



# PGP

Postgraduate Programme  
for Sustainability  
Cooperation

Your gateway to a career in  
international cooperation for  
development and sustainability



Knowledge. Research. Network



# IDOS

German Institute  
of Development  
and Sustainability



## Background

To ensure our shared planetary future, we must transform social, political, and economic systems to meet the needs of present and future generations. Our societies' complex interconnections and interdependencies necessitate developing joint and collective sustainable solutions.

In response to global challenges, the field of international cooperation has undergone significant transformation in recent years. Previously, development policy focused mainly on knowledge transfer and financial aid. Today, international experts work professionally and collaboratively to tackle global challenges and support partners in designing and implementing their own problem-solving strategies.

New challenges are continuously emerging, and shifts in global power dynamics and growing criticism of the sector for maintaining post-colonial power structures come on top. Amidst changing conditions in various world regions and increased systemic competition, partnership-based cooperation has become more crucial than ever.

Our postgraduate programme is designed to prepare you for this evolving professional landscape. Join us to gain the skills and knowledge needed to drive meaningful change and create sustainable solutions for our world's most pressing issues.



## What is the Postgraduate Programme for Sustainability Cooperation?

In our Postgraduate Programme for Sustainability Cooperation (PGP), participants learn cooperation competencies for transnational and international cooperation to jointly shape sustainable futures.

The PGP enhances competencies of master's graduates aspiring a career in international cooperation for development and sustainability. Each year, we select 18 people for our 9-month programme.

What we offer:

- **Comprehensive Perspective:** Gain a 360-degree perspective on global cooperation.
- **Unique Learning Environment:** Work in an environment that emphasizes intensive teamwork, a high degree of participant involvement, and collaboration with our international partners. Conduct research in a team under the guidance of experienced IDOS researchers on current questions and real-world challenges in international cooperation.
- **From Research to Policy:** Learn from our experience at IDOS on how to provide theory-led and empirically based policy advice to political decision-making.
- **Career Orientation:** Benefit from individualised coaching, career trainings, and our personal contacts to main actors in the field of international cooperation.
- **International Networks:** Establish connections with future decision-maker from emerging global powers (MGG) and from African countries (Shaping Futures). We consider fostering mutual exchange within trust-based networks as fundamental for international cooperation.
- **Valuable Alumni Network:** Build personal networks with our alumni working in different professions in the field of international cooperation.

*"IDOS provides the ideal preparation for a professional career in international cooperation. The combination of academic knowledge, practical relevance and global networking with organisations has opened numerous doors for me over the years."*

**Achim Steiner (participant 21st PGP)**

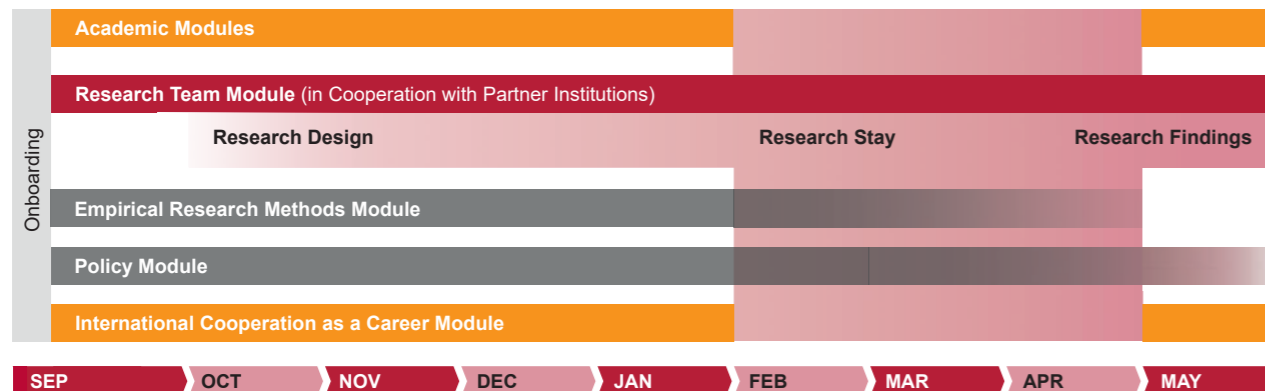
UN Under Secretary-General  
Head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)





## Schedule of the 61<sup>st</sup> PGP 2025/26

The programme comprises the following modules:



## 61<sup>st</sup> Postgraduate Programme

Our 61<sup>st</sup> PGP starts on 1 September and runs for a period of nine months. The PGP takes place in Bonn. It includes a three months research stay abroad.

The research team is at the heart of our programme. This core component involves preparing and implementing an empirical research project that offers policy advice, all in close collaboration with partner institutions. To equip you with the necessary methodological skills, we additionally provide a comprehensive module on empirical research methods.

You will also participate in ten intensive three-day academic modules, gaining insights into fundamental topics in international cooperation and engaging with current issues related to development and sustainability. Our policy module includes a simulation game, where you will experience government negotiations. Moreover, you will learn how to provide policy advice based on your own empirical research.

The module on international cooperation as a career provides specific advice on possible career paths and individual competencies for the professional field. Through personal contacts to key actors in international cooperation, the Postgraduate Programme is a gateway to a career in this sector.



*“Engaging in practice-oriented seminars, participating in exciting discussions with individuals passionate about global cooperation, and contributing to interdisciplinary research projects at IDOS was truly enjoyable. I enjoyed the diverse training, which offered me the ideal start for my career.”*

**Lea Stuff (participant 50th PGP)**  
Project Management KfW



## Who is the programme for?

- Good to very good Master's degree in economics, social sciences (e.g. political science/international relations, sociology, development studies, social anthropology, regional sciences, social science-oriented sustainability research) or 2nd state examination in law or 1st state examination teaching degree.
- Qualifying degree must have been completed within the 5 years preceding the start of the course.
- English language skills (C1); proficiency in German (C1) is desired; good knowledge of another widely used language (preferably a UN language or Portuguese) is an asset.
- German or EU citizenship (including Schengen area) or persons with a permanent residence permit for Germany or EU.
- Stays in or transnational life connections to Africa, Asia and Latin America are an asset (e.g. internships, voluntary services, work or study visits).
- Personal motivation to work in global cooperation for sustainable development.

Even if, at first glance, your CV does not seem to point straight to the programme at IDOS, we encourage you to apply. We know that life experiences are diverse. Perhaps internships or stays abroad were not possible or your studies were prolonged due to COVID-19, finances or health issues. Diversity of experience enriches our professional field.

The application period for the programme starting on September 1st is annually between December and March. Application is possible with a transcript of records. The grade for the Master's degree can be submitted by August 31. We look forward to receiving your application!



*„Through the Postgraduate-Programme, I am part of an extensive network that not only includes my research team but also the alumni from previous cohorts. I have successfully utilized this network for my entry into the professional world and continue to benefit from the diverse contacts to this day.“*

**Felix Paffhausen (participant 58th PGP)**  
KfW Project Management

## Scholarship

The programme is free of charge. All participants receive a scholarship of € 1,500 per month. IDOS covers additional costs for the research stays.





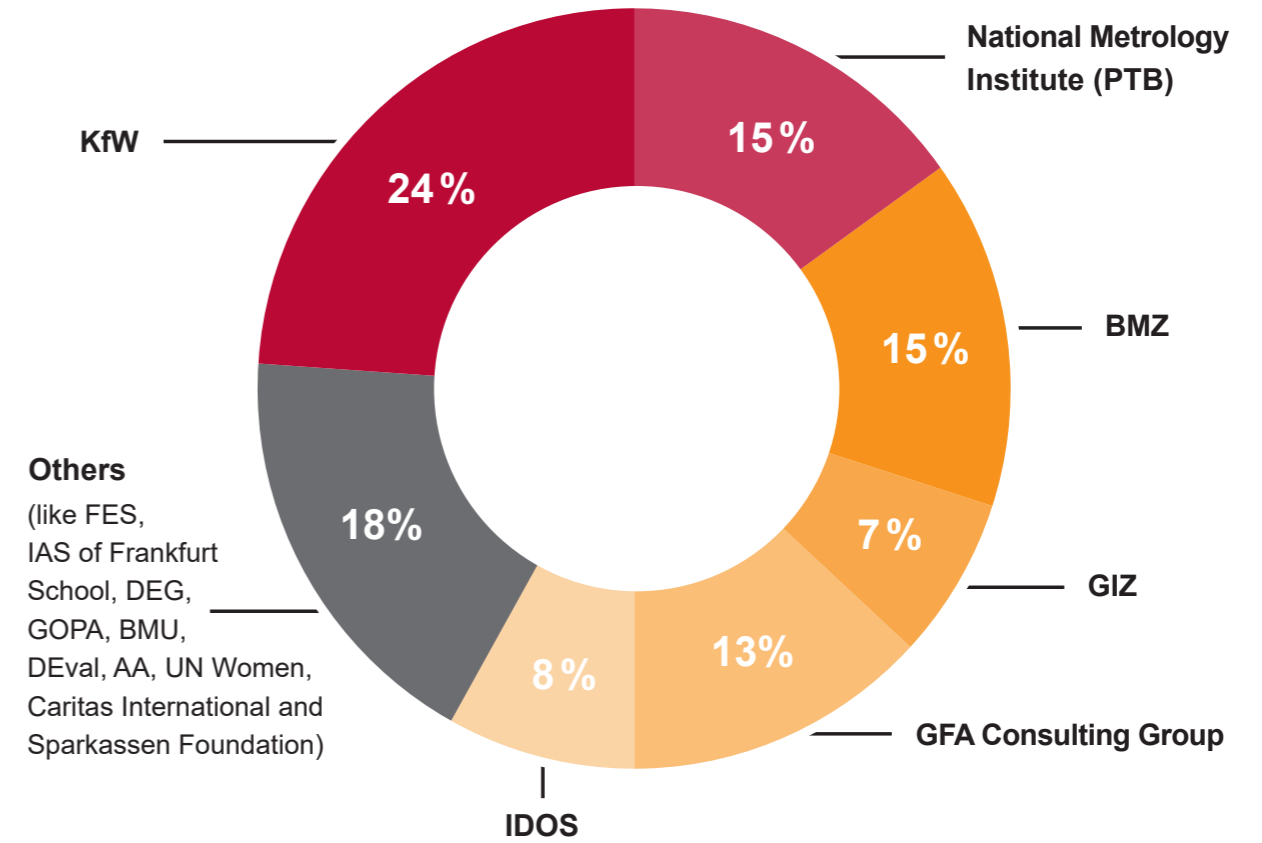
## Benefits for Participants – through your participation, you ...

- ideally prepare for a professional career in international cooperation;
- strengthen your personal and professional competencies;
- expand your knowledge on sustainable global development;
- reflect your positionality and privileges in a world shaped inequalities and postcolonial power structures;
- engage with real-life sustainability challenges;
- gain insights into the interface of research, policy advice and practice;
- become part of our valuable networks.

... OUR RESEARCH TEAMS HAVE COLLABORATED WITH PARTNER INSTITUTIONS WORLDWIDE, INCLUDING IN...



... OUR GRADUATES FROM THE 49TH-59TH PGP FOUND THEIR CAREER STARTS HERE:





## Become part of our network

After the successful participation in the PGP, you are part of our IDOS alumni network, consisting of around 1,000 former participants. Our alumni work in a wide variety of international cooperation institutions. Many alumni are also actively involved in our programme, for example by contributing to the programme as mentors or providing orientation on career paths in their institutions.



## How to apply?

The application period for the PGP each year is between December and March; applications are possible through our portal within this period. After a careful internal pre-selection, 48 candidates are given the opportunity to personally present themselves as part of the main digital selection process. An expert committee composed of researchers and practitioners decides on admission to the programme, taking particular account of the applicants' professional qualification, social competences, including the ability to work in a team, and motivation for the professional field.

### Application period for the 61<sup>st</sup> PGP:

<b>Application period:</b>	January 2025 – March 2025
<b>Internal preselection:</b>	May 2025
<b>Main selection:</b>	June 2025
<b>Start of 61st PGP:</b>	1 September 2025

*„Through the Postgraduate Programme, I was able to gain a comprehensive overview of potential employers and career paths in the field of international cooperation. This helped me to gain a better understanding of my professional goals.“*

**Saskia Metz (participant 58th PGP)**  
Advocacy Officer Kindernothilfe e.V.



## Contact



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 [www.idos-research.de/en/training/postgraduate-programme/](http://www.idos-research.de/en/training/postgraduate-programme/)

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 *German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)*

 [www.youtube.com/DIE\\_IDOS\\_research](http://www.youtube.com/DIE_IDOS_research)