The role of support staff in Doctoral Education

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UZDOC 2.0 meetings

Tashkent Institute of Finance, 1 October 2018

Agenda

➢ State of play: players involved in Doctoral Education

➢ Professional management in Doctoral Education

  ➢ Definition, tasks and benefits

  ➢ A case study: starting from scratch

➢ A Professional at my institution

➢ PRIDE Network: Association for Professionals in Doctoral Education

State of play:
players involved in Doctoral Education

Players involved at my institution

➢ **Identify who is in charge of the following aspects of the Doctorate at your institution:**
   1. Research topic / project (drafting of the project, choice of topic…)
   2. Admission (recruitment, selection, registration, information about admission process…)
   3. Doctoral research (supervising the research, undertaking the research)
   4. Scientific training (designing the programme, giving the courses/training sessions…)
   5. Regular assessment of research progress (evaluation, organisation…)
   6. Final assessment of PhD thesis (evaluation, award of diploma, organisation…)
   7. Improvement of organisation and quality of doctoral studies
   8. Regulations about doctoral studies (development, information about regulations…)

➢ **What should be improved (in terms of players involved)?**

Players involved at my institution

	Rectorate	Supervisor	PhD cand.	Admin. staff	Others
Research topic/project					
Admission					
Doctoral research					
Scientific training					
Assessment of progress					
Final assessment					
Organisation / quality					
Regulations					

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Players involved at my institution

	Rectorate	Supervisor	PhD cand.	Admin. staff	Others
Research topic/project		x	x		x
Admission		x		x	x
Doctoral research					
Scientific training					
Assessment of progress					
Final assessment					
Organisation / quality					
Regulations					

Professional Management in Doctoral Education

Agenda

- Context in Europe
- Characteristics of Professionals in Doctoral Education
- Tasks of Professionals
- Skills and Knowledge areas of Professionals
- Benefits for the University

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Changing Context in Europe

External and internal conditions in higher education have changed dramatically in the last two decades, resulting in pressures within universities:

- rapid growth in the number of PhD students

- less state and more institutional autonomy, but also: more accountability, more monitoring, more competition

- an explosive growth in „auditing"

- type and distribution of work changed in universities

- knowledge is increasing and so the expected impact for society

European Context: Academics experience…

- Continuous monitoring and controlling of their work in terms of quality and output

- New internal structures, guidelines and processes („de-privatization" of their areas of activities e.g. from one-one supervision to team supervision in doctoral education)

- More bureaucracy, delegation of task

European Context: Consequences

Professionalization of administration on at least 3 level

- Leadership: doctoral education become flagship initiative, on top of the agenda, doctoral schools are established with new roles and duties and governance structure

- Teaching and Research Support: Supervisors' training becomes a top priority (or at least top on the wish list)

- Staff: growth in number of highly qualified professionals (in administration) to support these processes of change

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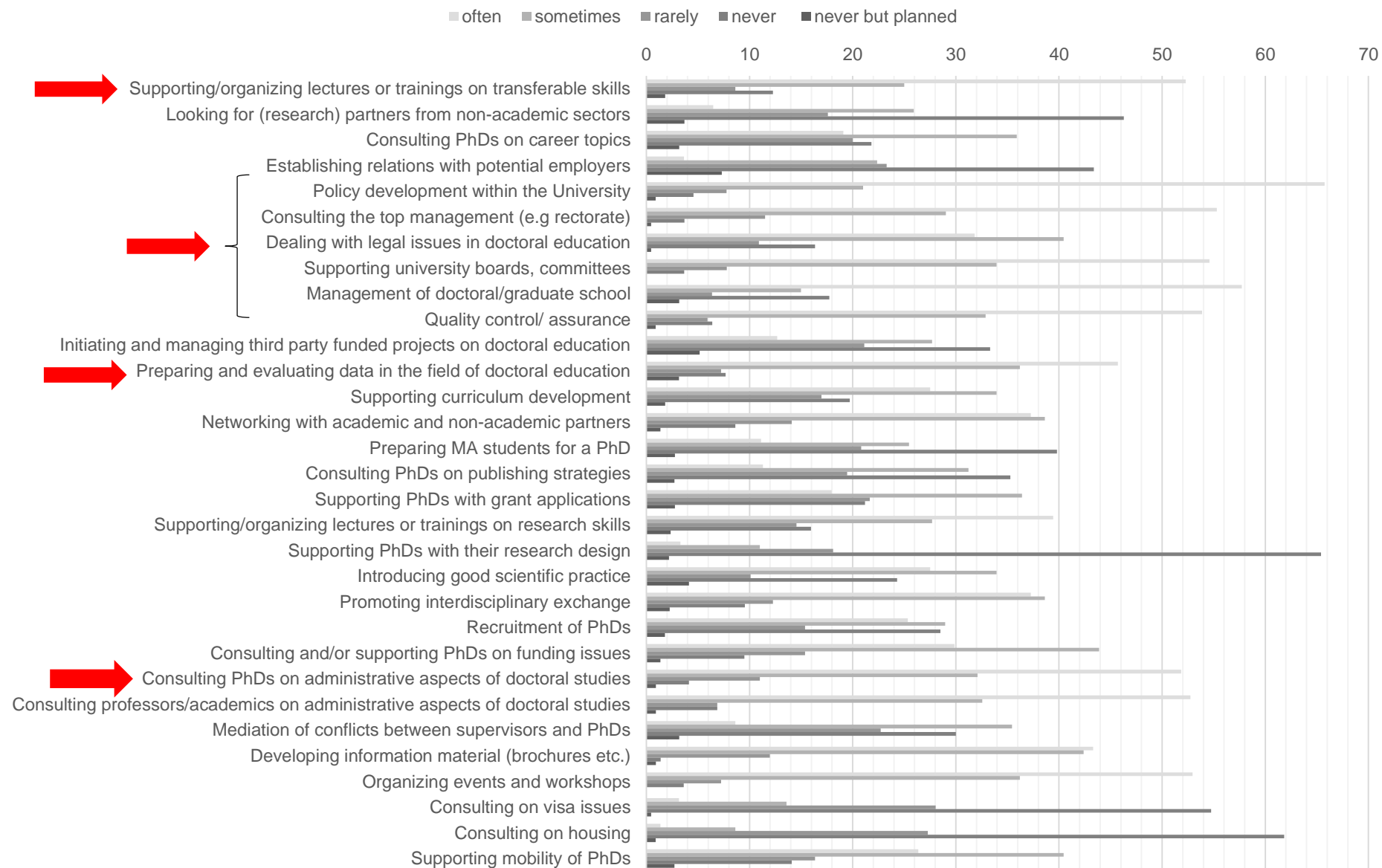Erasmus+ Programme
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Characteristics of Professionals in Doctoral Education

- satisfying the growing need of university management for systematic knowledge about the university;

- releasing academic and administrative staff from a variety of functions and tasks;

- high affinity and commitment to the areas of teaching and research; experiences in research

- experts in the field of higher education and have a "high degree of familiarity with the core functions of higher education institutions";

"[It is essential to have a] holistic understanding of the different aspects that affect and have bearing and relevance on doctoral education, involvement in both recruitment and pastoral sides. Clued into wider national and international developments concerning doctoral provision."

"Formulating strategies and policies, restructuring the office to align with the university´s new strategic vision."

"It's an intimate partnership between an academic leadership and strong professional leadership."

Survey question chart: "What are the main fields of activity in your current position?"

Legend: often, sometimes, rarely, never, never but planned

Activities listed (top to bottom):
- Supporting/organizing lectures or trainings on transferable skills
- Looking for (research) partners from non-academic sectors
- Consulting PhDs on career topics
- Establishing relations with potential employers
- Policy development within the University
- Consulting the top management (e.g rectorate)
- Dealing with legal issues in doctoral education
- Supporting university boards, committees
- Management of doctoral/graduate school
- Quality control/ assurance
- Initiating and managing third party funded projects on doctoral education
- Preparing and evaluating data in the field of doctoral education
- Supporting curriculum development
- Networking with academic and non-academic partners
- Preparing MA students for a PhD
- Consulting PhDs on publishing strategies
- Supporting PhDs with grant applications
- Supporting/organizing lectures or trainings on research skills
- Supporting PhDs with their research design
- Introducing good scientific practice
- Promoting interdisciplinary exchange
- Recruitment of PhDs
- Consulting and/or supporting PhDs on funding issues
- Consulting PhDs on administrative aspects of doctoral studies
- Consulting professors/academics on administrative aspects of doctoral studies
- Mediation of conflicts between supervisors and PhDs
- Developing information material (brochures etc.)
- Organizing events and workshops
- Consulting on visa issues
- Consulting on housing
- Supporting mobility of PhDs

"What are the main fields of activity in your current position?"

Survey with professionals (*LLP Project 540332-LLP-1-2013-1-AT-ERASMUS-EIGF „PRIDE" in 2014*)

Professionals in Doctoral Education

- Professionals are **not** academic staff (not replacing directors of the studies programmes, supervisors,…)

→ They are supporting and consulting academic staff like supervisors, director of studies programmes, (vice-)rectors, academic commitees

(They are **not** supervising the research of PhD candidates, evaluating the PhD thesis etc.)

Skills of Professionals in Doctoral Education

How important are the following skills for your job?	mean	standard deviation
Working co-operatively with others	1,3	0,6
Advising and consulting (e.g. providing expertise to clients)	1,5	0,9
Independently acquire information on new topics	1,6	0,9
Using creativity to develop ideas and new initiatives	1,6	1
Giving clear and comprehensive presentations adapted to the target group	1,6	0,9
Identifying needs	1,7	0,9
Initiating, planning, executing and monitoring projects	1,7	1
Managing, guiding and facilitating a group or activity	1,7	1
Communicating where sensitivity to, and understanding of, cultural differences are required	1,9	1
Handling complaints – simple or difficult	2,1	1,1
Communicating where communication may be difficult, or involves added skills (e.g., multiple languages, sign language, dealing with clients unable to communicate)	2,5	1,4
Mediating and resolving conflicts	2,6	1,2
Knowing about research methods (e.g. designing a survey)	2,9	1,2
Teaching or training	3,0	1,5
Counselling (e.g. therapeutic intervention)	3,7	1,2

Scale: very important 1 – not important 5

Survey with professionals (*LLP Project 540332-LLP-1-2013-1-AT-ERASMUS-EIGF „PRIDE" in 2014*)

Knowledge of Professionals in Doctoral Education

How relevant are the following areas of knowledge to be able to your everyday work in a professional way?	mean	standard deviation
Internal university regulations regarding doctoral education	1,3	0,7
National/legal framework of doctoral education	1,5	0,8
Global trends in doctoral education	1,9	1
Doctoral supervision	2	1,1
Funding opportunities	2,2	1,2
Research ethics and integrity	2,2	1,2
Job markets and career opportunities for PhD holders	2,3	1,2
Intellectual property	2,7	1,1
Human resource development	2,8	1,2
Science communication (e.g. social media)	2,9	1,1
European project policies	2,9	1,2
E-Learning practices	3,3	1,1

Scale: very important 1 – not important 5

Survey with professionals (*LLP Project 540332-LLP-1-2013-1-AT-ERASMUS-EIGF „PRIDE" in 2014*)

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Benefits of having professionals in institution

- „neutral", not obliged to one interest group – facilitate processes

- Overview about different models of doctoral education – strategic advisors

- „Stability factors" of the system (e.g. vice-rectors only for a certain period elected)

- Knowledge of the rules and regulations in all detail

Get the BOOK!

PRIDE
Professionals in Doctoral Education

PROFESSIONALS IN DOCTORAL EDUCATION

PROFESSIONALS IN
TRAINING
SKILLS
KNOWLEDGE
EDUCATION
DOCTORAL
CAREER
SUPPORT
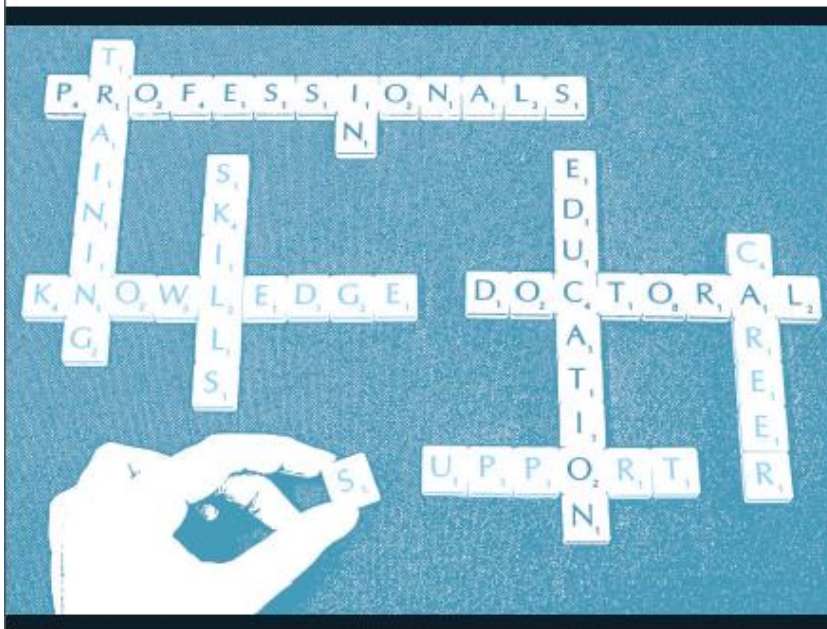
Edited by Lucas Zinner

There is no doubt, that the last decade has been marked by changes in Higher Education. These changes have in some areas been accompanied by an ascent of Higher Education Professionals. But although the area of doctoral education has especially been affected by structural changes the roles of the strongly developing supporting staff in this area so far has been neglected.

We believe it is time to put Professionals in Doctoral Education under the spotlight. Who are they, what do they do, why are they so important?

This handbook intends to provide hands-on and practical information on the roles and activities of doctoral education professionals. The proposed target audience are administrators in doctoral education, HR managers and academic leaders in higher education institutions. Modern doctoral education needs professional staff and this handbook aims at helping to reach this goal.

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Handbook: https://phaidra.univie.ac.at/view/o:454303

Professional Management
in Doctoral Education: case study

Agenda

1. My background

2. My current position
   - Some realisations
   - Evolution
   - Benefits for my institution
   - Useful skills

My background: fields

Field	Degree	Year
• Languages and Literatures (French, Spanish)	• Master's Degree (ULB)	• 1999
• Comparative linguistics (French, Spanish)	• Advanced Master's Degree (ULB)	• 2001
• Cultural Studies (XXth Century, Belgium)	• PhD (ULB)	• 2006

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My background: research experience

Lecturer and researcher (1999-2002)

(Post-)doctoral researcher and lecturer (2002-2006, 2007-2011)

Postdoctoral researcher and lecturer (2006-2007)

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My background: management and organisation

University management

- ✓ Faculty Board Member (elected member)
- ✓ Faculty Council Member (elected member)
- ✓ University Committees (appointed member)

Research project management and organisation

- ✓ Funding applications, research project drafting
- ✓ Organisation of conferences, exhibitions…

My current position: mail goals

Hired in December 2011 as a project manager, at the Research Administration Department

3 main goals:

➢ implement University strategy regarding organisation of Doctorate

➢ improve communication about the Doctorate

➢ set up transferable skills training programme for PhD candidates

My current position: some realisations (1)

Central contact point (2013-)

- Any request related to the PhD
- One single contact email
- New website
- New brochure

Quality and policy (2012-)

- Quality assessment
- → New University PhD Regulations (2012)
- Current project: improve success and duration of the PhD / lower drop out

Cotutelle agreements (2012-)

- Lower drastically workload of supervisor and PhD candidate regarding negotiation of agreement
- Lower time of negotiation
- Soften regulations whenever possible

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My current position: some realisations (2)

Training programme for PhD cand. (2012-)

- Development of programme on transferable skills (2012)
- University budget secured (2013)
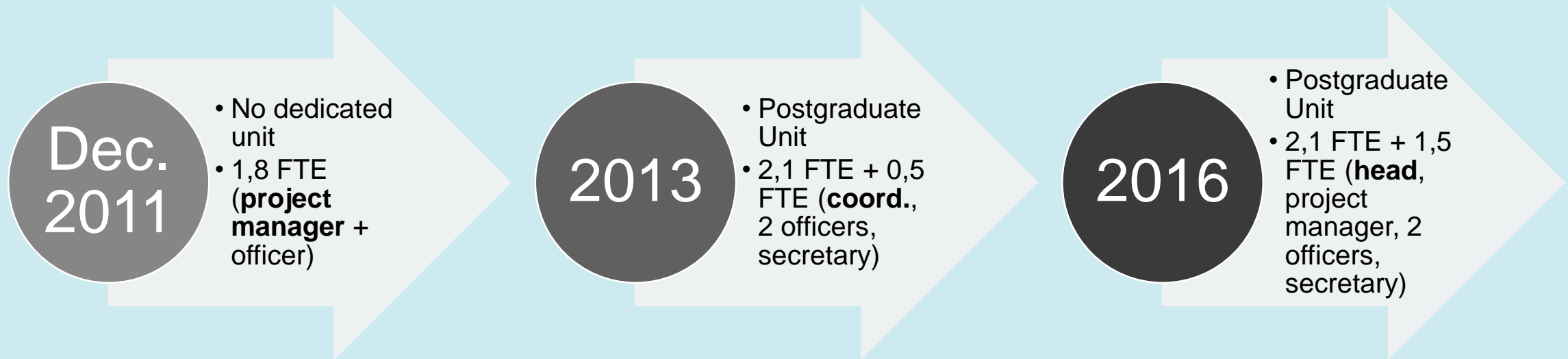- Website + newsletter (2014)
- Career coaching (2014)

Supervisors' support (2014)

- 2-day advanced workshop on PhD supervision
- Round tables on specific topics (e.g. selection)
- Intervision (peer support)
- Online tools

Networking and learning (2012-)

- EUA-CDE meetings
- UNICA PhD Master class
- PRIDE network meetings
- Other opportunities of training/meetings about doctoral education

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My current position: evolution

Dec. 2011
- No dedicated unit
- 1,8 FTE (**project manager** + officer)

2013
- Postgraduate Unit
- 2,1 FTE + 0,5 FTE (**coord.**, 2 officers, secretary)

2016
- Postgraduate Unit
- 2,1 FTE + 1,5 FTE (**head**, project manager, 2 officers, secretary)

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My current position: main benefits for my institution

➤ Updated overview of organisation of doctoral education (internationally)

➤ In-depth knowledge of laws and regulations

➤ Advising Rectorate on any aspect related to doctoral education

➤ Continuous improvement of organisation (policy, quality...) and services (communication, support, training programme...)

➤ Stability, dedicated team, memory

➤ Improved interuniversity cooperation (joint projects)

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My current position: useful skills

- ✓ (International) experience of research and Academia (core business)
- ✓ Management and organisation experience
- ✓ Strategic thinking and planning
- ✓ Interpersonal skills
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Languages (English)
- ✓ Hability to learn by myself

Conclusion

Multi-faceted roles:

➢ Advisor

➢ Project manager

➢ Link between Rectorate, administration and academics

➢ Booster for further developments in doctoral education (staff fully dedicated to doctoral education)

A Professional at my institution

Working group

Discuss in groups:

You have just been informed that you will have the opportunity to hire a Professional in doctoral education:

1. Do you think it will be useful for your institution?
2. What will be the first task you will ask this professional to do?

An association for Professionals in Doctoral Education: why?

- Background and Motivation
- Community's interest
- Our Mission
- Services and potential benefits

Learning   Sharing   Advocating

Community's Interest
brief feasibility study

Providing opportunities for networking and community building

Convening working groups on specific "hot" topics in doctoral education

Promoting international job rotation and exchange opportunities

Connecting people with planned or recent research projects and research findings related to doctoral education

Facilitating member-driven working groups and special interest groups

Creating the opportunity to add the voice of professionals to the doctoral debate

Providing training for newly recruited staff members, employees and leaders

Providing a jobs board to serve hiring organizations and job seekers

Providing a platform for professionals to build their own online reputation

Promoting volunteering opportunities to enable newcomers to gain hands-on experience

Answers to: What could be the potential benefits of joining an association, 117 responses in total

Mission Statement

Mission: Leading professional resource for advancement of professionals with the ultimate goal to improve doctoral education in our institutions.

We want to do this by:

✓Establishing, promoting, and advocating professional standards and practices.

✓Helping higher education institutions understand the roles and potential of professional staff.

✓Promoting training resources and opportunities for advancement professionals.

✓Supporting professional growth and advancement for professionals.

✓Facilitating relationships and interaction among professionals.

PRIDE Network
Association for Professionals in Doctoral Education

Services and Benefits

Membership programs and services: guide and support professionals in their career and to further develop their competences

✓Training events and workshops

✓Membership platform that allows peers to interact and exchange

✓Online and openly accessible and freely usable resources

✓Facilitating the dissemination of information on doctoral education related news

✓Encouraging members to start discussion groups on specifically relevant topics and to position themselves as experts

✓Promoting internships, job rotations and staff exchange

Outlook 2018/19

PRIDE Network — Association for Professionals in Doctoral Education

- ✓ in November 2018: Webinar on "Transferable Skills"

- ✓ 25 + 26 March 2019: Training on "Transferable Skills" in Luxemburg

- ✓ 28 + 29 March 2019: Conference on "Services for postdocs" in Brussels (and GA)

- ✓ End August/beginning September 2019: Joint training event with UNICA "UNICA PhD Master Class"

Discussion forum

What will you discuss today?

Search Discussions... 🔍 New Discussion

All Discussions   Pinned Discussions   No Replies   My Discussions   My Replies

filter by tags 🏷 ⬇

Author	Discussion	Last Activity	Replies	Views	
	Collection of practices of information material for *Annina Müller Strassnig Published 4 months ago* Supervision PhD Programme	4 months ago	0	32	✏ 🗑
	Supervision Q&A *Stan Taylor Published 9 months ago* Supervision	9 months ago	34	217	✏ 🗑

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Text & Tools

Conflict Consultation - Dealing with crises and conflicts

Everybody working at a doctoral school knows several cases of conflict between doctoral students and their supervisors. Ways need to be found to deal with each case seperately but also to find an overall procedure to foster the needs of both sides. Humboldt Graduate School developed an interesting format of professional counselling and mediation, which proved to be highly effienct and may act as a role model for other Higher Education Institutions.

📅 September 5, 2017   By 👤 Lehmann   General, Toolkit   Conflict Consultation, Mediation, Counselling   0 Comment   Read More >>

Supporting Doctoral Supervision at the University of Graz

Gerald Lind describes the struggles at the University of Graz during the process of establishing the support unit to improve doctoral education "DocServices". Especially the met dissapproval by supervisors due to various reasons was striking. The DocServices team found a successful way of creating a basis of acknowledgement for a new supervisory culture within their institution.

📅 September 4, 2017   By 👤 Gerald Lind   General   Doctoral Education, Supervision   0 Comment   Read More >>
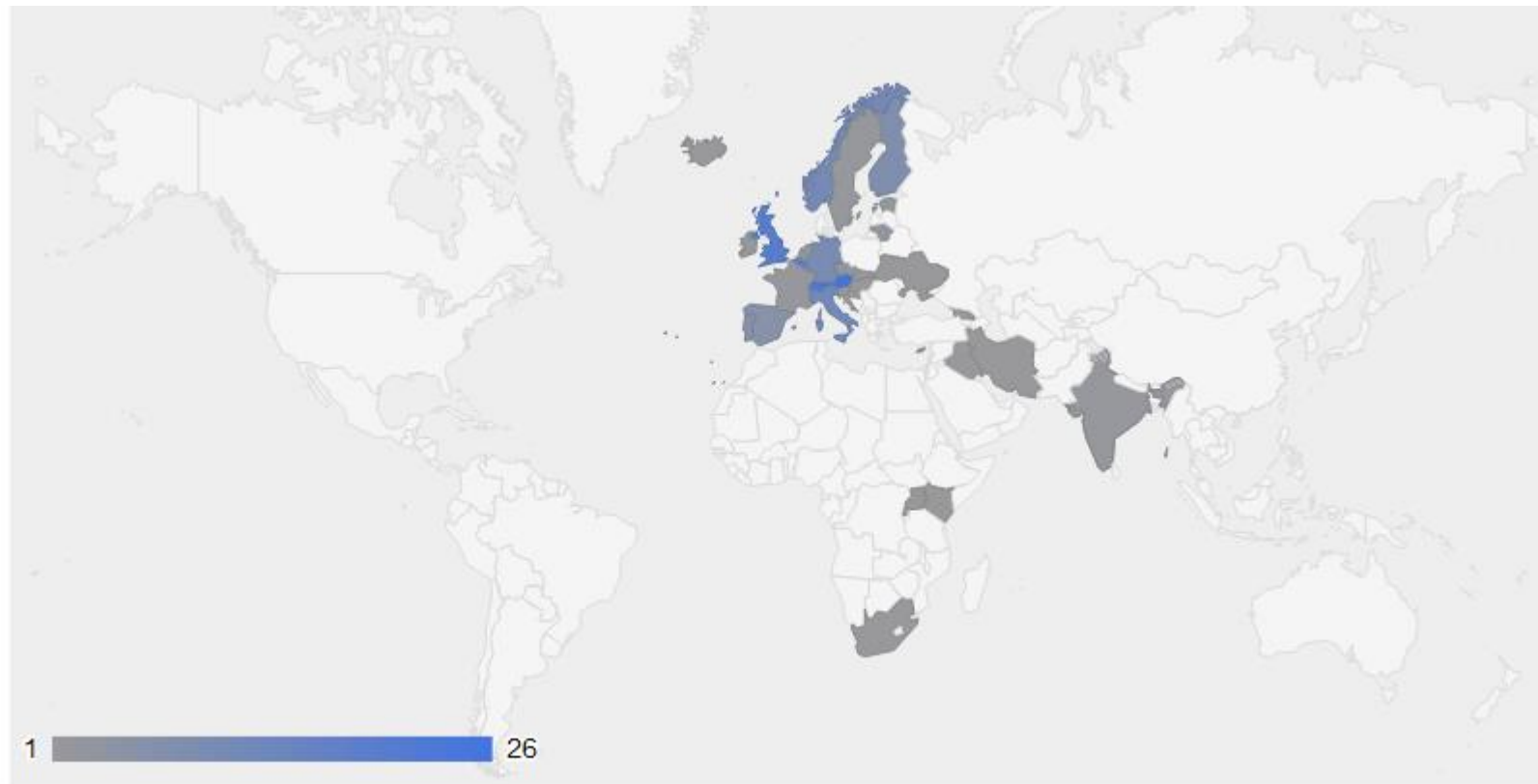
From PhD to Job Market. A case story from Ghent University

Nele Bracke from Ghent University describes the establishment of Doctoral Schools at her institution and their engagement in activities with other Flemish universities to foster future careers of their PhD students.

📅 September 4, 2017   By 👤 Nele Bracke   Skills Training, Toolkit   Doctoral School, Career support   0 Comment   Read More >>

PRIDE GeoChart

Contact

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http://www.pride-network.eu/

Thank you!