

A blurred, 3D-style logo of the acronym 'DFG' in white, set against a blue background with light rays and geometric patterns.

# Interdisciplinary Doctoral Training Programmes

# What is the DFG?

Germany's largest research funding organisation

## The DFG

- ▶ serves **all branches of science and the humanities** by funding research projects and facilitating cooperation among researchers
- ▶ supports the **education and advancement** of young scientific researchers
- ▶ promotes **equality** between men and women
- ▶ **advises parliaments and public authorities** on scientific matters
- ▶ fosters **relations between research and the private sector** and between **scientists and academics at home and abroad**



# What is the DFG?

Germany's central, self-governing research funding organisation

Member institutions include

- ▶ German universities (69)
- ▶ non-university research institutions (16)
- ▶ German academies of sciences and humanities (8)
- ▶ scientific associations (3)



List of members: [www.dfg.de/dfg\\_im\\_profil/struktur/gremien/mitgliederversammlung/mitglieder.html](http://www.dfg.de/dfg_im_profil/struktur/gremien/mitgliederversammlung/mitglieder.html)

# What is the DFG?

An association under German private law

The DFG is funded by

- ▶ German federal government (67%)
- ▶ German states (32.7%)
- ▶ Private sources (0.3%)\*

The DFG's 2011 budget totalled **€ 2.4 billion (= \$ 3.1 billion)**



\* Figures refer to revenues in 2011

# What does the DFG fund?

The DFG funds interdisciplinarity through programmes such as

- ▶ Collaborative Research Centres and CRC/Transregios
- ▶ DFG Research Centres
- ▶ **Research Training Groups** and International Research Training Groups
- ▶ Priority Programmes
- ▶ Research Units and Clinical Research Units

Coordinated programmes are national, international and/or interdisciplinary. They provide opportunities for cooperation with other universities and non-university research institutions (e.g. partners in industry) and bundle expertise at a university or several university locations.

# What does the DFG fund?

The DFG funds the three pillars of the Excellence Initiative

- ▶ **graduate schools**
- ▶ clusters of excellence
- ▶ institutional strategies



further information: [www.dfg.de/en/research\\_funding/coordinated\\_programmes/excellence\\_initiative/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/coordinated_programmes/excellence_initiative/index.html)

# What does the DFG fund?

The DFG funds interdisciplinary doctoral training through

## ▶ ~ 230 Research Training Groups

- 10 – 15 PhD students, ~ 10 PI
- Focused research area
- Similar to IGERT (NSF)
- Can be / should be interdisciplinary

## ▶ 45 Graduate Schools

- 50 – 500 (and even more) PhD students, 25 + x PI
- Broad research field
- Overarching generally some departments
- Have to be interdisciplinary / multidisciplinary

# Interdisciplinarity in real life

Does it work?

What makes a doctoral programme interdisciplinary?

- Interdisciplinary supervision?
- Interdisciplinary thesis / project?
- Joint publications?



# Interdisciplinarity in real life

Does it work?

## In Graduate Schools

- In most cases a disciplinary thesis is better for the careers
- No demand for hundreds of interdisciplinary projects in one research area
- Interdisciplinary discussions help PhD students to find their disciplinary identity
- Better projects and better research because of exchange of methods, theory, and even results
- Ideas for new projects in the own discipline / field

# Interdisciplinarity in real life

Does work

## Conclusion

- Interdisciplinary doctoral education does makes sense
- The success depends on the goals / the benchmarks



DFG

**Thank you for your attention**

**For more information**

- ▶ on the DFG: [www.dfg.de/en/](http://www.dfg.de/en/)
- ▶ on DFG-funded projects: [www.dfg.de/gepris/](http://www.dfg.de/gepris/)
- ▶ on over 17,000 German research institutes: [www.dfg.de/research\\_explorer/](http://www.dfg.de/research_explorer/)