

## **ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR APPLICATION**

On behalf of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) the Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) and the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH) is organizing the

### **International Germany Alumni Seminar 2022-2023**

#### **Waste Free Climate –**

**Climate Change and Circular Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Research, Education and International Cooperation**

**The seminar is organised in two parts:**

Part 1: A series of online training seminars in 2022

Part 2: A seven day seminar in presence in April 2023

**at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City**

followed by the participation in the

**4th Mekong River Commission Summit (MRCS) 2023**

**April 2023 (TBA) in Vientiane, Lao PRD**

#### **Seminar aims**

Never before was the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change more urgent - however sometimes it is difficult to concentrate on it when there are many more issues still threatening basic societal needs. What could be better than mitigating and adapting to climate change by tackling these needs?

In order to uphold the Paris Agreement (2015) the European Action Plan puts a central role on the world-wide transformation to a circular economy. This would not only benefit the climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also enhance the hygiene in living quarters, the water quality and a sound environmental protection. By recycling organic materials and plastics, pollution can be decreased while energy and resources are won; this also includes economic benefits for structurally weak regions. An existing and well-organized waste management infrastructure is furthermore improving the resilience in case of floods as waste material can be swiftly disposed of before hygienic issues and pollution can spread, adding to an already severe situation. The recycling of resources like sand can also protect natural habitats and ecosystem services as primary resources are left untouched.

For the purpose of implementing a sound waste management system and circular economy, financial and political support is needed in the long run. Current strategies put a focus on implementing extended producer responsibility in the Global South, which would shift the waste management cost partially to the producers and hence ease the financial burden of the citizens. It is necessary to have governmental support to implement such strategies and to monitor the compliance with waste management rules. As the shipment of waste is still an issue, despite the world-wide ratification of the Basel agreement, an intergovernmental discussion of waste management issues is needed. Especially since rivers are often used as means of transportation for unwanted materials in countries without a functioning waste management. The Mekong River Commission is handling issues along the Mekong River and hence would be a good platform to regulate and thereby support waste management projects in its member states and along the river.

In preparation for the 4<sup>th</sup> Mekong River Commission Summit 2023 in Laos, the “Waste Free Climate”-workshop of the Industrial University in Ho Chi Minh City (IUH) and the Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) will focus on climate change issues and waste management / circular economy projects in the area. For this an integrative approach was chosen where every participant gets the chance to present and work on their own projects and ideas for waste management / circular economy solutions in the area. Both, small-scale pilot projects as well as large-scale implementation strategies for cities will be welcome. The project coordinators will support the participants with their own expertise and by inviting experts in the targeted fields. However, the greatest benefit will be achieved by the active contribution of all participants, who since their graduation have already won experience of their own.

Within four online sessions in 2022 the participants and the project team will pin-point current hot spots for circular economy in the region by working on the issues addressed by the participants (first two sessions) and then jointly develop a position paper with the project team. This position paper will be given to the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to inform them on current barriers in waste management and benefits in case these barriers will arise and need to be addressed. Furthermore, suggestions will be made on how these barriers could be overcome. In Spring 2023, Alumni participants and the project team will meet in Ho Chi Minh City for a six day training workshop. The ideas in the position paper will be further improved by visiting waste management sites, the Mekong river as well as by conducting interviews with experts and locals. Directly after the workshop, the Alumni and the project team will travel to the 4<sup>th</sup> Mekong River Commission Summit 2023 in Laos.

The seminars and conference visit are offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in the framework of the programme Alumni Special Projects ([www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects](http://www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects)). The International Germany Alumni Seminar is organized and hosted by the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City and the Technische Universität Dresden. The costs will be mainly covered by funds from the DAAD provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The seminar is scheduled in the run-up to the 4<sup>th</sup> Mekong River Commission Summit in Laos (<https://mrcsummit.org/>).

## Tentative Programme

### **2022 and January 2023 (ONLINE):**

- Four online training seminars will be held in April, July, October 2022 and in January 2023. Duration of each online seminar training will be approximately between 4-8h.
- **Online training seminar 1 in April:**
  - relation between circular economy and climate change
  - current status of the waste management / circular economy in the Mekong River Area compared to the rest of the world
  - 15 presentations, presented by the participants on the following topics: the fields of organic / plastic waste or structural management of waste management systems (e. g. logistics, financing, regulation, social awareness); followed by (group) discussions regarding those issues
  - **After the seminar small group tasks will be given out to groups working on similar projects**
- **Online training seminar 2 in July:**
  - Short presentation on the personal projects and tasks from the January session

- external experts will be invited to give an online presentation on related topics (most likely but not fixed: plastics, organic waste and financing of waste management systems)
- **Online training seminar 3 in October 2022 and online training seminar 4 in January 2023:**
  - writing a joint position paper for the MRC with the main question in mind: Which issues are currently hindering the regional circular economy and the respective benefits?
  - The outline will be decided on in the third meeting. Afterwards everyone (also the project team) will write a chapter for the position paper. The individual parts will have to be send to the whole group two weeks before the fourth meeting so everyone can read all parts and comment on them. Meeting four will be used to discuss the corrections made.
- **There will be also one additional joint online session with two further MRC Summit related alumni seminars of ITT Cologne and TU Dresden in the course of two days (3h per day).**

#### Training workshop in Viet Nam in March/April 2023:

- Refining the position paper by including personal experience gained in the workshop week. For this following program points will be included:
  - Two excursions to local waste management businesses
  - one field trip to Can Tho City (close to the Mekong River)
  - talking to locals to get a transdisciplinary perspective on the topic
  - expert interviews from locally active project members in the field of circular economy
  - collectively including new insights in the position paper

The exact dates for the 4th MRC Summit are not yet fixed, below you will find a preliminary schedule

8 days before MRC Summit:	Arrival in Ho-Chi-Minh City, Vietnam
Seminar days 1 - 6:	4-day training seminar in Ho Chi Minh City plus 2-day excursions to Can Tho City
1 day before MRC Summit:	Travel from Ho Chi Minh City to Vientiane, Lao PDR
4 days in April 2023:	Participation in the 4th MRC Summit 2023
1 day after the MRC Summit:	Departure of participants from Vientiane, Lao PDRs

The final programme in Ho Chi Minh City will be published once all applications have been reviewed.

#### Eligibility criteria for participation

This seminar targets Alumni of German universities

- from the riparian states of River Mekong listed on the OECD DAC list: **Myanmar, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam** (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>)
- who carried out research or studied in Germany for at least 3 months
- who are currently living and working in their home countries

You should have

- (1) a **proven background in academic fields relevant to the topics** of waste management and circular economy, climate change, 3Rs (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle), organic waste, plastic waste / pollution, environmental and sustainability science, waste treatment technologies, financing of waste

management systems and treatment plants, environmental law, governance mechanism, recycling, resource management, environmental awareness raising through participation and public communication, transboundary waste shipment regulations, capacity building,

- (2) **professional experience and personal interest in one of the following areas:** research, education, NGOs, government agencies, policy making, project development, local communities, and related stakeholders,
- (3) the **requirements to act as a potential multiplier** who will present the training seminar results in your home country and thus disseminate the acquired knowledge as well as develop ideas and projects for regional implementation,
- (4) **adequate language proficiency** which is essential to actively participate in the workshops and discussions as the seminar will be held **in English**

### **Eligibility for repeated attendances at Alumni Special Projects:**

Alumni are eligible to participate in up to two DAAD Alumni Special Projects within four years. The year of participation, not the year of application, is decisive for the calculation. (This rule does not apply for attendance in a completely digital Alumni Special Projects).

### **Cost coverage**

- International return ticket from and to airport/train station in Vietnam/Laos (lowest possible economy class airfare) – both trips max. 450 € for participants from Vietnam/Laos, max. 650 € for participants from other countries
- Train tickets (2nd class): Airport to Ho Chi Minh City – preferably Rail & Fly (included in the above budget)
- Travel health insurance and visa costs (max. 30 €)
- Accommodation and meals during the stay in Ho Chi Minh City during the seminar 2023
- Transport on excursions
- Transport from Vietnam to Laos
- Accommodation and partial living expenses during the conference stay in Laos

**Please note:** You must cover by yourself any other costs, such as transport costs between your place of residence and “your” airport, as well as travel costs for visa application in your country of residence. Please keep in mind that living expenses are only covered partly during your stay in Vietnam and Laos.

**Extensions of stays** before the seminar / after the trade fair are only possible up to 5 working days and upon submission of a comparison of flight ticket prices before you start your travel. You will have to pay any difference between the flight ticket prices for the official arrival /return date (see below) and your actual date of travel before / after your extension. You must also cover by yourself any additional travel costs, subsistence costs and other additional costs of your extension.

Extensions beyond 5 days must be of an official nature which you need to justify, e.g. through visits to universities, organizations, institutions, companies etc. and with details about contact persons and a day-to-day programme of activities. These extensions must be approved by DAAD before you start your travel. Decisions by DAAD are made on an individual nature based upon your justification, your programme etc. For any extension you need to organize your accommodation by yourself, and, very importantly, you have to make sure to have a valid health insurance for the extension days.

**It is essential that you participate in all online sessions 2022 and from the first day of the training seminar in presence 2023 in Ho Chi Minh City to the last day of the 4<sup>th</sup> Mekong River Commission Summit in Vientiane, Laos.**

## Application procedure

Your application (in English language) should emphasize your motivation and personal/professional benefit for your participation. You should illustrate how you are planning to imply the gained knowledge and what possible stakeholders for collaboration you may identify for your professional career.

**Your application (in English language) must include the following documents in one single pdf file:**

- A filled out application form: The form is available on [https://tu-dresden.de/bu/umwelt/hydro/iak/forschung/forschungsprojekte/projekte\\_aktuell\\_abfallw](https://tu-dresden.de/bu/umwelt/hydro/iak/forschung/forschungsprojekte/projekte_aktuell_abfallw)
- A short CV with photograph and relevant documentation of Alumni status.
- An abstract on a personal project of interest or challenge one is currently facing in the field of waste management/circular economy and possible benefits for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The main topics are listed above; abstracts must not exceed 1-1.5 pages; please use font type "Arial", font size 11, 1.5 line spacing.
- A short description of your present duties/position and your personal professional goals, indicating your envisaged field of activities and duty level.
- An overview on seminars, workshops or conferences visited in Germany after finishing your studies in Germany.

**The PDF-document should be named 'Last name\_First name\_country' (e.g. Meier\_Mara\_Germany).**

**Please send your application, as one single pdf file via email to: [isla\\_marie.hodgkinson@tu-dresden.de](mailto:isla_marie.hodgkinson@tu-dresden.de)**

**Please note: Completeness of personal data mentioned in the online application form will affect your eligibility as a participant.**

After the review by the local organizing committee and DAAD, the invited participants will be notified in March 2022.

## Special Note

Given the world-wide pandemic and the current status of uncertainty of its development, DAAD will decide in due course to replace the event by an online version. This will imply modifications of the programme which will be announced to the participants.

**For further questions**, please contact Isla Hodgkinson ([isla\\_marie.hodgkinson@tu-dresden.de](mailto:isla_marie.hodgkinson@tu-dresden.de), +49 351 463-44127)

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