program for the promotion of research and innovation

Viktoria Bodnarova (*Regional Coordinator in Latin America and the Caribbean, EURAXESS LAC*)

14.00
[Guadalajara 4&5]

LUNCH

15.30–18.30

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

[Collection 1]

WORKSHOP 1
Digital Sector

MODERATION

Dr David Guerrero (*Research Professor, Department of Automotive Systems, Unidad Profesional Interdisciplinaria de Ingeniería Campus Guanajuato, Instituto Politécnico Nacional*)

[Collection 2]

WORKSHOP 2
Climate and Energy

MODERATION

Dr Juan Muñoz Saldaña (*Scientific Ambassador, Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung / CINVESTAV Campus Querétaro, Instituto Politécnico Nacional*)

[Guadalajara 1]

WORKSHOP 3
Transport

MODERATION

Edgar Mauricio Ruíz López (*Structural Engineer, Deutsche Bahn México*)

[Guadalajara 2]

WORKSHOP 4

Health

MODERATION

Dr Angélica Cuapio (*Senior Researcher, Karolinska Institute, Sweden*)

[Guadalajara 3]

WORKSHOP 5

Education and Research

MODERATION

Dr Yoana Pérez Badell (*Vice Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry, University of Havana*)

[Mexico 1&2]

FESTIVE DINNER

(DINNER WILL BE SERVED DURING THE CEREMONY)

19.30

WORDS OF WELCOME

Dr Kai Sicks (*Secretary General, DAAD*)

H.E. Delphine Borione (*Ambassador of France to Mexico*)

Wolfram von Heynitz (*Charge d'Affairs a.i., German Embassy in Mexico City*)

19.45

SHORT PITCHES OF THE WORKSHOP RESULTS (3 minutes each)

20.30

FAREWELL SPEECH

Dr Katharina Fleckenstein (*Regional Director Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, DAAD*)

20.45

INTRODUCTION

Christoph Hansert (*Head of Division Development Cooperation and Transnational Programs, DAAD*)

Friday, August 2, 2024

XOCHIMILCO, HOTEL BEL AIR

7.30 Departure from the Hotel Bel Air to Xochimilco
[Lobby] *Comfortable clothing and sturdy shoes are recommended for the excursion.*

9.00 **FIELDTRIP IN XOCHIMILCO**

Visit of the Biological and Aquaculture Research Center of Cuernavaca (CIBAC), Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM)

11.00 **Boat Trip through the Pre-Hispanic Canal System of Xochimilco (Pier Cuernavaca)**

13.00 Return to Hotel

14.00 **LUNCH**
[Foyer Collection]

15.00 **PANEL DISCUSSION**
[Collection] **Ideas for Cooperation**

PARTICIPANTS

Dr Alfonso Martínez Muñoz (*Minister for Environment of the State of Nuevo León*)

Dr Ulrike Capdepón (*DAAD Visiting Professor, University Center for Social Sciences and Humanities (CUCSH), Universidad de Guadalajara*)

Dr Víctor Jiménez García (*Director, Agricultural Research Institute, Universidad de Costa Rica*)

Jimena Kreusler (*Managing Director, German Centre Mexico*)

Rubisel Velázquez Lugo (*Deputy Director General, Agro Groppo*)

MODERATION

Dr Alejandro Márquez (*DAAD Visiting Professor, Faculty of Economics, UNAM*)

16.00 **COFFEE BREAK**

16.30 **WRAP-UP / CLOSING REMARKS**

[Collection]

Dr Katharina Fleckenstein (*Regional Director Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, DAAD*)

17.00 **FAREWELL FIESTA**

[Cantina Dakota]

MODERATION OF THE EVENT:

Silvia Stieffermann (*Deputy Regional Director and Head of Marketing, Regional Office Mexico, Central América and the Caribbean, DAAD*)

Speaker (in alphabetical order)

Dr Stefan Agne

Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Mexico
Stefan holds a doctoral degree in Agricultural Economics (Göttingen University, Germany). From 2004-2008, he was Head of Sector for Environment and Sustainable Development in the EU Delegation in China. Hereafter, he joined the EU's climate change department, participating in the multilateral climate change negotiations up to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015. In February 2016, Stefan moved to the EU's international cooperation department. In 2019, he was appointed Head of Cooperation in the EU Delegation to Brazil. In 2023, he took up his current assignment.

Dr Víctor Ávila Akerberg

General Director, Council for Science and Technology of the State of Mexico (COMECYT)
Víctor studied biology and restoration ecology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He earned the doctoral degree on natural resources, from the University of Freiburg, after which Víctor made a postdoctoral stay at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. He has ample experience on projects related with biodiversity and ecosystem services conservation and sustainable use in temperate forests of central Mexico as well as environmental education. For 10 years he was a full-time lecturer and researcher at Autonomous University of the State of Mexico and UNAM. Strong links with Germany remain, being an active DAAD young ambassador. As a DAAD

alumnus, he has organized seven international seminars on topics of biodiversity, sustainability, food sovereignty and water management. He has developed the original ideas and co-produced seven audiovisual documentaries (four of those supported by DAAD), which have received national and international awards and recognitions (like Water forest/Xänthe Dehe).

Viktoria Bodnarova

Regional Coordinator, EURAXESS Latin America & Caribbean

Viktoria has been based in Bogota, Colombia as of 2022, mainly to inform the community of researchers of all scientific domains and nationalities based in Latin America and the Caribbean about the funding and career opportunities the European Research Area (ERA) offers. Prior to this, she was the Regional Representative for EURAXESS North America and led the office for 7 years. Between 2008 and 2013, Viktoria was a Project Manager and EURAXESS Network Coordinator at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. Born in Slovakia, Viktoria holds a Master of Arts degree in International Relations and European Studies from the Metropolitan University in Prague. She was an international student herself in the UK, France, US and Canada and speaks six languages.

Prof Dr Remigio Cabrera Trujillo

Research Professor, UNAM

Remigio is a Mexican physicist with a PhD from Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana and the

University of Odense (1998). He completed postdoctoral research at the University of Florida and Kansas State University. Since 2006, he has been a professor at UNAM and a Level III member of Mexico's National System of Researchers. His research in Atomic, Molecular, and Optical Physics has led to significant publications in *Physical Review Letters*. Dr. Cabrera has held the Linnaeus-Palme chair at the University of Gothenburg, coordinated an exchange program between UNAM and Gothenburg. In 2022 he received an Honoris Causa Doctorate from the University of Gothenburg 2022 and was a visiting professor at the University of Heidelberg.

Dr Ulrike Capdepón

DAAD Visiting Professor, Universidad de Guadalajara

Ulrike gained her PhD in Political Science from the University of Hamburg and the Institute for Latin American Studies of the GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies. She has been a Marie Curie-Fellow at the Center for Social Science and Humanities of the Spanish National Research Council in Madrid, and a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Konstanz in the ERC-project “Narratives of Terror and Disappearance”. Ulrike was a DAAD Postdoctoral Research Scholar affiliated to the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University in New York City. She also was a visiting scholar and lecturer in the Program in Latin American Studies at Princeton University. Afterwards, she worked as a research fellow at the University of Konstanz. Her research interests include peace and conflict studies, human rights, memory studies, and transitional justice as well as political violence in Europe, particularly the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America. She is a participant member of

the Jean Monnet-Policy Network “ValEU-Research and Education Network on Contestations to EU Foreign Policy”, based at Europa-Viadrina University Frankfurt (Oder).

Dr Angélica Cuapio

Senior Scientist, Karolinska Institute

Angélica holds an academic and research background, with a foundation in medicine and advanced specialization in immunology. Her academic journey began with a medical degree in Mexico, followed by a PhD in Immunology from Germany. She further honed her research skills through postdoctoral positions in Austria and Sweden, all funded by three consecutive Marie Curie Fellowships. Currently, she serves as a senior scientist at the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden. Presently, she is on a career break in Mexico, where she works as a scientific consultant, focusing on international scientific collaborations and funding programs, particularly Horizon Europe.

Prof Dr Jan Felix Drexler

Research Professor, Charité Berlin

Jan Felix studied Spanish linguistics and Medicine in Germany and Brazil. Following post-doc periods in Germany and the Netherlands, he was appointed as associate professor in Bonn and today work as a professor in virus epidemiology at Charité Berlin. Following years of fieldwork and the development of in vitro and in silico methods, his work focuses on virus epidemiology and the evolutionary biology of emerging viruses. His major achievements include the development of affordable diagnostic tests for the human immunodeficiency virus, hepatitis C virus and yellow fever virus for Brazilian public laboratories, the uncovering of the zoonotic

origins of major human viruses like hepatitis A and B virus, the elucidation of central aspects of the epidemiology of the Latin American Zika virus outbreak, the study of viral infections in resource-limited settings and the interdisciplinary analysis of emerging infectious diseases, including different fields of the social and life sciences.

Prof Dr Emmanuel Eveno

Attaché for Science & Higher Education, Embassy of France in Mexico

Emmanuel currently serves as Attaché for Science & Higher Education at the Embassy of France in Mexico. He is also a Full Professor in Urban Geography at French universities and an Associate Professor at the University Laval in Quebec, Canada. His previous responsibilities include serving as Director of the Franco-Mexican Universitarian House in France, and as Director of the International Research Network of the CNRS, "Living in the Cities of the Future". He was also the Vice-President of the Administrative Council at the Université of Toulouse Jean-Jaurès from December 2018 to January 2023. Additionally, he held the position of Director of the Doctoral School "Time, Space, Society, Culture" at the Université of Toulouse Jean-Jaurès, and served as Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Urban Studies at the same university. In terms of research, he has spent the last twenty years developing a general theory on the relationship between cities and information and communication technologies (ICT). He posits that the rapid development of ICTs in contemporary societies is closely linked to urbanization. As urban growth continues, there is an increasing need for the use of ICT by both actors and users. He has published

numerous articles and presented papers at international conferences on this subject.

Baldomero Garza García

President, Railway Cluster of Mexicans in Germany

Baldomero is a distinguished civil engineer and infrastructure planner with a successful career in project management and development at both national and international levels. He holds a Master's degree in Infrastructure Planning from the University of Stuttgart in Germany and a degree in Civil Engineering from ITESM Campus Monterrey in Mexico. Currently, Baldomero is the President of the Railway Cluster of Mexicans in Germany, where he promotes the education of young Mexicans in the railway industry in Germany. Previously, he served as the General Director of Studies, Statistics, and the Mexican Railway Register at the Regulatory Agency for Railway Transport in Mexico.

Dr David Guerrero

Research Professor, Instituto Politécnico Nacional

David has received his PhD in Information Technologies at Universidad de Guadalajara and Technische Universität Berlin and a BSC in Electronics Engineering and M.Sc. in Telecommunications at Instituto Politécnico Nacional. At IPN, he holds a Full Professor-Researcher position at the Department of Automotive Systems in the Unidad Profesional Interdisciplinaria de Ingeniería Campus Guanajuato. His research works are focused on Industry 5.0, Cyber-Physical Production Systems, Digital Transformation and Industrial robots. Also, he is head of automotive systems laboratory. David Guerrero is member of Ambassadors DAAD Mexico program and first Mexican member of UNIFI project (UNiversities

for Future Internet) through global collaboration among academic institutions.

Christoph Hansert

Head of Division for “Development Cooperation and Transnational Programmes”, DAAD

Christoph has a professional background in higher education management and quality assurance focusing on Central America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. After working at organisations which are now part of GIZ, he joined DAAD as Head of Section “Higher Education Management for Developing Countries”. Subsequently, he directed the Regional Office for Africa, followed by positions as senior adviser for digitalization at the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and DAAD’s head of division for “Knowledge Management and International Network.” He studied Political Science and Economics in Freiburg, Heidelberg, Washington, D.C., and at the Latin America Institute of Freie Universität Berlin.

Wolfram von Heynitz

Charge d’Affairs a.i., German Embassy in Mexico City

Wolfram previously served as Deputy Consul General in New York. He has been Head of the Service of the Cyber Policy Coordination Service of the German Federal Foreign Office and a member of a governmental member of a group of governmental experts convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations, António Guterres, on the development of responsible behavior of states in cyberspace, as well as member of the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence of the Council of Europe. Throughout his career at the German Federal Foreign Office, he was also a Research Task

Coordinator, author of a strategy for managing future challenges and Head of the Strategic Prospecting Section. He worked in the Section on the Enlargement of the European Union. He was Counsellor in Tel Aviv (dealing with the Middle East peace process) and also worked in the Office of the Deputy Minister for Europe, in the Federal Presidency and as Deputy Head of Mission in Ireland and Azerbaijan.

Prof Dr Víctor M. Jiménez

Director of the Agricultural Research Institute, Universidad de Costa Rica

Víctor is Full Professor of Plant Physiology and Biotechnology at the University of Costa Rica (UCR). He is also coordinator of the Doctoral Program in Agricultural Sciences at the UCR and of the Biotechnology Laboratory of the Grains and Seeds Research Center. He is a graduate of the Plant Science program at the UCR, where he also obtained his M.Sc. in Plant Biotechnology. He received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Sciences from the University of Hohenheim (UHOH), Germany, with a scholarship from the DAAD. He was a Georg Forster Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and Visiting Professor at the UHOH. He was honored with the UCR Researcher Award in 2009, as Humboldt Professor (UCR/DAAD) in 2022, and with the Costa Rican National Science Award “Clodomiro Picado Twilight”, also in 2022. He served as Regional Coordinator for Latin America of the Food Security Center, an Exceed project based at UHOH (2009-2019).

Jimena Kreuzler

Managing Director, German Centre Mexico

Jimena has been managing director of German Centre Mexico since 2018 and is currently a board member of the German Mexican chamber

of Industry and Trade. She is also a member of the German Mexican business women circle established by the German Embassy. During the past 16 years in Mexico and at the German Centre, she has acquired hands-on experience directly related to German small and medium-sized businesses establishing and doing business in Mexico. Being bicultural political scientist in the business world, supports the bridging work that identifies the German Centres worldwide when entering new markets. Establishing sustainable connections and always looking for innovative collaborations are key ingredients of the success recipe that, combined with a solid market and political knowledge, have made her a long-time partner within the network.

Dr Alejandro Márquez-Velázquez

DAAD Visiting Professor, UNAM

Alejandro holds a PhD in Economics from the Freie Universität Berlin, where he researched the impacts of the real exchange rate and technology on economic growth. He earned a master's degree in International and Development Economics from the Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft (HTW) Berlin, and a bachelor's degree in Economics from the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas. Currently, he is on leave from his position as a research associate in economics at the Institute for Latin American Studies of Freie Universität Berlin. He specializes in the real exchange rate and economic growth, focusing on Latin America. Additionally, he is an active member of the Institute of New Economic Thinking Young Scholars Initiative (YSI).

Dr Alfonso Martínez Muñoz

Minister for Environment of the State of Nuevo León, Mexico

Alfonso earned his Dr. sc. agr. at George August University Göttingen, with a scholarship from the DAAD. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the College of Natural Resources at Utah State University and a specialization course in urban and industrial environmental management in Singapore. He served as a professor and Dean of the Forestry College at the University of Nuevo León. Additionally, he was responsible for R&D at Promotora Ambiental S.A.B. de C.V. and served as the federal environmental delegate for Nuevo León.

Dr Juan Muñoz Saldaña

Scientific Ambassador, Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung / CINVESTAV Campus Querétaro, Instituto Politécnico Nacional)

Juan obtained his Dr.-Ing. degree from the Technical University of Hamburg-Harburg (2001) as a DAAD scholarship holder. He is Full Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at Cinvestav in Queretaro, and since 2019 national researcher level III of the SNI, member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences and of the Latin American Academy of Sciences. He leads a large research group at Cinvestav (Multifunctional Ceramics Group) and the National Laboratory of Thermal Spraying of Mexico. Climate, environment, circular economy, and energy are part of the main focus of his research in materials science. Juan has been appointed as a scientific ambassador of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He was distinguished with the Georg Foster Fellowship of the same foundation for research activities at the German Aerospace Center (DLR) in Cologne, Germany from 2015-2018.

Daniela Nuñez Zurita

Public Diplomacy and Communication Officer, Embassy the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Mexico

Daniela holds a masters on International Relations and a bachelors on Latin American studies, both by Leiden University in the Netherlands. Since September 2023 she is the Public Diplomacy and Communications officer of the Netherlands Embassy in Mexico City. Born and raised in Mexico City, she has lived in Belgium, Brazil, United States, and the Netherlands. She has worked at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs for over 8 years, ranging from consular help to trade promotion and logistics & support. In her free time she enjoys reading, visiting cafés, live shows, and traveling.

Prof Dr Yoana Pérez Badell

Vice-dean at the Faculty of Chemistry, University of Havana

Yoana was born and grew up in Havana, Cuba. She is the vice-dean for Research, Graduate Studies and International Affairs at the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Havana. The Faculty of Chemistry is an institution in the university for study and research in the field of chemistry. It is recognized as leading research in diverse areas of fundamental and applied chemistry. She is Professor in the Department of Physical Chemistry and did her PhD in Chemistry at the University of Havana. Her research interests include Theoretical and Computational Chemistry. She has carried out several collaborations with the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, ETH Zürich, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Oxford University, Universität Bremen, among others. She has international experience working in foreign

projects for research funded by DAAD, The Royal Society of Great Britain and ERASMUS+ KA171.

Dr Ivan S. Razo Zapata

Chief Technology Officer, COCOA Collaborative Innovation B.V.

Ivan is a computer scientist with experience in business informatics, artificial intelligence, service innovation, blockchain, and smart electricity grids. He holds a PhD in Science from VU University Amsterdam. He has been researcher at the Artificial Intelligence Lab of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and at the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology. He has also been a visiting professor at Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de Mexico and lecturer at Tecnológico de Monterrey. His research on the application of multiagent systems to smart electricity grids received the Best Demo Award at the International Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems. He is co-founder and Chief Technology Officer at COCOA Collaborative Innovation BV, a company based in Delft (The Netherlands) that provides advice on the design and implementation of solutions that employ digital technologies to promote action for adaptation to climate change and catalyze the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Prof Dr Julieta Rojo Medina

Scientific Counselor, Mexican Embassy in Berlin

Julieta graduated from UNAM and is a hematologist with a Magna cum Laude PhD from the University of Cologne, Germany, where she studied as a DAAD scholarship holder. She has been a professor at the Faculty of Medicine at UNAM for over 25 years and has been a member of the National Researchers System (SNI) for 18 years. She has completed two sabbatical years and four research stays as an invited professor at

the University of Cologne, Germany. Julieta has participated in APEC and PAHO meetings concerning health politics from 2014 to 2019. She is a member of the Mexican Academy of Surgery and the National Academy of Medicine. Throughout her career, she has received several awards and was honored by the German government with the Cross of the Order of Merit in 2015. From 2008 to 2019, she served as the General Director of the National Center of Blood Transfusion at the Ministry of Health in Mexico. Since 2019, she has been a Scientific Advisor at the Mexican Embassy in Germany.

Tony Argelio Rojas Gil

General Director for Project Execution Abroad, Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID)

Tony Rojas holds a master's degree in Strategic Planning and Technology Management. In addition, he has accreditations, certifications and diplomas from Harvard Business School, Lakehead University in Canada, and Boston University. As part of his professional career, he was a specialist in Processes and Strategic Planning for the United Nations Development Program in Mexico and worked for the government of the State of Puebla as Director of Open Government and General Director of Information Technology. Among his main achievements, he reduced the technological backlog in Puebla from 25 to three years, being awarded first place in the category of Government Innovation, granted by CIAPEM; also, he positioned the state in first place nationally in open data and citizen participation, according to the 2018 INAI Metrics; that same year, Tony received the national award “Gob.Mx” for the best open data strategy and implementation in the country, and developed Puebla Activa, the first open data platform in

Latin America for post-earthquake reconstruction. After holding the position of Director of Cooperation for Economic Development, he currently assumes the General Directorate of Project Execution Abroad of AMEXCID.

Suvi Roponen

Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Mexico

Before coming to Mexico in 2023, Suvi Roponen was Political Assistant at the Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) for Economic and Global Affairs. She also worked as an Advisor in the EEAS Strategic Policy Planning Division, in the Office of the President of the United Nations General Assembly and in the EU Delegation in New York. Earlier in her career she was a member of the Cabinet of the EU High Representative. She has also worked in the EU Regional Delegations in Thailand and Mauritius. She is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School.

Edgar Mauricio Ruíz López

Structural Engineer, Deutsche Bahn México

Edgar Mauricio is a Civil Engineer with experience in engineering Design, project and construction management within various sectors as Industrial facilities, Oil & Gas and Railway. From 2014 to 2016 was awarded a DAAD Scholarship to study a master's degree in computational mechanics at the University of Stuttgart. In his current role as the Engineering Design Team leader for Deutsche Bahn Engineering & Consulting, he fosters the formation of sound railway engineering capacities to support the LATAM region in current and coming transport challenges.

Dr Kai Sicks

Secretary General, DAAD

Kai Sicks was born in 1976 and studied German Studies and Political Sciences in Frankfurt/Main, Cologne and Vienna. In 2008 he completed his Ph.D. in German Literary Studies. He was a research scholarship holder at the German Historic Institute in Washington, D.C. and at Cornell University (USA). From 2008 until 2013 he acted as coordinator of the European PhD Network in Literary and Cultural Studies (PhDnet) at the International Graduate Center for the Study of Culture (University of Giessen) with partner organizations in Bergamo, Helsinki, Lissabon and Stockholm. In 2013 Kai became managing director of the Bonn Graduate Center, the central service unit for early-career researchers at the University of Bonn. As of 2017, he was appointed as director of the University of Bonn's International Office. In this position, he co-authored the University of Bonn's Excellence Strategy and acted as Bonn's project manager of the European University of Brain and Technology (NeurotechEU). In April 2021 Kai Sicks was appointed as Secretary General of DAAD.

Rubisel Velázquez Lugo

Deputy Director General, Agro Groppo

Rubisel has a career of 15 years with a sound knowledge on international trade policy and regulatory aspects, as well as on the functioning of international organizations. He was part of Mexico's negotiating team in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), in the Pacific Alliance, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the modernization of the EU-Mexico Trade Agreement, and negotiations with EFTA, the UK, among others. He served as Secretary of the USMCA' Mexican section and

served as Director General of International Trade Rules in the Ministry of Economy, where he designed and implemented strategies on international trade negotiations on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, and Good Regulatory Practices, among others. He is currently deputy general director at Agro Groppo, a company dedicated to the production and commercialization of food in the agri-food sector. He has a M.A in European Studies (public and private management) from Hochschule Bremen, Germany, a BA in International Business from the Instituto Politécnico Nacional and a Certificate on Project Management Practice in Sydney, Australia from the Australian Pacific College.

María del Carmen Villegas Hernández

Counselor of the Vice Chancellor on Research and Postgraduate Studies Office, Instituto Politécnico Nacional

María del Carmen obtained a bachelor's degree in Chemistry Bacteriology and Parasitology of the Instituto Politécnico Nacional. Her post graduate studies were carried out, at the Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas of the IPN, where she obtained the degree of Master in Sciences with specialty in Microbiology. Later, at the Université Claude Bernard Lyon I, she obtained the Diplôme d'Études Approfondies (DEA) in Microbial Ecology, and her Ph. D. degree in Microbial Ecology. She has worked as a specialized translator, being also the Founder and CEO of a Mexican specialized service company, Helyx Affaires. She has worked as a Professor and Researcher at the postgraduate and undergraduate levels, in different academic units of the IPN and private universities. She held the position of Academic and Research Deputy Director of the Centro de Investigación en Biotecnología Aplicada del IPN, from where

she promoted and coordinated the creation of the first networking postgraduate program of the IPN, the Ph. D. in Biotechnology program. María del Carmen held the position of Coordinator of Institutional Programs at IPN, and currently works as Counselor of the Vice Chancellor on Research and Postgraduate Studies Office.

Organizers

Dr Katharina Fleckenstein

Director for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, DAAD Regional Office Mexico City



Katharina Fleckenstein started working at the German Academic Exchange Service in June 2009. Since June 2019 she is heading the regional DAAD office in Mexico City and the Information Point in San José, Costa Rica. From 2016 until 2019 she was head of section for DAAD scholarship programs in North Africa and the Middle East. She was seconded to DAAD in Afghanistan from 2014 to 2016 as senior advisor in a joint project “Academic Mining Education in Afghanistan” with the GIZ. Her academic background is Religious and Islamic Studies at University of Erfurt and University of Exeter, UK. She earned her doctoral degree on the topic “Continuity and Change in Islamic Education for Women in Pakistan”. During her studies she was a scholarship holder of the Interdisciplinary Forum of Religion of the University of Erfurt as well as the German Academic Scholarship Foundation.

Silvia Stieffermann

Deputy Director and Head of Marketing, DAAD Regional Office Mexico City



Silvia Stieffermann holds a Master's degree in German philology, musicology, systematic theology, as well as in Spanish linguistics and German as a foreign language from the Universities of Cologne and Potsdam in Germany. She also studied literature at the University of Valladolid, Spain. In March 2019 she joined DAAD Mexico. Previously, she has worked as a lecturer for two years for DAAD at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City. She is a proud alumna of the Erasmus Scholarship Program of the European Union and DAAD itself.

Alejandro Cadena Ramos

Alumni Coordinator, DAAD Regional Office Mexico City



Alejandro is working at DAAD Mexico since August 2017. He holds a B.A. in International Relations by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and is an authorized teacher of German as a Foreign Language also by the UNAM. He has experience in the Mexican public and diplomatic sector, having worked at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as an internship in the Mexican Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His main areas of interest are international cooperation in education and research, as well as political science and music.

Imprint

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