

ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

on behalf of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU), and the International Association of World Heritage Professionals (IAWHP e.V.), we are pleased to announce the

International Alumni Conference

“70 Years of the Hague Convention: Learning from the Past and Present for the Future”

as part of the DAAD programme:

Alumni Programme for the Further Education and Retention of International Alumni from Industrialized Countries (AA) 2025

Timeline:

- **1 August – 23 November 2025:** Online preparation phase (monthly Zoom meetings)
- **24 – 29 November 2025:** In-person conference in Cottbus, Germany

Application deadline: 8th August 2025

Conference Aims and Content

The project **“70 Years of the Hague Convention: Learning from the Past and Present for the Future”** aims to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and to critically assess and, if necessary, update its relevance in today’s world.

The increasing number of armed conflicts and disasters worldwide underscores the urgency of intensifying efforts to protect cultural property and to develop modern strategies and response measures.

The project will:

- Provide a comprehensive understanding of international cultural property protection under the Hague Convention.
- Foster international dialogue and cooperation between BTU and its alumni.

- Serve as a platform for alumni and experts from German and international institutions to exchange insights, develop emergency response plans, and create sustainable protection strategies.

Conference activities include:

- **Seminars** on current case studies, emergency measures, disaster scenarios, and protection strategies directly related to the Hague Convention.
- **Workshops** on practical applications of emergency measures in disaster situations.
- **Excursions** to cultural heritage sites in Berlin and Cottbus, complemented by group work linking theory and practice.
- **Networking events** with representatives from academia, public institutions, civil society, and politics.

Programme objectives:

- Promote interdisciplinary and international dialogue between BTU and its alumni.
- Increase awareness and knowledge of the Hague Convention and current protection strategies.
- Strengthen alumni connections to the university and foster professional exchange.
- Develop practical, sustainable strategies for protecting cultural property.

Expected outcomes:

- Enhance alumni capabilities to identify and document cultural heritage in crisis situations.
- Create and distribute best practices, emergency management protocols, and protection strategies within cultural institutions.
- Build a lasting professional network to support long-term exchange and cooperation in heritage protection.

Tentative Conference Programme

Online Preparation

To ensure participants are well-prepared, a structured approach will be followed:

- **August:** An introductory meeting to present the conference goals, preparation plan, and participant roles.
- Participants will receive a reading list and be assigned to one of 3–4 thematic groups (e.g., history, current challenges, future perspectives) and act as “topic experts” during the event.

- Optional follow-up meetings can be arranged to clarify questions.
- One month prior to the in-person event, a second mandatory meeting will review group progress and provide logistical updates.

In-Person Conference (24–30 November 2025, Cottbus)

The in-person component includes lectures, workshops, excursions, and networking. Topics will include disaster management, the current relevance of the Hague Convention, and applied case studies (e.g., the Ukraine Art Aid Centre).

Please, find the programme draft below:

Arrival day Day 1 Mon. 24.11.25	Day 2 Tue. 25.11.25	Day 3 Wed. 26.11.25	Day 4 Thu. 27.11.25	Day 5 Fri. 28.11.25	Day 6 Sat. 29.11.25	Departure day Day 7 Sun.30.11.25
	09:00-09:30 Check-in	08:00 Check-in	09:00-09:30 Check-in	09:00-09:30 Check-in	09:00-09:30 Check-in	09:00-09:30 Check-in
Arrival by noon	09:30-12:30 Work phase Input from the BTU teaching areas Prof. J. Blokker Input from external experts	Departure to Berlin Excursion topic: past and future disaster management using the example of Berlin's Museum Island	09:30-12:00 -Group work on the excursion; preparation of initial documents -Roundtable discussion on the dialectics of war, led by Prof. Astrid Schwarz und Dr. Anca Prodan from the BTU Chair of Technoscience Studies	09:30-12:00 Keynote speech by an expert from the BKM. Afterwards Presentations and discussions with doctoral students LS Prof. Blokker and invited students of the doctoral programs	09:30-11:30 IAWHP e.V. General Meeting with ZOOM transmission	09:30-12:30 Showcases of the experts and BTU to Discussion; Formulation of a f
	12:30-14:00 Lunch (self-payer)	12:30-14:00 Lunch (self-payer)	12:30-14:00 Lunch (self-payer) in Cottbus-Branitz	12:30-14:00 Lunch (self-payer)	12:00-13:30 Lunch (self-payer)	12:30 Lunch (self-payer)
	14:00-16:00 -Workshop Practical disaster management -Panel presentations on armed conflict as context to the Hague Convention, led by Prof. Astrid Schwarz und Dr. Anca Prodan from the BTU Chair of Technoscience Studies	14:00-16:00 Group work to scenarios 1) Fire 2) (Civil) war 3) Weather events 4) Natural disasters 5) Power failure	14:00-17:00 Work phase Topic: Current challenges, using the example of Ukraine Art Aid Center	14:00-17:00 Excursion with Prof. Blokker through Cottbus on the topic: Strategies for dealing with disasters, failed measures and the impact of the convention on the ground in Cottbus	14:00-15:00 Meeting at the International Office and discussion on alumni work and prospects for expanding the BTU alumni network	Departure

15:30-16:00 Greeting BTU, AA, IAWHP e. V.	16:00-16:30 Break	Joint presentation and discussion			15:30-17:00 Campus tour on the topic "History and architectural heritage of the BTU", organized by Alumni Office	
16:00-18:00 Introduction IAWHP Motivations Expectations	16:30-18:00 Work phase Excursion preparation Group work	End of the day in Berlin		End of the day in Cottbus	From 17:00 Meeting between BTU students and alumni at Quasimono, organized by Alumni Office	
19:00 Dinner	19:00 Dinner	19:00 Late return to Cottbus	19:00 Dinner and social event	19:00 Dinner and social event	19:00 Dinner (self-paying)	

On **Days 4 and 5**, the event will coincide with **Heritage GradConnect 2025** and the **25th Anniversary of the World Heritage Studies M.A.** programme (organized by Prof. Britta Rudolff). Joint activities, including a graduation ceremony and master's thesis presentations, will be integrated into the conference.

The final programme will be published once all applications have been reviewed.
Please note, that that is necessary to participate in the whole programme: online preparation and conference in Cottbus , and social activities.

The conference participation are supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), funded primarily by the German Federal Foreign Office (AA).

Eligibility Criteria

This conference targets **alumni of German universities / research institutions** (so called German alumni), who fall under the following criteria:

- **Residence:** participants residing in industrialized countries, meaning in those NOT on the OECD DAC list (<https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/topics/policy-sub-issues/oda-eligibility-and-conditions/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2024-25-flows.pdf>)
- **Citizenship:** all citizenships are allowed, EXCEPT for German.

Note regarding Russian alumni: Funding is possible for individual alumni, but not if they hold management positions in Russian universities, the private sector, or government ministries.

Who qualifies as alumni?

- Students, graduates, researchers, or lecturers who have completed a degree at a German university or have studied, taught, or conducted research at a German institution for **at least three months**.

Applicants **temporarily** residing in industrialized countries and planning to return to DAC-listed countries are **not** eligible. However, those planning to remain long-term are eligible. When in doubt, contact us for clarification.

What are the selection Criteria?

Selected applicants will:

1. Have a background in heritage conservation, cultural management, or related fields.
2. Demonstrate relevant professional experience and interest in policy, education, or development.
3. Act as multipliers, sharing knowledge and outcomes in their regions and institutions.
4. Possess sufficient English language skills for active participation.

Cost coverage

The following expenses are covered by DAAD funds:

- International travel to and from Cottbus (economy class, up to €1,000)
- Local transportation
- Accommodation and partial living costs in Cottbus (€96/day)
- Visa fees (approx. €75)
- Entry fee to Museum Island Berlin (max. €24)

Note: All other expenses are the responsibility of participants.

Important: Only complete applications will be considered. Applicants will be notified by **mid-August 2025**.

For further questions, please contact.

Khrystyna Ahner and Caroline Schmidt
E-Mail: info@daad-alumniconference2025.de

Cottbus, July 2025