

Subject: Training measure outside the training programs of the Bundeswehr/ Public Service

Topic: Project Mercury - Germany Pilot Program

Description of the training measure

Training content

Project Mercury (PM) is a program aimed at promoting an innovation culture in the public sector, combined with the acquisition of competencies and the building of a network. Through joint seminars, real projects, and self-study, participants learn the framework conditions for designing, developing, and implementing innovations. They learn how to successfully use innovation tools and methods in real-world situations, using a dual approach of academic (conceptual) and project-based (experiential) content.

At the end of the program, participants present their development of innovative solutions for complex problems for further testing and implementation within their sending authority as part of an online showcase.

Training objective

Empowerment to apply alternative ways of thinking, methods, and new tools to solve unclear, high-risk problems in ambiguous contexts. Formation of a network within the PM community, as well as the creation of a shared vocabulary in the field of innovation.

Qualification to be acquired

Upon successful completion of the program, all participants earn the “Certified Professional Innovator” certificate from the University of Michigan (USA) School of Engineering and unrestricted access to the online network of the PM Alumni Association (US, NATO, Germany).

Annex to Application for Training Outside the Bundeswehr Training Catalogue

Subject: Training measure outside the training programs of the Bundeswehr / Public

Service: Project Mercury-Germany Pilot Program

Description of the Training Measure

Training Content

Project Mercury (PM) is a program designed to foster an innovation culture in the public sector, combining the acquisition of competencies with network building. Through joint seminars, real-world projects, and self-study, participants learn the framework conditions for designing, developing, and implementing innovations. Participants are taught how to successfully apply innovation tools and methods in real situations, following a dual approach: academic (conceptual) and project-based (experiential) content.

At the end of the program, participants present their development of innovative solutions for complex problems for further testing and implementation within their sending authority as part of an online showcase.

Training Objective

Empowering participants to apply alternative ways of thinking, methods, and new tools to solve ambiguous, high-risk problems in uncertain contexts. Formation of a network within the PM community, as well as the creation of a shared vocabulary in the field of innovation.

Qualification to be Acquired

Upon successful completion of the program, all participants earn the “Certified Professional Innovator” certificate from Michigan Technological University (USA) and unrestricted access to the online network of the PM Alumni Association (US, NATO, Germany).

Duration and Scope of the Training Measure

- 13 MAR 26 – Virtual Orientation (Introduction to online platforms)
- 20 MAR 26 – Virtual Day 0 (Introduction to Jumpstart procedures)
- 23–25 MAR 26 – Jumpstart (In-person workshop) in Berlin/Grünheide
- 30 MAR–12 JUN 26 – Virtual, project-based working phase
- 17 JUN 26 – Virtual final presentation and certification

Every Wednesday, starting 01 APR 26 (Time: 15:00–18:00 CET, to be confirmed), all participants attend three-hour coaching or instructional units with Project Mercury coaches. These online sessions are led in English by master coaches from the USA. Additionally, team members organize several self-managed online meetings each week to advance their selected innovation project for two to three hours per week. German-speaking coaches support the teams during all meetings and project work. The program lasts a total of 13 weeks.

Additional working time required is between six and ten hours per week. Participation in PM is intentionally not limited to outside regular working hours. It is expressly desired that participants

seek both sparring partners and corrective feedback from their supervisors for the solutions developed.

Training Costs

- Participation fee: €3,750 per participant
- In-person week: €117 per day including full catering (x4 days = €468)
- Total cost: €4,218
- Payment due: Upon acceptance to the course: 01.02.2026

Training Requirements

Basic English language skills, otherwise none. Good ideas have neither rank nor job titles. Participants should have a problem statement or an innovation idea to further develop during the program.

Training Facility

- Jumpstart: Haus am Werlsee / Grünheide, Germany
- Online program: Zoom meetings
- POC USA: Cleo@innovatrium.org
- POC DEU: project.mercury.deutschland@gmail.com

Additional Note

Project Mercury @ Germany is based on the established and scientifically grounded concept of the US Air Force, adapted by NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in 2024, and is now being opened nationally to German soldiers, civil servants, and public sector employees as a cross-agency pilot program. Based on these initial experiences, decisions can then be made regarding continuation, development of a unique German program, or inclusion in public administration training catalogues.

An online market review has shown that a comparable program is currently not available in the European market.