

DONOR HARMONISATION GROUP FORUM 2022

“Creating reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships to respond to local and global challenges”

23-25 November, 2022 – Barcelona, Spain – Hosted by OBREAL Global

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Objective of the DHG Forum is to share expertise and experiences, to enhance co-operation among donors and capacity development programmes implementing agencies, or relevant resource organisations like the International Association of Universities, the World Bank, UNESCO, the AAU and others.

Initially the DHG was set up to bring the Paris Declaration (2005) into practice, hence the name *donor harmonisation*. However, at the first meeting in Scheveningen in 2010, that objective proved to be unrealistic as most educational co-operation programmes had a strong reciprocal benefit policy. But the idea of trying to prevent overlap in activities, to find ways to collaborate with each other, and share expertise and experiences formed a solid basis for these annual meetings. The initiative for the first meeting in 2009 was taken by both the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and Nuffic.

The organising committee for the DHG in 2022 consists of representatives of HK-dir (Ingvild Hope, Hilde Haaland-Kramer and Hilde Granås Kjøstvedt) and OBREAL Global (Elizabeth Colucci, Nicolas Patrici, Ramon Torrent) as the host organisation. All communication to members and registered participants will go through OBREAL Global, which has created an event website.

The location of the DHG Forum changes annually. The past 10 meetings took place in Scheveningen, Bergen, Madrid, Bonn, Helsinki, Brussels, Vienna, Stockholm, Copenhagen and London. In 2021 the 11th DHG Forum took place in Basel, Switzerland. Because of Covid-19, the DHG Forum was arranged as two webinars in 2020. OBREAL Global, supported by other Barcelona-based educational and research organisations, has offered to host the 2022 forum in Barcelona, and link it to an important policy dialogue meeting which will facilitate the participation of several international development cooperation partners from Africa, Latin America, India and Southeast Asia.

TOPIC 2022: CREATING RECIPROCAL, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS TO RESPOND TO LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

One persistent and pressing topic in development cooperation and in higher education and research collaboration more broadly is that of mutually beneficial, sustainable partnerships. Many funding agencies have evolved their models towards those of supporting partnerships, which structure development actions and demonstrate motivation and gain on both the 'North' and 'South' side. What is more, in a survey conducted of DHG members by OBREAL Global in January 2022, as an input to the African Union-EU Summit, the majority of respondents asserted that the top priorities going forward would be a) incorporating Southern partners more systematically into programming, priority setting and evaluation of cooperation actions and, b) supporting the development of dynamic partnerships to tackle the SDGs.

The 2021 DHG Forum in Basel has been an occasion to examine in more depth some of these models, and to brainstorm on where higher education development cooperation could and should be 30 years from now (the topic of the closing session). However, there is a clear need to explore in more depth the modalities and mechanics of funding mutually beneficial partnerships. In this spirit, DHG members would be keen to engage Southern partners more actively in this conversation, and integrate them into the DHG Forum more systematically, which has in the past been difficult due to resource constraints. In the 2022 Barcelona Forum, it is proposed to change the paradigm, and organise the event in conjunction with an important activity of the host organisation – OBREAL Global – which will allow for the active, physical presence of representative higher education associations and public authorities from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and India in particular.

FORMAT

The [DHG Forum 2022](#) will take place over two days and offer a dynamic, inter-active format. Opportunities to visit Barcelona-based universities and agencies, an inter-regional dialogue forum and cultural side programmes will also be provided. The host will also be sponsoring a welcome reception, a dinner and provide for cultural and city tours, which will be optional.

Note that a [pre-day programme](#) is also being developed on inter-regional South-South dialogue, with a special focus on Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe. DHG members are also invited to this event