ÖAW AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

AROUND THE WORLD

THE INTERNATIONALITY OF THE AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

HEINZ FASSMANN AND BERNHARD PLUNGER

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FOREWORD

The Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW) is internationally networked and opens the door to Europe and far beyond through a wide range of activities. It is a scientific bridge builder and a promoter of international research. And not just now, but since its foundation over 3 years ago. From the very beginning, the Academy has been involved in important, increasingly global and forward-looking research in the key areas of the humanities and natural sciences. It participated – just to remind you – in the circumnavigation of the earth by the frigate "Novara" (1857–1859), in the Austro-Hungarian North Pole Expedition (1872–1874) and the interdisciplinary "South Arabian Expedition" (1898–1899).

This brochure, written under the leadership of Bernhard Plunger, Head of the International Relations Department, provides information on the international activities of the Austrian Academy of Sciences today. It makes it clear that the OeAW is not only promoting internationalisat ion for its own institution, but for the science and research system in Austria as a whole. To this end, this report looks in detail at the origins of the OeAW's employees, the members of the learned society, the institutional links with foreign academies, the JESH mobility program and, finally, the scientific and foreign policy significance of the institutes and branch offices.

This document does not claim to be exhaustive. Rather, it offers a cursory insight into the diverse international anchoring of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. It is intended as a signal to Austrian stakeholders and the international research community and is intended to demonstrate the potential of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as a strategic partner and scientific-diplomatic bridgehead.

HeinzF assmann,Pr esident of the OeAW. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

Bernhard Plunger,H ead of the International Relations Department of the OeAW. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

SCIENCE IS GLOBAL

The rules of honest research apply everywhere and the theories and empirical results are universal. Hardly any other social subsystem is as unbounded as science and research. The universally understood technical languages support this process, as do the diverse institutional and personal relationships that extend far beyond the respective national borders.

The dissolution of boundaries at the level of the European Union (EU) is particularly advanced. The European Research Area (ERA) is explicitly mentioned in the European Unification Treaties, the mobility of researchers and students is actively supported, the standardization of tertiary education ("Bologna architecture") is an important structural prerequisite for this and the installation of long-term funding structures (research framework programmes) supports European research. In addition, there are diverse and shared infrastructures and institutions – such as CERN, the European Space Agency (ESA) or the European Southern Observatory (ESO) – which make it clear that research has long since ceased to adhere to national borders. And if one looks back in the history of science and considers the diversity of medieval and modern universities, then it must be said that science and research have always been international in the modern sense.

The Austrian Academy of Sciences supports these processes of dissolution of boundaries and sees its cooperation as a central instrument for strengthening Austria in the world as a knowledge society and innovation location. It thus makes a contribution to science diplomacy, but also creates a prerequisite for excellent and internationally networked basic research.

Illustration: Adobe Stock

THE BEST MINDS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

The first perspective on the international dimension of the OeAW focuses on its staff and members. Where do the researchers employed by the research institution come from and what international roots characterize the learned society? This inventory analysis is differentiated according to employment groups for researchers and according to membership categories for members.

RESEARCHERS FROM 66 COUNTRIES

The Austrian Academy of Sciences currently (2025) employs around 1,900 people, including the independent institutes IMBA – Institute of Molecular Biotechnology, GMI – Gregor Mendel Institute of Molecular Plant Biology, CeMM – Research Center for Molecular Medicine and AITHYRA – Research Institute for Biomedial Artificial Intelligence. In any case, the number fluctuates depending on third-party funding, recruitment and departures. Of these 1,900 people, around 1,100 are academic staff and 800 are non-academic staff.

The count of academic staff shows that 58 % do not have Austrian citizenship and are therefore immigrants in most cases. This is undoubtedly a high figure, but it is easy to explain. The Austrian Academy of Sciences is looking for the "best minds" regardless of geographical origin and citizenship. Vacancies are advertised worldwide via EURAXESS and also announced in the respective specialist networks. The researchers come from 66 countries of origin, with Germany in the lead as expected, followed by Italy, China in third place and India in fourth place, just ahead of Spain, Russia and France.

Another question of interest was whether this high proportion of foreigners is the same in all employment groups. The detailed employment groups are defined in the collective agreement of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and range from student assistants to the scientific management of research institutes. In the following table, these detailed employment groups are grouped into four categories.

TABLE 1: RESEARCHERS BY EMPLOYMENT GROUP AND CITIZENSHIP (AS AT 31.12.2024)

Framework	Number				Proportion of foreigners in %
	in total	Domestic	EU	Third country	
R4 – Leading Researcher (Directors,G roup Leaders,D istinguished Researcher, Senior Research Associates)	141	82	50	9	41,8
R3 – Established Researcher (OeAW Principal Researcher,J unior Group Leaders, Research Associates)	41	10	21	10	75,6
R2 – Recognised Researcher (Academy Scientist,Po stdoc)	511	198	180	133	61,3
R1 – First Stage Researcher (Predoc,S tudent Employees)	448	185	147	116	58,7
Total	1.141	475	398	268	58,4

Source: own compilation

Interestingly, it can be seen that the "Leading Researcher" have the lowest proportion of foreigners. At around 42 %, this is still respectably high, but lower than for "Established", "Recognized", or "First Stage Researcher". This may be due to a temporal effect. "Leading Researcher" have a long institutional affiliation with the OeAW and may have joined the Academy when international recruitment was not yet so pronounced. However, some "Leading Researcher" may also have acquired Austrian citizenship due to their long period of residence and therefore no longer contribute to the proportion of foreigners, or they may be people with Austrian citizenship who have returned as "Leading Researcher" after their postdoc years.

The proportion of foreigners among "Established Researcher" and "Recognized Researcher" is particularly high. Both essentially comprise people who have completed their doctorate and are embarking on the "research experience". As a rule, this is also a highly mobile group of people who gain their postdoctoral experience in order to qualify for a professorship or to close the chapter on science and move into industry or other sectors. This sectoral mobility is often also associated with geographical mobility and explains the high proportion of foreigners.

It is also worth noting that the proportion of foreigners varies significantly according to discipline. In the institutes assigned to the humanities, social sciences and cultural studies, the proportion of foreigners is 41 %, whereas in the natural sciences institutes it is 55 %. This corresponds to the higher degree of internationality in the natural sciences, but also has something to do with structural reasons. In a historical institute that deals with the history of Austria, for example, the probability of employing Austrian scientists is much greater than in an institute that deals with mathematical issues, which are the same in Austria as in the USA or China. It is therefore not surprising that life science LLCs have the highest proportion of non-Austrian employees (63 %).

HIGH REGIONALITY OF NON-SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYEES

The degree of internationalization among non-scientific employees is fundamentally different. Although they are diverse and often very highly qualified, their qualifications are less specialized than those of academic employees. A qualified papyrologist cannot be found via an advertisement in a daily newspaper, but an accountant can.

Non-academic staff are therefore mainly recruited on the regional labour markets. Employees for payroll accounting, controlling, the library or the laboratory do not have to be recruited from abroad; they can be found in the region. The proportion of foreigners is therefore falling significantly. It amounts to 27 % for non-scientific staff overall and also shows relatively little fluctuation, apart from the small group of simple jobs and the significantly larger group of managers in administration and administrative staff in the life sciences institutes. The proportion of foreigners is increasing significantly in both groups.

TABLE 2: NON-SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYEES BY EMPLOYMENT GROUP AND CITIZENSHIP (AS AT 31.12.2024)

Framework	Number				Proportion of foreigners in %
	in total	Domestic	EU	Third country	
Experts and managers	288	224	50	14	22,2
Intermediate activities (clerical work)	159	125	18	16	21,3
Simple activities (auxiliary activities)	19	11	8	0	42,1
LLCs and contracts outside KV	256	165	62	29	35,5
Sum	722	525	138	59	27,3

Source: own compilation

MEMBERS ABROAD AS AN ASSET OF THE OEAW

The learned society of the Austrian Academy of Sciences currently (spring 2021) has a total of 765 members, 336 of whom are corresponding members abroad (169 Humanities and Social Sciences and 146 Mathematics and Natural Sciences[1]). Most of the corresponding members abroad are based in Germany (177), followed by the USA (52) and Switzerland (28).

The members abroad represent a special "as set" of the OeAW. They are something of a "think tank" for the Austrian Academy of Sciences when it comes to obtaining scientific assessments, establishing personal contacts or gathering information about the respective scientific systems. They enrich the OeAW's internal discussions and support the OeAW in an international context.

Corresponding and full members must have their main place of residence in Austria due to the definition of a domestic member, but as a rule always have international careers. They would not meet the learned society's standards of excellence if their entire career had taken place in only one place or only in Austria. A quick count shows this clearly. Of all 429 domestic members (excluding honorary members), the vast majority held a professorship at a foreign university or spent a longer postdoc phase abroad. Networking with universities and research institutions is one of the dominant characteristics of the learned society and thus shapes the international perspective of the OeAW.

OeAW members Claudia Rapp and Birgit Kellner, who both conduct research on Eurasia in a highly endowed Cluster of Excellence of the Austrian Science Fund FWF. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

Nobel laureate and OeAW member abroad Ferenc Krausz during a lecture in the Academy's festive hall. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

However, the international dimension of the OeAW members is not only reflected in their scientific activities outside Austria or in their international careers, but also in the international activities of the OeAW commissions, which are largely supported by members of the learned society. The OeAW commissions operate at the interface between research, politics and the public and address current issues of scientific and social relevance.

These issues often have a significant international focus and range, for example, from the interdisciplinary analysis of cultural and economic relations between Europe and the "New World" across the Atlantic Ocean, to the social, intellectual and political history of Muslim communities in Central Asia since the mid-16th century, to fundamental issues related to the defossilization of energy systems.

1 The members of the OeAW are assigned to a division based on their field of research; on the one hand to the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences and on the other to the Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

RESEARCH WITHOUT BORDERS

The Marietta Blau Institute for Particle Physics is involved in major international research projects such as CERN. Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

Since its foundation in the 1980s, the Space Research Institute in Graz has been involved in over 40 international missions.
Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

The RICAM regularly gathers the international top of mathematical research at its location in LinzPh oto: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

The dissolution of boundaries between science and research has long since affected all institutes of the OeAW. No institute researches and operates exclusively within national borders. When staff are recruited, the institutes look for the most qualified people and it is largely irrelevant where they come from. This was demonstrated in the previous chapter on the basis of citizenship. When research proposals are submitted within the framework of Horizon Europe, collaboration with international cooperation partners is generally mandatory. When the Austrian Academy of Sciences participates in large and costly projects, international exchange is also mandatory. Especially in connection with large international research institutions, exchange across borders is the norm.

The **Marietta Blau Institute for Particle Physics** is involved in experiments based at CERN in Geneva, at the Japanese particle research center KEK and at the Italian Laboratori Nazionali del Gran Sasso. The **Space Research Institute** is involved in projects led by the European Space Agency (ESA), NASA in the USA and national space agencies in Japan, China and South Korea. The exchange with scientists from these countries is correspondingly close. The **Johann Radon Institute for Computational and Applied Mathematics**, which specializes in applied mathematics, organizes annual "special semesters" with the most qualified colleagues from abroad. The **Institute for Urban and Regional Research** regularly organizes summer schools with institutes in Belgrade and Athens, which are dedicated to the problems of housing markets in Europe. In the Cluster of Excellence "EurAsian Transformations", led by the **Institute for Medieval Research**, researchers from the Universities of Vienna and Innsbruck and the Central European University (CEU) work together on issues relating to the political, social and cultural development of Eurasia. They show the connectivity of societies covered by the term Eurasia, and enlighten the superficial and politically appropriative spatial construction from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

This list is incomplete, not least because international activities are constantly changing, reinventing themselves, as it were, and shaping everyday research. The international collaborations are determined by the locations of the major research institutions, or by the willingness of foreign colleagues to cooperate on this or that research question. The geography of the collaborations is therefore always different. This distinguishes these collaborations from those that are predetermined by the core research question.

The central research fields of the Institute for Urban and Regional Research are orientated towards current social challenges -s ocial diversity,h ousing markets and migration. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

Source research and digital methods explore and preserve cultural treasures from all over Europe at the Institute for Medieval Research. Photo: OeAW/ Klaus Pichler

RESEARCH INSTITUTES WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS – GLOBAL AND REGIONAL

A number of institutes have a research question at the core of their research mandate that focuses on international relations and interdependencies or on the historical, cultural or political development of selected states or macro-regions. Examples include the following.

The **Institute of Iranian Studies** conducts research on Iran and Iranian-influenced cultures and societies in Asia. The Institute's staff work primarily in the fields of history, cultural studies, philology, linguistics and literary studies. The temporal framework from the early modern period to the present is of great importance. From a geographical perspective, the Institute's academic work focuses on Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, which are today officially Persian-speaking countries, as well as on the cultures and societies of the Caucasus, Central Asia and South Asia that are historically influenced by Iran or have close contact and exchange with the Iranian region, and on Iranian diaspora communities throughout the world.

The **Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia** works on Tibetan Sanskrit texts, studies the philosophical history of Buddhism in South Asia, China and Tibet, examines the scholarly traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and the religious history of South Asia, and makes important contributions to the historical development of Shinto and thus to Japanese religious history. The Institute combines Indology, Tibetology, Sinology, Japanese Studies, Buddhist Studies, Religious Studies and Philosophy and is a t' hink tank'f or the intellectual history of the continent.

The **Institute for Social Anthropology** also deals with Asia – but not only Asia. The regional focus is on primarily Buddhist Central Asia (Tibet, Mongolia and the Tibetan-speaking Himalayan region), Southeast Asia and the island world in the Indian Ocean, as well as the Islamic Middle East and North Africa. The Institute analyses conflicts in these spaces, but also cultural change processes of the societies in these spaces based on a cultural and social anthropological approach.

The Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia previously untapped sources on the cradle of human intellectual history in Asia and contributes to the preservation of cultural assets. Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

Iran,i ts history and its integration into the crisis regions of the Middle East are being analysed by the Institute of Iranian Studies.
Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

Conflict-ridden regions such as the Middle East and Asia are at the centre of research at the Institute of Social Anthropology. Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

Since 1999, the so-called historical holdings of the Phonogrammarchiv, i.e. all recordings from 1899 to 1950, have been a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

This research is supported by the collections available at the OeAW, and in particular by the **Phonogrammarchiv**, which provides audio-visual research documents and makes them scientifically accessible, especially music, languages and oral traditions from Africa, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East and Central Asia.
There are other institutes that have played a significant role in the dissolution of national research boundaries. The **Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies** maintains a working group that addresses the fundamental questions of the history and culture of south-eastern Europe across epochs, flanked by basic research projects that serve to develop and safeguard the cultural heritage.

The **Institute for Medieval Research** concentrates its research on the period between around 0 and around 0 AD in Europe and the Mediterranean world up to the Euphrates. It edits documents, compiles a detailed dictionary of Byzantine Greek and documents the material traces of the historical geography of Byzantium.
Finally, there is the **Austrian Archaeological Institute**, Austria's largest research institution in the field of archaeology and ancient studies. The geographical focus is on West Asia, North East Africa and Europe. In this context, the branch offices of the OeAW should be mentioned, which play a special role and are an expression of a thematic and geographical focus.

At the Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies, the name says it all – from the history to the present of the Central European region. Photo: OeAW/Klaus Pichler

Archaeologists from the OeAW are conducting Austria's largest foreign excavation in Ephesus,Turkey. Photo: OeAW-OeAI/Niki Gail

LOCATIONS IN ATHENS, EPHESUS, CAIRO AND ROME

The Austrian Academy of Sciences operates and finances four branch offices in Athens, Ephesus, Cairo and Rome. Three of these branch offices joined the Austrian Academy of Sciences when the Austrian Archaeological Institute was incorporated in 2016, while the branch office in Rome is linked to the Austrian Historical Institute, which became part of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in 2025. The branch offices offer particular added value in terms of promoting science and foreign policy.

Branches manifest themselves through their own premises, they have a specific address and are physically anchored at their destination. Sometimes the term branch refers to several properties and buildings (Cairo and Tell el-Dab'a), sometimes the Austrian Academy of Sciences is the registered owner of a property (in Ephesus and Athens), and sometimes a s ubtenant's ecured by a usage agreement.

The field offices generally maintain a library, offer work opportunities for research, are contact points for excavation licenses in Greece and Egypt, offer guest rooms for shorter or longer stays and are venues for scientific events.

They are an "asset" because they are bridgeheads of research and at the same time representatives of the Republic of Austria. Compared to their real costs, they contribute many times over to Austria's image. In Egypt, for example, the Austrian branch office, together with the Austrian embassy, ranks in a "league" otherwise only occupied by Great Britain, the USA, Germany and France. A similar story can be told of Ephesus. Through its archaeological research, Austria has not only created a site of overwhelming tourist interest, but has also made a contribution to foreign policy. Austrian archaeology has been working in Turkey and with Turkish researchers for many decades in a correct, collegial and very often friendly manner. Although this is only one piece of the mosaic for an overall picture of Austria in Turkey, it is one that is always taken into account.

The branch office in Athens has been an important interface between Greece and Austria for over 3 y ears. Photo: OeAW-OeAI/B. Eder

TABLE 3: OVERVIEW OF THE OEAW'S BRANCHES

Location	Functionality	Team on site	Usable area	Number of guest rooms
Athens	Office space, library, guest apartment	Approx. 10	Approx. 800 m²	5
Ephesus	Excavation,l aboratories for processing and documenting found material,w orkshops for restoration and conservation,d epot,l ibrary, event facilities,g uest house	Approx. 60	Approx. 2.800 m²	38
Cairo	Office space, library, field research, guest apartment	Approx. 5	Approx. 500 m²	4
Rome	Office space, library, guest apartment	Approx. 6	Approx. 100 m²	5

Source: own compilation

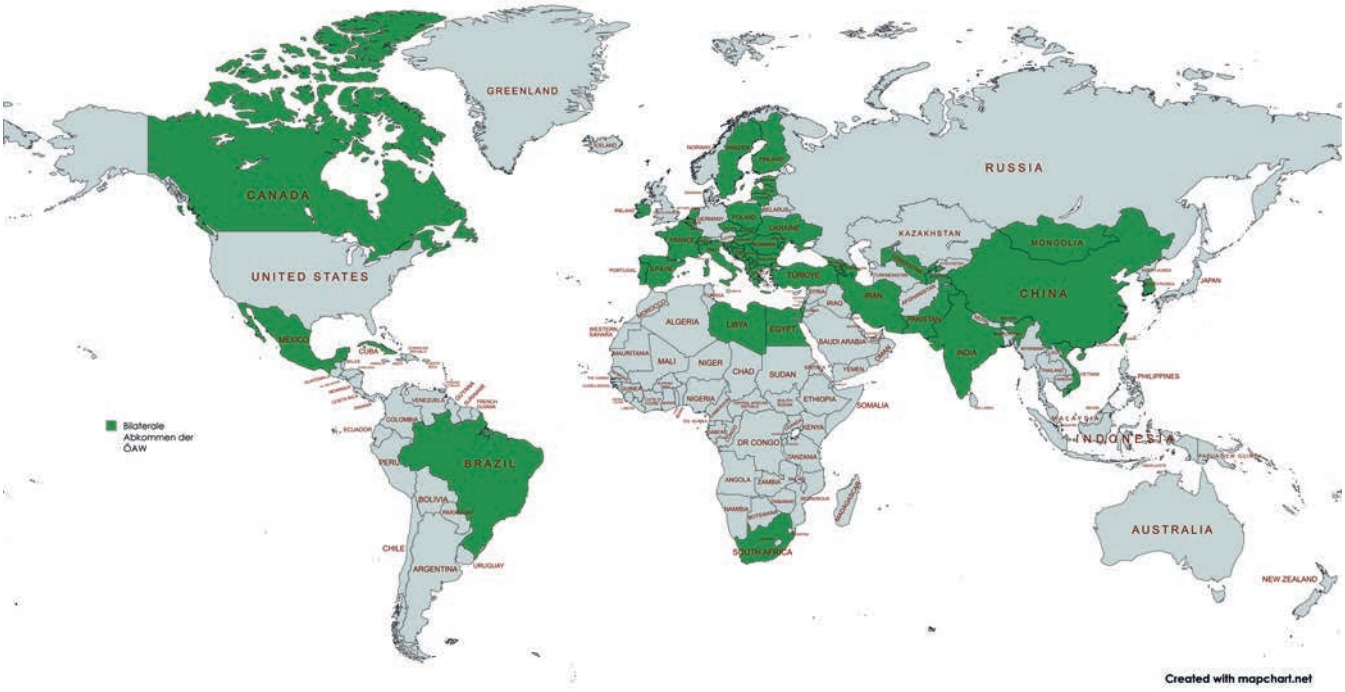
INTERNATIONALLY NETWORKED IN OVER 50 COUNTRIES

Another important international dimension of the OeAW does not concern individuals and research, but agreements, autonomous and mandated memberships and mobilities within the agreements. The institutional networks with partner academies should be emphasized separately, as these represent an important and traditional networking instrument. A fundamental distinction must be made between bilateral cooperation agreements through cooperation contracts and memberships in academy networks.
For Austria as a research location, the mostly commissioned memberships in large international research institutions are essential, as this ensures the opportunities for participation. They are presented separately.

BILATERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

The conclusion of cooperation agreements with partner academies is one of the traditional instruments of internationalization. The OeAW maintains more than 60 bilateral agreements with partner institutions in more than 50 countries worldwide. Since the mid-1960s, the OeAW has thus continued a tradition of diplomatic and scientific bridge-building that began when it was founded. The oldest agreement dates back to 1966 and was concluded with the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN), the most recent with the African Academy of Sciences in 2025.

MAP 1: COUNTRIES WITH COOPERATING ACADEMIES* **



Map created with mapchart.net.
* The agreements with the Russian and Belarusian academies are currently suspended.
** The agreement with the African Academy of Sciences basically covers all African countries;h owever,f or the sake of clarity,t he African continent has not been fully coloured in the relevant graphic.

In addition to general objectives, the cooperation agreements typically also contain agreements regarding the exchange of researchers. This is very often a core element of the agreements, because without an intensive exchange supported by people, they remain just a piece of paper. Some cooperation agreements have defined fixed person-months, others only contain a general commitment to mobility. In most cases, the host academies finance the stay, sometimes also in guest houses if these are available, while the costs of travel to and from the host academy are borne by the sending academy. In those countries that require a visa for entry, invitations from academies are an important document for obtaining a visa. Particularly during the "Cold War", this was often the only way to maintain links with the political E ast." But even under the current geopolitical conditions, the value of these mobilities has tended to increase and remain an important instrument of scientific and cultural exchange in the 2 t century.

Employees of research institutes of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as well as members of the learned society can participate in the exchange of scientists agreed in the agreements. They offer the possibility of short-term research stays (individual stays of a few days to a few weeks) and they are generally based on reciprocity, which is unfortunately not currently the case. The number of incoming persons clearly exceeds the number of Austrian outgoing persons.[2] Ideally, the number of stays in one direction should correspond to the number of stays in the other direction.

The stays are mostly for joint research work, a joint publication, archive research or participation in conferences, symposia and workshops. Joint projects can be initiated using the instrument of academic exchange within the framework of cooperation agreements. One example of this is the cooperation between the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Slovenian Academy of Sciences, which has resulted in a new type of joint Austrian-Slovenian history book. Or the cooperation with academies worldwide as part of the research project "Academies for Global Innovation and Digital Ethics" (AGIDE), which made it clear that the Eurocentric view on innovation and digital ethics is not a global one and that we have to deal with very different strategies and perspectives.

In addition, the OeAW launched the J oint Academy Days" format in 2 Academies of Sciences and Humanities are confronted with similar social problems worldwide and face up to their special responsibility to overcome global crises. In cooperation with a number of partner academies, the Austrian Academy of Sciences is fulfilling its mission to bring science and research to the heart of society with this global initiative. It also provides targeted food for thought on the relationship between science, politics and society, for example with the V ienna Theses on Science-based Advice to Politics and Society" published jointly with the Leopoldina in 2

Overall, it can be said that the networking of Austrian research and support for the mobility of researchers within the framework of academy agreements have made a significant contribution to the sustainable shaping of scientific relations with partners, especially outside the European Union,i n the sense of a Beyond Europe strategy.

At the Joint Academy Days,s elected partner academies from around the world are guests at the OeAW. Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

MEMBERSHIPS IN ACADEMY NETWORKS

The OeAW has not only signed many bilateral agreements, but has also accepted memberships in academy networks. Perhaps the most important association is ALLEA (All European Academies). It is an association of almost 60 academies from around 40 EU and non-EU countries and was founded in 1994. ALLEA represents the interests of its members at European and international level, promotes science, facilitates scientific cooperation across borders and disciplines and regularly speaks out with research policy statements. It organizes its consultation by setting up working groups that deal with topics such as "Science and Ethics", "Intellectual Property Rights", "European Research Area" or "E-Humanities". Members of the Austrian Academy of Sciences are actively represented in these working groups. ALLEA pursues a clear and broad "Policy for Science" approach.

2 For example, 5 people took part in the academic exchange program in 2024, of which 137 were incoming and 38 outgoing. Some of the most important countries of destination and origin were the Czech Republic (28), Hungary (17), Ukraine (14), Mongolia (10) and Slovenia (7).

TABLE 4: MEMBERSHIPS OF ACADEMY ASSOCIATIONS

Abbreviation	Name	Year of foundation	Number of members	Number of member countries	Administrative headquarters
ALLEA	All European Academies	1994	>50	ca. 40	Berlin
EASAC	European Academies Science Advisory Council	2001	28	28	Vienna
FEAM	Federation of European Academies of Medicine	1993	24	20	Brussels
Euro-CASE	European Council of Academies of Applied Sciences,Technologies and Engineering	1992	22	22	Paris

Source: own compilation

EASAC, the European Academies Science Advisory Council, is also an association of European academies and pursues the goal of science-based policy advice ("Science for Policy"), but has a clear thematic focus. Its advisory activities focus on energy, the environment, life sciences and public health. EASAC prepares concrete statements for the national and European policy level within these focus areas. These statements are based on a scientific analysis and a broad and independent consideration of political measures to solve specific problems.[3]

A total of 28 national science academies of the EU member states have been working together in EASAC since 2001. The secretariat was supported by the British Royal Society and the National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina and has been based at the Austrian Academy of Sciences since 2024.

EASAC represents Europe in the global academy network IAP (InterAcademy Partnership)[i] and is also a key part of SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies). Other members of SAPEA are FEAM (Federation of European Academies of Medicine) and Euro-CASE (European Council of Academies of Applied Sciences, Technologies and Engineering).

SAPEA, in turn, is part of the Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM), which was established in 2018 with the aim of improving the quality of political decisions at European level. It can be improved if it is evidence-based and thus has a stronger scientific foundation. SAM is, on the one hand, the scientifically sound anchoring of political decisions and, on the other hand, regulates the interaction between SAPEA and the group of leading scientific advisors and the communication with the European Commission (EC), which ultimately defines the questions to which it would like to have profound answers. The EC uses a SAM secretariat for organizational processing. The answers to the defined questions are available to all European institutions and are of course also published. Examples of topics that have been dealt with within the framework of the SAM are: "Solar radiation modification", "One Health governance in the European Union" or "Successful and timely uptake of artificial intelligence in science in the EU".

EASAC and OeAW scientists discussed solutions for a sustainable energy supply of the future at a Joint Academy Day.
Photo: OeAW/Daniel Hinterramskogler

The Austrian Academy of Sciences is a member of the four major academy associations mentioned above (ALLEA, EASAC, FEAM and Euro-CASE) and thus actively participates in the respective "Science for Policy" and "Policy for Science" initiatives. At institutional level, the OeAW significantly increased its visibility at European level by taking over the EASAC office at the beginning of 2024 and strengthened its participation in the European Union's Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM).

In addition, the Austrian Academy of Sciences has been a member of Science Europe (SE), the interest grouping of European research funding institutions, since 2023. The OeAW decided to join because it is not only a research performing organisation, but also a research funding institution. The Austrian Academy of Sciences networks with "main players" in European research funding and

3 Examples of the statements mentioned are: "Increasing Urgency for Transformative Change", "Perspectives on Decarbonisation of Existing Buildings in Europe", "The EASAC Plastics Report: Towards a Plastics Treaty," "Advances in Ecological Research," "Deep-Sea Mining: Assessing Evidence on Future Needs and Environmental Impacts" or „The Future of Gas."

actively participates in the discourse on central topics of the European Research Area (CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) and more).

The Austrian Academy of Sciences is also a member of almost 0 international professional societies, mainly in the natural sciences. This makes it a link for the relevant Austrian specialist community and a hub in a comprehensive global network. A significant number of these specialist societies are brought together under the umbrella of the International Science Council (ISC)[ii], of which the OeAW has been a member since its foundation in 8

The OeAD's membership of the two research networks Africa-UniNet[iii] and Eurasia-Pacific UniNet (EPU)[iv], which are organizat ionally anchored at OeAD, opens up further opportunities for researchers at the OeAW to actively network with colleagues in two regions of the world that are rapidly gaining in importance, especially in the field of science and research.

In Africa-UniNet (OeAW accession in fall 2 , the OeAW focuses on institutional and personal exchange with researchers in African countries. In view of the dynamic and underestimated demographic development – Africa will account for 40 % of the world's population by the end of the century – Europe and Austria are called upon to take a much more strategic approach to their future relationship with partners in Africa.

Africa's scientific landscape is a current focus of the internationalisation of the OeAW,f or example with a bilateral agreement with the African Academy of Sciences and through participation in Africa-UniNet. Photo: Adobe Stock

The OeAW has been a member of the Eurasia-Pacific UniNet (EPU) since 0 This partnership has proven to be very fruitful, not least due to the fact that a number of OeAW institutes have either been conducting research in Asia or have Asia as their research focus for many years. On the one hand, the OeAW benefits from the targeted funding opportunities and, on the other hand, it contributes its own extensive "Asia network't o the EPU.

MEMBERSHIPS AT MAJOR RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

In addition to bilateral agreements and memberships in academy associations and professional societies, memberships at major research institutions are an essential part of the international dimension of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The Academy operates on the basis of its autonomy on behalf of the Republic of Austria. It represents the Republic on the various boards, networks the Austrian research community and reports to the responsible ministry on current developments. These memberships provide the relevant researchers in Austria with quality-assured access to the international research infrastructure and international research institutions.

Table 5 provides an overview of selected memberships. The major research institutions such as CERN, ILL or ESRF, which are of central importance for particle physics, stand out. If Austria wants to conduct research in this field, then membership of these institutions is essential. Austria would never be able to raise the funds to carry out such experiments on its own. The respective membership fees also represent considerable expenditure, but they are much cheaper than setting up the corresponding infrastructure at national level.

In addition to the purely financial considerations, a second argument is important. By becoming a member, Austria secures its researchers access to the most highly qualified networks in the respective scientific fields. This applies equally to the natural sciences and the humanities. Humanities researchers are involved in the CLARIN and DARIAH research infrastructures, which use modern digital methods to index and analyse their research material. The international IODP and ICDP programs involve geologists, oceanologists, sedimentologists and many other earth scientists who cooperate with each other worldwide and jointly supervise scientific drilling projects in order to learn much more about the structure of the earth's crust and the ocean and climate system than we currently know. These are just two of many highlights.

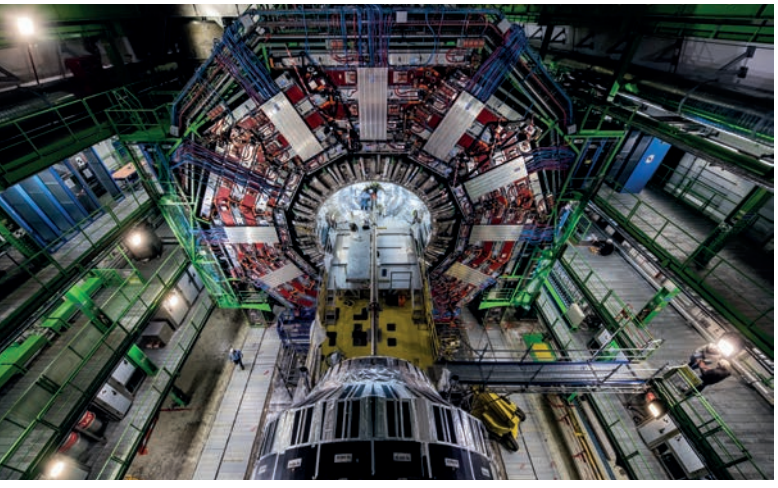
Experience has shown that these international projects, across all political systems, work very well. Even more than that.

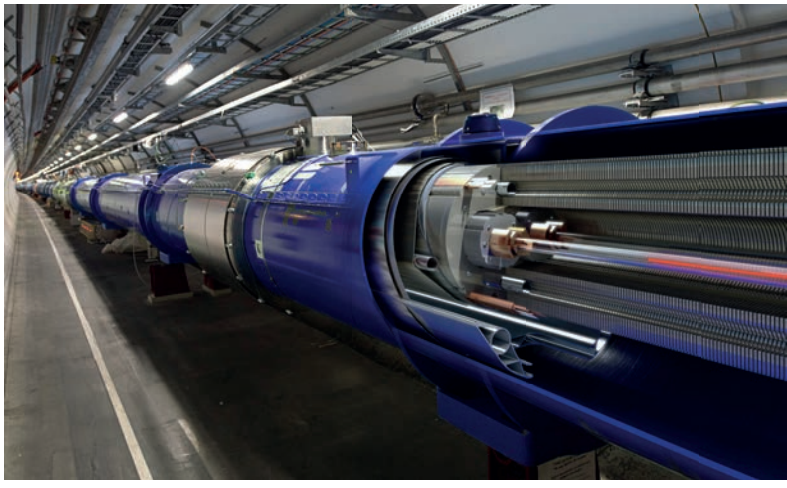
TABLE 5: MEMBERSHIPS OF MAJOR RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS

Abbreviation	Name	Year of foundation	Number of member countries	Administrative headquarters
Major research institutions				
CERN	Conseil européen pour la recherche nucléaire	1954	24	Geneva
ILL	Institut Laue-Langevin	1967	13	Grenoble
ESRF	European Synchrotron Radiation Facility	1988	19	Grenoble
Research infrastructure				
CLARIN	Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure	2012	24	Utrecht
DARIAH	Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities	2014	22	Paris
KEK/BELLE	Belle is an international experiment at the Japanese laboratory for particle physics KEK	2010	27	Tsukuba
International programs and institutes				
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis	1972	19	Laxenburg
EUROfusion	European Consortium for the Development of Fusion Energy	2014	30	Garching
IODP	International Ocean Discovery Program	2013	21	Aix en Provence
ICDP	International Continental Scientific Drilling Program	1996	22	Potsdam

Source: own compilation

During the long years of the Cold War, international projects, programs and institutes were institutional places of exchange and cooperation. This is clearly illustrated by the history of IIASA: founded in 1972, also supported by the USA and the former Soviet Union, based in neutral Austria and focused on global problems. Diplomacy often begins with "science diplomacy" as a first step on the long road to peaceful cooperation.





The particle accelerator at CERN is considered the largest machine in the world. Researchers from the OeAW were also involved in the discovery of the "Nobel Prize particle", the Higgs boson. Photos: CERN/ Maximilien Brice, CERN/Daniel Dominguez

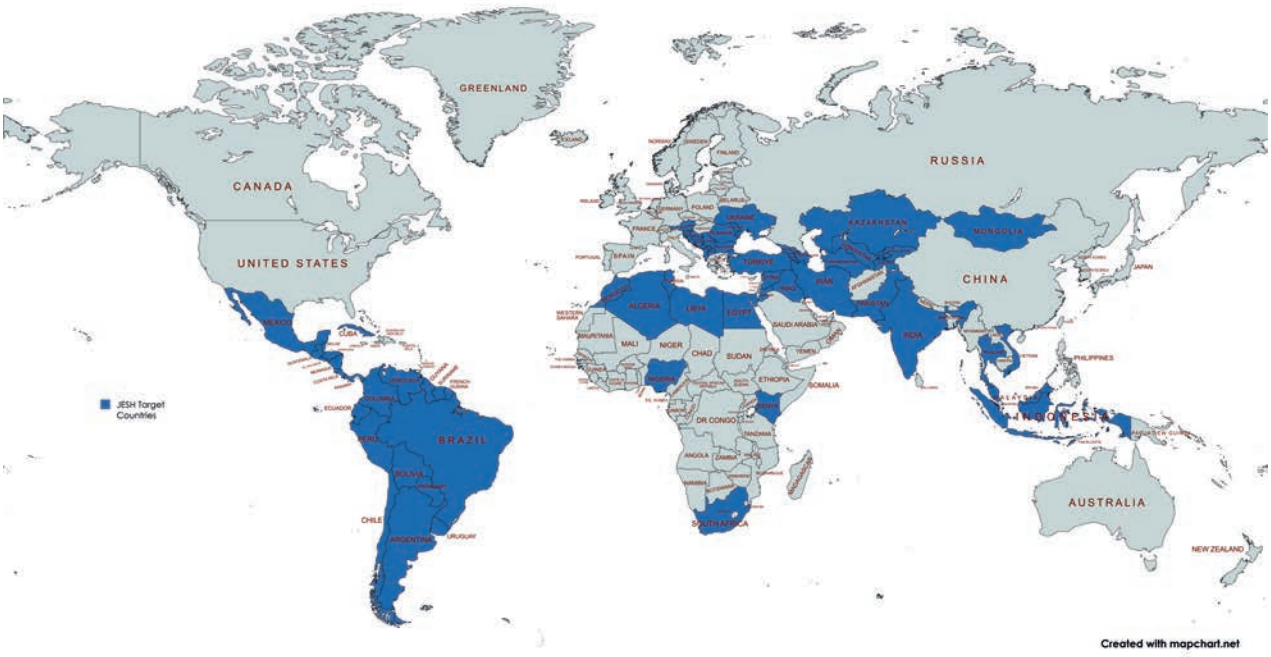
EXCHANGE OF TALENTS: THE JESH MOBILITY PROGRAMME

The "Joint Excellence in Science and Humanities" (JESH) mobility program is an important funding initiative that has existed since 2014 and extends beyond the OeAW. It is an incoming and outgoing program, which is not only available to the research institutes of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, but to all scientific institutions in Austria. Every public university in Austria and every research institution can invite or send researchers via this program. The only, but significant, restriction is with regard to the destination and source country affected by the mobility. JESH does not cover all countries in the world, but currently 61 countries of destination and origin based on research policy considerations agreed with the responsible ministry.

The main criteria for the selection of destination and source countries are eligibility for funding based on the economic situation – preferably but not exclusively upper or lower middle income countries according to the OECD classification –, representation in Austrian networks such as Africa UniNet, ASEAN UniNet and Eurasia-Pacific UniNet as well as an active tertiary education and research policy or recognizable international research activities. Target and source countries within the framework of JESH are therefore in particular African countries, Latin America, Central Asia, the Caucasus states and the Western Balkan countries.

Overall, JESH serves to intensify and improve scientific cooperation between Austrian researchers and partners in the target countries outside the established funding areas. It offers the opportunity to establish or strengthen international contacts at a high level, regardless of the topic. JESH also supports the internationalization efforts of Austrian universities. The funding period is between one and six months. Funding is provided from the OeAW's global budget, calls for proposals are issued annually and flexible adaptation to special requirements (e.g. special call for proposals for Ukraine) is possible. To date, 388 mobilities with a total funding volume of around EUR 3.8 million have been financed.

MAP 2: TARGET AND SOURCE COUNTRIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF JESH



Map created with mapchart.net.

OUTLOOK: THE OEAW AS A BRIDGE BUILDER

The international dimension of the Austrian Academy of Sciences is important in everything it does. It takes this into account out of self-interest in order to provide its researchers with the best conditions for research, but it also sees itself as a g atekeeper" and d oor opener" for the entire research system. Through the management of its mandated memberships, agreements, mobility programs and external offices, it can create structures that have a systemic effect and enable universities and other institutions in the tertiary sector to establish stronger international networks. It will be the task of this and all other Presiding Committees to ensure this.

Vienna,J uly 2

Photo: Adobe Stock

APPENDIX

IMPORTANT ABBREVIATIONS

ALLEA	All European Academies
AITHYRA	Research Institute for Biomedical Artificial Intelligence of the OeAW
CeMM	Research Center for Molecular Medicine of the OeAW
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
CEU	Central European University
CLARIN	Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure
CoARA	Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment
DARIAH	Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities
EASAC	European Academies Science Advisory Council
EK	European Commission
ERA	European Research Area
ESA	European Space Agency
ESO	European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere
ESRF	European Synchrotron Radiation Facility
EU	European Union
EURAXESS	European Research Mobility and Career Portal
Euro-CASE	European Council of Academies of Applied Sciences, Technologies and Engineering
FEAM	Federation of European Academies of Medicine
GMI	Gregor Mendel Institute of Molecular Plant Biology of the OeAW
IAP	InterAcademy Partnership
ICDP	International Continental Scientific Drilling Program
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
ILL	Institut Laue-Langevin
IMBA	Institute of Molecular Biotechnology of the OeAW
IODP	International Ocean Discovery Program
ISC	International Science Council
JESH	OeAW mobility program „Joint Excellence in Science and Humanities"
KEK	High Energy Accelerator Research Organization in Japan
KV	Collective Agreement
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
OEAW	Austrian Academy of Sciences
RICAM	Johann Radon Institute for Computational and Applied Mathematics
SAM	Scientific Advice Mechanism
SAPEA	Science Advice for Policy by European Academies
SE	Science Europe

ENDNOTES

i The InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) is a global network consisting of over 140 national and regional member academies for science, technology and medicine. It was founded in 1993 as the InterAcademy Panel (IAP). The mission of the IAP is to support global sustainable development and provide science-based advice to the public and policy makers on global issues.

ii The International Science Council (ISC) was formed in 2018 from the merger of the International Council for Science (ICSU), founded in 1931, and the International Social Science Council (ISSC), founded in 1952. ISC sees itself as the global voice of science and aims to promote science as a global public good and to increase understanding of science in society.

iii Africa-UniNet is a network of Austrian and African universities and research institutions coordinated by Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD). Africa-UniNet provides a long-term and solid basis for scientific cooperation between the participating Austrian and African research institutions. The activities of the network aim to establish new contacts, deepen existing cooperation and support innovative joint research.

iv Eurasia-Pacific UniNet (EPU) – also organizationally based at OeAD – was founded in 2000 with the aim of establishing an educational network for Austrian universities, universities of applied sciences and other educational institutions in Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific region. It promotes projects in the fields of research, research-led teaching and art as well as technology cooperation.