



DIGITAL INITIATIVE FOR AFRICAN CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE (DIGI-FACE)



Project meeting in Oldenburg, July 2023 (© University of Oldenburg)



DIGI-FACE centre admin training in Accra, September 2023 (© DIGI-FACE)

FOCUS AND CHALLENGES ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

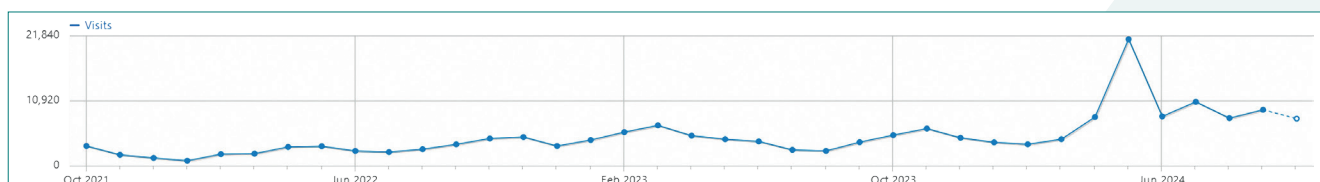
The project focuses on supporting DAAD-funded African Centres of Excellence in adopting digital teaching and learning opportunities while fostering stronger networks and increasing the impact of their academic activities within and across disciplines. The Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence (DIGI-FACE) aims to meet the

diverse needs of participating centres and their affiliated universities, which vary in their levels of experience with e-learning and blended learning. Bringing together academics, staff, students, and alumni from different disciplines and linguistic backgrounds presents both challenges and opportunities for mutual enrichment.

OBJECTIVES AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

At the heart of the project's aims is the platform based on WordPress and Moodle integration. The platform is continuously adapted to the needs of the centres. In order to support the centres in the use of e-learning, the project has developed interdisciplinary modules that are regularly offered to and adopted by the centres. In addition, through capacity-building modules and training, multipliers in the centres are enabled to create, modify and teach modules according to the

needs of the centre. Multipliers are also trained in the use and management of all centre-related areas of the platform. Project meetings are held every 6-8 weeks to assess project progress. For implementation, we hold a weekly co-ordination team meeting to co-ordinate specific tasks. We believe that transparent and shared project documentation and regular communication are key to a beneficial partnership and the achievement of goals.



Chronology of platform visits since launch in October 2021 (© DIGI-FACE)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

Since the launch of the DIGI-FACE platform in October 2021, academics, staff, students and alumni from the Centres of Excellence have been using the platform to connect and collaborate. DIGI-FACE serves 52 universities from more than 25 countries in Africa, South America and Asia. Since the beginning of 2024, the platform has had well over 80,000 visits to date, with most visits coming from Kenya, followed by Ghana, Germany, Niger and South Africa. More than 3,900 users are registered on the platform, with around 1,650 affiliated to a Centre of Excellence for Africa and others to the DAAD Global Centres for Climate and for Health. Since its inception, DIGI-FACE has developed and regularly offered 11 generic modules as well as training on the production of e-learning materials. The platform boasts 466 blog posts, highlighting the active participation and contribution of its users, which has fostered a vibrant

academic community. The 53 research publications from the centres show the wide range of scientific topics, reflecting the diverse interests and expertise of the DIGI-FACE community.



Regional Moodle training in Eldoret, October 2023 (© Moi University)

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

Over the past few months, the DIGI-FACE team has taken an important step towards securing the future of the platform. As we approach the end of the current DAAD project funding phase in December 2025, we recognise the need to move beyond time-bound project funding. We are delighted to announce that DIGI-FACE

has successfully applied to the call for proposals to provide online modules for the DAAD's In-Country/In-Region Scholarship Programme in sub-Saharan Africa. For this, DIGI-FACE is providing three online modules focused on academic skills development over the next six years.



Karlien Potgieter and Elmien Waring with Dorothee Weyler, Director DAAD Regional Office Eastern Africa at e-learning Africa Conference in Kigali, 2024 (© DIGI-FACE)



Training with centre CEMEREM in Port Elizabeth, 2024 (© Nelson Mandela University)

DAAD-FUNDING: Since 2019

PARTNER COUNTRIES: South Africa

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