

Empowering Doctoral Candidates Through Personal Development Planning

Proceedings



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Foreword

Recent years witnessed a major change in doctoral education all over Europe. Whereas previously the focus was on the written dissertation and other publications, today the young researcher is considered as the major outcome of a doctorate. Doctoral holders acquire a number of skills and competences and experience a substantial gain by performing research and working independently. Changes in the employment sector of PhD holders and a serious demand for more research capacity strongly influenced this development.

As career paths and perspectives of doctoral holders nowadays go beyond the academic sphere, universities recognized their responsibility to prepare doctoral candidates for a wider job market to enhance their employability. Besides training in transferable skills, universities have developed a variety of strategies to encourage PhD candidates to reflect upon and evaluate their own research experiences and to plan for their own development. Personal Development Planning (PDP) has become a popular synonym to describe this process. Moreover, the many recommendations and templates for development planning provided by institutions and individuals likewise bear testimony to this trend and at the same time indicate the demand for planning tools.

Following this international trend, the Center for Doctoral Studies at the University of Vienna took the initiative and started the project *Empowering Doctoral Candidates through Personal Development Planning* together with the Comenius University Bratislava and Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica. Thanks to the financial support of the Austrian-Slovakian programme "Aktion Österreich-Slowakei/Akcia Rakúsko-Slovensko" two workshops for doctoral candidates could successfully be organized. The project aimed at contributing to the change of PhD training and more importantly, embed the relevance of personal development planning among

doctoral candidates. Our goal was to develop together with doctoral candidates planning tools for their personal development and encourage them to take a proactive approach to their personal and professional development. During the two workshops, eighteen doctoral candidates from the three universities worked together and exchanged their experiences and ideas on this topic. The first workshop took place in the mountain area of Tále in the Low Tatras in July 2013 and explored the meaning of personal development planning during the doctorate, its challenges and its benefits. The 2 ½ days interactive programme included both lectures from experienced trainers in this area as well as intensive group work and presentations by the doctoral candidates. The interdisciplinary and transnational composition of the group proved to be an additional asset to the discussion. The second workshop took place in Vienna in February 2014 and was the closing event of the project. According to the wishes of the participants, this workshop was more praxis oriented and focused on the topic of how to write a (research) proposal.

The project provided an excellent opportunity for all participants to reflect on how to improve personal development planning on both an institutional as well as individual level. Moreover, it paved the way for further co-operations between doctoral candidates of the three universities. The project team wants to thank all participants for their contributions and the lively discussions during the workshops. Special thanks are due to Kenneth Wann from Cardiff University and Sylvie Kohli from the University of Lausanne for their contributions for and during the workshops.

Alexandra Bitusiková, Matej Bel University
Dušan Meško, Comenius University Bratislava
Lucas Zinner, University of Vienna

The Importance of PDP



It was very interesting and enjoyable for me to meet with doctoral candidates and staff from the three universities and to take part in this new joint initiative. The institutions themselves and the students were noticeably different in their approach to doctoral education and to the principal agenda for the meeting, which was concerned with personal development planning from the perspective of a researcher.

I think that a number of elements of the workshop worked particularly well. The meeting began with an ice-breaker in which every attendee (trainer, staff and doctoral candidates) introduced him/herself in a one minute description, finishing with a single word that

he/she, or colleagues, felt best described their character or personality. Significant words such as passion and curiosity featured commonly.

Research Development Framework

In the lecture I tried to emphasise that personal development planning and frameworks such as the Researcher Development Framework (RDF), which is widely used in the UK, are vocabularies that enable us all to talk to each other. The important elements for all of us no matter where we are in our career are:

- 1) reflection and evaluation of where we are,
- 2) prioritisation and planning,
- 3) action, tailored to needs,
- 4) recording an evidence base of what we have done and the difference it makes.

An important consideration which seemed to be recognised by some participants is that whatever framework institutions adopt it must be fit for purpose, and have buy-in from everyone in the system, from Vice-Rectors down.

In breakout sessions we began by carrying out individually a partial SWOT analysis utilising three of the domains of the RDF, namely Knowledge and intellectual abilities (domain A), Personal effectiveness (domain B) and Engagement, influence and impact (domain D). It was important to convey the message that the first step in the construction of any individual personal development plan is to set individual goal(s) for both the short term and the long term, and to consider what is required of you to attain these goals. Everyone therefore needs to reflect on his/her own personal strengths and weaknesses, given the direction of travel he/she intends. The partial SWOT analysis enabled participants to direct their thinking to this end.

I think that participants identified the descriptors in the domains that were relevant, but equally found some descriptors ambiguous, and came up with alternative more transparent terms.

Attempts to generate a framework suited to their needs proved, I felt, to be more difficult for participants than anticipated. Individual groups debated what was required and did produce rough schemes. One conclusion for me was that although weaknesses might be identified and certain actions taken to remedy, the loop was often not closed sufficient attention not being paid to what difference or outcomes these actions made or achieved. In other words, there was not perhaps adequate attention given to how the participant might improve as an effective researcher as a consequence.

Outsiders View

The Gallery walks provided a measure of relaxation along with educational benefit and in particular the song presentations in the evening focussed attention on the theme in a light hearted way. I found, and I hope others did too, the time allocated for socialising or networking to be a valuable part of bringing people together.

Kenneth Wann, Trainer at the Workshop in Tále, July 2013

Kenneth Wann is Deputy Dean of the University Graduate College at Cardiff University. This position allowed Ken to gather extensive experience in Personal and Professional Development Planning and support doctoral candidates in this process. We invited Ken as expert and trainer to our first workshop in Tále, Slovakia and greatly benefited from his profound knowledge in this field.

My experience

When I started to be involved in the project, I was already quite convinced of the importance of planning on various levels but I had never used or thought to use a specific tool. Up till then I used to-do lists on post-its, alarms on my agenda or a written explicative narrative to support my planning. I became fully aware of the benefits of planning when I wanted to convince my line managers to let me go on a sabbatical year. Preparing a structured plan (which was in form of an explicative written narrative) with goals, why and how I want to achieve certain objectives was reassuring and convincing. I strongly believe that it is easier to take a greater advantage of an experience if you have thought about it seriously in the first place.

Why planning

Planning allows you to look at a project (long or short term) and reflect on the possibilities that exist in terms of routes and personal development, side opportunities or the outcomes that can be expected.



Beside the Wikipedia Definition (“Personal development includes activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, build human capital and facilitate employability, enhance quality of life and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations...”) this is the definition we found most appropriate for PDP in our context:

“Encourage / support students to reflect upon their past and or future experiences in order to set goals and plan how to reach them more efficiently”

A priority: get people involved

If the question has never been tackled before, lifelong personal or professional planning can seem really abstract or even useless because it may seem too uncertain. The first important goal of the project, in my opinion, resides in the necessity to make PhD candidates (and the university community at large) aware and convinced of the benefits of personal development planning. Once people are convinced, it will make the rest of the process much easier. When awareness is raised, these people should be offered some tools that they can use or adapt to fit their personalities and needs.

The work done with the group during the first workshop goes exactly in this direction: getting PhD candidates involved in the development of tools that suit their needs. More emphasis could maybe be put on showing evidence of the benefits of personal development planning by summarizing experiments or studies on the topic, in order to make users want to plan and not only think they have to do so. Working on short or middle term goals to start with is certainly also a good way not to be discouraged by the task.

Find the right tool

The research of existing materials led us to a categorisation of the tools according to three different axes:

1)

Past orientation	Future orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect upon what was done and acquired • Assess one’s successes / failures • Show evidence of what we know (learn to “sell” oneself) • Keep record of meetings, discussions, evaluations... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect upon future goals • Plan how to reach one’s goals • Plan skills improvement • Calendar, timeline forms, planning

2)

Individual	Collective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal calendar, questionnaire, checklist • Personal evaluation, reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, progress report • Personal coaching, advice on various aspects

3)

Simple	Complex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic paper forms to download 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex online platform • Password needed • Expensive programmes acquired by an institution

The work done during the workshop revealed a fourth category according to which the tools can be classified:

Narrative	Numeral
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Choosing one or the other will very much depend on the personality of the user. Some of us like to rate skills, goals and achievements with numbers, whereas others need to develop a narrative in order to reflect on this. It seems relatively pointless to “force” a “numeral kind of person” to use a narrative template and vice versa. In my opinion both options should be offered to potential users to try and find out what suits them most.

I find it important to also use PDP tools to keep track of achievements and show evidence of progress and successes (or failure) and construct on that.

Since I took part in this project, I realized that I am definitely of a “narrative kind” and that it makes a lot of sense to me to reflect on what I consider achievements, needs, goals. I will keep updating the “CAN” tool that was developed during the workshop and that I adapted to my needs. Besides, I also like to keep in mind the 4 Ds model for a more day-to-day organization:

Importance +	Delay	Do it now
	Dump it	Delegate
	- Urgency +	

Potential use of PDP tools at the University of Lausanne, International Relations Office

I am now planning the return to my home university after a very enriching stay in Vienna and I hope to be able to transfer what I learned on PDP to the context of the International Relations Offices. Some examples to work on are:

- promote a PDP tool for outgoing exchange students. Offer the opportunity to write a plan in the exchange application to take maximum advantage of their stay abroad. Make them aware of the benefits to plan in advance in order to reach their goals more efficiently,
- possibly offer a PDP session during the welcoming week for incoming exchange students,
- offer a PDP workshop for all,
- make one or several templates for PDP available on the website.

Sylvie Kohli, International Relations Manager, University of Lausanne

In spring 2013, Sylvie spent four months at the Center for Doctoral Studies at the University of Vienna and during this period she was actively involved in the project. Sylvie carried out most of the research on available PDP tools and participated in both workshops as an external trainer. The project greatly benefited from her critical comments and contributions.

Communication Skills

"We need to apply the science of communication to the communication of science" - Preston Manning

Communication is the activity of conveying information through the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, by speech, visuals, signals, writing, or behaviour. Communication may be intrapersonal or interpersonal, intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or non-linguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes. Communication requires a sender, a message, and a receiver and can occur across vast distances in time and space. The communication process is complete once the receiver has understood the message of the sender. Academic and scientific communication and rules are specific because academic and scientific language is unfamiliar to non-academics.

Communication is at the heart of science, both in making claims to new knowledge and then in transmitting the body of knowledge to both scientists and non-scientists. Today research results and outcomes have led to a growing need to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of one's research and the need to communicate research more widely - both to an academic and non academic audiences. Policies and practices are more likely to benefit society when they are informed by research knowledge. Academic research makes a crucial contribution to the development but



often findings are kept within the research community.

Effective communication through the media is not straightforward. It is influenced by many factors (professionalism of journalists, environments for public debate, ...). The media can play an important part in communicating research and knowledge to a wider audience, to disseminate important findings both to professionals and the public.

General tips & tricks for better scientific communication:

- Think before you talk.
- Put yourself in the others' shoes.
- Consider using the grandmother test: would she understand your message? If it is too complex for her, perhaps it is too tricky for your audience as well. Clarity and simplicity are crucial.
- Use words sparingly and precisely and write using crisp sentences that are straight to the point. Know what is important for listeners to know.
- Practice and be prepared to communicate with lay and professional journalists.
- Practice presentation and communication skills in one-to-one settings and to a wider audiences.
- Practice discussing and interpreting research results.
- Practice all available communication channels (including blogs and social media, tweets, videos, movies) and digital communicators.
- Practice engagement with media and other communicators, including the public. Scientific knowledge influences your decision-making. Science is fun. Scientific information returning to society maintains a demand for ongoing science.

Comments from Participants

The idea to spread scientific information is not to inform, but to communicate. Communication is not what is said, but what is heard. Communication is not what is explained, but what is understood. It is about painting verbal pictures. Every scientist wants to be heard and understood. Every scientist wants to feel valued and included. Know what you want to say and believe in your message. Repeat major points, increase your vocabulary, watch your tone and volume. Effective communication helps you to better understand what you are doing. Communication is a critical professional skill in any walk of life.

Dušan Meško, Comenius University Bratislava

Vice-Rector for Science and Postgradual Study at Comenius University Bratislava and part of the project team.

„As a doctoral candidate I very much appreciated the opportunity to have learnt more about PDP and also about proposal writing. The method of learning in an international environment was very fulfilling. I am grateful for new contacts with doctoral candidates from other universities that opened my view of international doctoral studies and gave me a chance to present my work outside Slovakia. I believe these experiences will be beneficial for my professional growth.“

Doctoral Candidate at Matej Bel University

„The first workshop made me be more aware of the importance of setting goals and prioritizing, while not forgetting to enjoy the process leading there. I believe the second workshop added to this value, by focusing on a critical point: proposal writing. It is worth so much to be well prepared when you set out to write your first proposal. As from the intervision, I've learned how helpful a true brainstorming (with all voices being heard) can be. Not only that, but also the fact that this brainstorming goes through phases in which the focus is changed can really be powerful to solve problems. On the other hand, I missed the ‚personal‘ aspect from PPDP. Now I know that I misinterpreted the meaning of the word, and it's meant as ‚individual‘, in the sense that each of us is responsible for his/her own (professional) growth. I also understand that it wouldn't have been possible to add more to the program, due to time and financial constraints, not to mention the goals of the initial proposal that was submitted. It took the process of proposal writing training to make me see this.“

Doctoral Candidate at the University of Vienna

„Mit der Teilnahme an diesem Projekt konnte ich meine Stärken und Schwächen besser einschätzen/analysieren, lernen wie man ein „proposal“ schreibt und worauf man dabei achten muss. Außerdem war es mir eine große Freude, mit so unterschiedlichen Persönlichkeiten zusammenzuarbeiten.

Ich kann daher behaupten, dass PDP auf jeden Fall bei meiner weiteren „Karriereplanung“ nicht fehlen wird“.

Doctoral Candidate at the University of Vienna

„The project gave me a chance to learn about the system of doctoral studies in Austria. I appreciated learning about experiences of doctoral candidates from other institutions that are rather different in some aspects (especially concerning the system), and similar in other aspects and contexts (mainly personal problems and concerns related to doctoral studies). The project managed to create a good network of doctoral candidates who otherwise would not have met. I hope further collaborations will continue. I learned new skills through creative and interactive workshop activities and realised which challenges the international setting can pose, but also which chances collaborations of diverse international teams can offer. Last but not least, the project helped me to realise how important it is to actively build one's own career, how much it is stressed abroad (in Austria) and how little is done in this area in Slovakia.“

Doctoral Candidate at Matej Bel University

„During the project „Empowering PhD candidates“, I became more aware of my personality and my own responsibility for an enriching professional and private life. Running a research project and having a private life often is a challenge. The personal and professional management tools we learned helped me better knowing myself, adjusting my aims and better communicating my needs and wishes to colleagues, friends and supervisors. This workshop therefore had a direct impact on my daily life. I am also happy that through participating in the workshop we will participate in further improving the offers of our universities for PhD-candidates. The peer-peer assisting techniques we trained will certainly turn out to be useful in the future. It's a striking experience to see how many problems PhD candidates have are similar and how much we can help each other.

I found the inter-cultural and interdisciplinary team extremely enriching. I enjoyed working together with international PhD-candidates and the very approachable supervising trainers.“

Doctoral Candidate at the University of Vienna

„In my opinion one can benefit a lot from this meeting; through practical training we could exercise not only our writing skills, but also our communication, social and leadership skills. At the same time the meeting was an opportunity to share our experiences with other PhD students, to speak about daily fears, to face and discuss different points of views and create a network. It was a very encouraging environment. Creative people always shed more light to your own work.“

Doctoral Candidate at Matej Bel University

„The workshops on PDP not only allowed us to gain valuable theoretical insight and practical experience on a professional but also on a personal level. The two-fold structure of the project provided a sense of continuity that strengthened our community as well as created a purposeful and agreeable atmosphere. Especially the transnational setting made the experience truly memorable.“

Doctoral Candidate at the University of Vienna

„In the beginning, I must admit and honestly say that my participation in the project was not planned. I joined the Matej Bel University group at the very last moment, because the PDP topic sounded interesting and very up-to-date for me. But right after the July session I was already looking forward to learn more and come to Vienna. During the first session in Tále I met very interesting and clever Ph.D. candidates with a great sense of humor. We have become friends very easily. The organizing team (Center for Doctoral Studies of the University of Vienna) and other partners, it is worthy to mentioned all of them :) - Lucas, Bianca, Michaela, Allison, Sylvie, Ken, etc. were very helpful, professional and nice at the same time. My expectations were fulfilled after the second session and I can say that they were even exceeded. During the second session in Vienna, we were implementing all theoretical knowledge we'd learned so far through workshops. The environment during both sessions was relaxed and opened. The brainstorming activities within my groups were fruitful and now we (participants) are seriously thinking about submitting an own project proposal to SAIA.“

Doctoral Candidate at Matej Bel University

„Thanks to the PDP-workshops I feel better prepared for the challenges I need to deal with. Although I still have to figure out a lot of things, I know now a bit better how to do this (or at least know how to plan to achieve my goals). Also, as trivial as it may sound: knowing that none of us is the only one facing certain problems (e.g. time management) makes things not easier but better bearable.“

Doctoral Candidate at the University of Vienna

„The project was an incredible opportunity to meet colleagues from different environments and universities, to share ideas between us. I found it very motivating for my future work and studies. I really enjoyed both of our workshops. I am still trying to apply PDP tools to my daily routine as a PhD candidate.“

Doctoral Candidate at the Comenius University Bratislava



Workshop Programmes

Workshop I, 8 - 10 July 2013
Tále, Slovakia

Monday 08.07.2013	Tuesday 09.07.2013	Wednesday 10.07.2013
	08:00 - 09:00 Breakfast	08:00 - 09:00 Breakfast
	09:00 - 12:15 Strengths-Weaknesses-Analysis & Action Plan	09:00 - 10:30 PDP tools
		10:30 - 11:00 Gallery walk
		11:00 - 12:30 Feedback/Evaluation Next steps
Arrival	12:15 - 13:45 Lunch	
14:00 - 14:30 Lunch	13:45 - 14:00 Presentation: Good Practices	12:30 Lunch
14:30 - 15:00 Get to know each other	14:00 - 16:15 Tool development	14:00 Departure
15:00 - 15:45 Group discussion		
15:45 - 16:45 Gallery walk		
16:45 - 17:30 Why bother with PDP?		16:15 - 16:30 Personal experiences with PDP tool
17:30 - 19:00 Free time	16:30 - 19:00 Free time	
19:00 - 20:00 Dinner	19:00 - 20:00 Dinner	
20:00 Evening programme	20:00 International Evening	

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Workshop II, 24 - 26 February 2014
Vienna, Austria

Monday 24.02.2014	Tuesday 25.02.2014	Wednesday 26.02.2014
	09:00 - 13:00 How to write the methodology and the work plan of a proposal	09:00 - 11:00 How to plan the financial issues for a project
		11:00 - 11:30 Agreement on next steps
12:00 Lunch	13:00 - 14:00 Lunch	11:30 Lunch
14:00 Presentation feedback loops		13:00 Departure
14:15 - 15:00 Review of the last half year	14:00 - 16:00 Intervision: Intercollegial consultation	
15:00 - 16:00 Introduction to the workshop		
16:00 - 18:00 How to write the goals of a proposal	16:30 Guided tour through the University of Vienna	
20:00 Dinner Gasthaus Königshofer	20:00 Dinner Melker Stiftskeller	

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Workshop Evaluation

Right after the first workshop in Tále a short online questionnaire was sent to all participants via e-mail. The goal of this questionnaire was to get structured feedback on different aspects of the workshop. Participants were asked to give feedback concerning the organization of the workshop, the location, the structure and content, the competences of the team and the trainer and in general the strengths and weaknesses of the whole event. Furthermore, participants had the possibility to suggest improvements for the follow-up workshop in February 2014.

In general, the participants were very satisfied with the workshop, its structure and content. Especially the group works, group discussions and the good working atmosphere were highlighted as strengths of the workshop. However, from the feedback it became evident that the programme was too dense and not enough time was scheduled for group works and discussion. Many participants also asked for more practical exercises. The feedback was included into the second workshop. As participants asked for a more praxis-oriented workshop, the project team decided to organize a training on how to write a proposal, as this is an activity researchers have to deal with all the time. The earlier doctoral candidates start practicing how to write a proposal, the easier it becomes for them.

The project team greatly appreciated the feedback and wants to thank all participants for their active contribution to make the project a successful adventure.



List of Participants

PhDs	Kamila	Benová	Matej Bel University
	Jozef	Buday	Comenius University
	Ivana	Demčíková	Matej Bel University
	Neriman	Dobek	University of Vienna
	Tomáš	Hlava	Comenius University
	Anton	Hrubon	Matej Bel University
	Tamara	Janecová	Comenius University
	Andrea	Komorníková	Comenius University
	Anna-Christina	Leitner	University of Vienna
	Marián	Macejka	Comenius University
	Ana Zora	Maspoli	University of Vienna
	Mojžiš	Michal	Matej Bel University
	Alex	Munteanu	University of Vienna
	Andrej	Némethy	Comenius University
	Jana	Pecníková	Matej Bel University
	Andrea	Poliaková	Matej Bel University
	Markus	Steenbock	University of Vienna
	Alexandros	Stylianidis	University of Vienna
Michal	Mojžiš	Matej Bel University	
Sona	Ondrasikova	Comenius University	

Project Team	Alexandra	Bitusikova	Matej Bel University
	Adriana	Csolleyová	Comenius University
	Michaela	Derntl	University of Vienna
	Bianca	Lindorfer	University of Vienna
	Dušan	Meško	Comenius University
	Alli	O'Reilly	University of Vienna
	Lisette	Schmidt	University of Vienna
	Nadezda	Zemanikova	Matej Bel University
	Lucas	Zinner	University of Vienna

Trainer	Sylvie	Kohli	University of Lausanne
	Kenneth	Wann	Cardiff University



Project Team

Alexandra Bitušíková

Alexandra Bitušíková received her PhD in social anthropology from Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. An experienced social anthropologist, Alexandra has been researching Central European cultures & societies for 20 years. Before joining the European Commission, DG Research in Brussels as a national expert in 2001, she was Director of the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies at Matej Bel University. In 2003 she joined the European University Association (EUA) in Brussels and started to work as a research programme manager mainly responsible for activities related to the development of doctoral education in Europe. She has been running EUA doctoral education projects and organized several international workshops and conferences on doctoral training, and was involved in the establishment and the launch of the EUA Council for Doctoral Education (CDE) in 2008. Since then she has been working at EUA as an external adviser in the field of doctoral education, and working as a full-time researcher at Matej Bel University in Slovakia.

Michaela Derntl

Michaela Derntl studied international development at the universities of Vienna and Valladolid. During her last academic year she started to work at the study grant authority in Vienna. From 2009 to 2011 Michaela worked at the international career and education portal 'Going International'. In 2011, she joined the Research Services and Career Development at the University of Vienna, where she is working in various projects related to doctoral education.

Bianca Lindorfer

Bianca Lindorfer holds a PhD in Early Modern History which she obtained at the European University Institute in Florence in 2009. She studied History at the universities of Vienna and Granada. After her graduation she took up a lectureship at the Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic followed by a research position at the European University Institute from 2004 to 2008. In late 2008 Bianca returned to the University of Vienna and supported the transition to the three year doctoral study programme and the establishment of the Center for Doctoral Studies.

Dušan Meško

Dušan Meško is university professor of internal medicine and since February 2011 Vice-Rector for Science and Postgraduate Study at Comenius University Bratislava. He graduated from Jessenius School of Medicine in Martin, Slovakia and has been working there as an internist since 1981. After a study stay at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, he became Head of the Department of Sports Medicine at the Martin University Hospital in 2002. Dušan is a member of several international societies and committees, has managed a number of projects funded by the European Commission, and since 2008 has been chief expert of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic for the Department of Sports Medicine.

Allison O'Reilly

Allison O'Reilly studied economics and sociology at the universities of Freiburg and Gothenburg. During her studies she worked for the student union as student service officer for two years. Allison joined the team of Research Services and Career Development at the University of Vienna in June 2010, where she has built up and is further developing a service for international PhDs.

Lisette Schmidt

Lisette Schmidt studied sociology and international development at the University of Vienna. In addition, she completed the Master "European Studies – EU Project Management" at the University of Applied Sciences Burgenland in 2011. From 2007 to 2010 she worked at the international office of the Vienna University of Economics and Business. Since June 2010 Lisette is part of the team Research Services and Career Development at the University of Vienna.

Nadežda Zemaníková

Nadežda Zemaníková is Lecturer in Modern German Literature at the Department of German Studies and since March 2012 Vice-Dean for pedagogical activities at the Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University Banská Bystrica. She studied German language and literature at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany and received her PhD in Literary Theory and History at the Comenius University Bratislava. Her present research focuses on various forms of literary remembrance, literary history of the GDR and humor in contemporary writing. Since 2010 Nadežda is president of the Association of German teachers in Slovakia.

Lucas Zinner

Lucas Zinner is Head of Research Services and Career Development at the University of Vienna. He began his career as a researcher in Mathematics, working in the fields of complex analysis, statistics and econometrics. After postdoctoral positions at Mid Sweden University and the Vienna University of Technology, Lucas joined the Austrian Science Fund, where he gained profound knowledge in research evaluation processes. In 2004, he joined the University of Vienna as Vice-Director of the Research Services and International Relations Office. Since 2007 he has been focusing on the reform of doctoral education and has been heavily involved in the re-organization of doctoral education at his home university. Under his management, the Center for Doctoral Studies was established, which in 2013 became integrated into the service unit Research Services and Career Development. He is currently involved in various international projects and conferences related to the Research - Education – Innovation triangle.

Final Comments

Doctoral education in Europe and worldwide has seen significant changes in recent years that are sometimes described as a „silent revolution“. These changes are a response to several challenges: the changing nature of the labour market in the global world; the European Union agenda in research and education with the objective to make Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy; and the inter-governmental European initiative called the Bologna Process. The aim of the Bologna Process is to create the European Higher Education Area by introducing and implementing reforms that will improve cooperation among universities, raise quality, foster mobility of students and academic staff and increase employability for graduates.

An increasing number of European universities respond to the new challenges by implementing innovative strategies in their everyday practice. The University of Vienna is one of the universities that have taken the new challenges seriously. The Center for Doctoral Studies at the University of Vienna has developed new ways of promoting the development of professional careers of doctoral candidates and young researchers not only at the university, but also outside of it and abroad. One of the regions where assistance and advice is needed is the neighbouring Slovakia. Doctoral education in Slovakia has had a long and strong tradition, but it has stagnated without any significant changes for several years or even decades.

Our colleagues and friends from the Center for Doctoral Studies at the University of Vienna offered an excellent opportunity for the Comenius University in Bratislava and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica to participate in the common project *“Empowering Doctoral Candidates through Personal Development Planning”*, funded by the *Austria-Slovakia Action*. They did not need to do so. They have many other internal things to do. But thanks to our good working contacts and

relationships, they decided to help, to offer their experience to enrich the Slovak system of doctoral education, to empower both the Slovak and Austrian doctoral candidates, and to strengthen the network of doctoral candidates and doctoral professionals in both countries. These objectives were fulfilled in every single aspect.

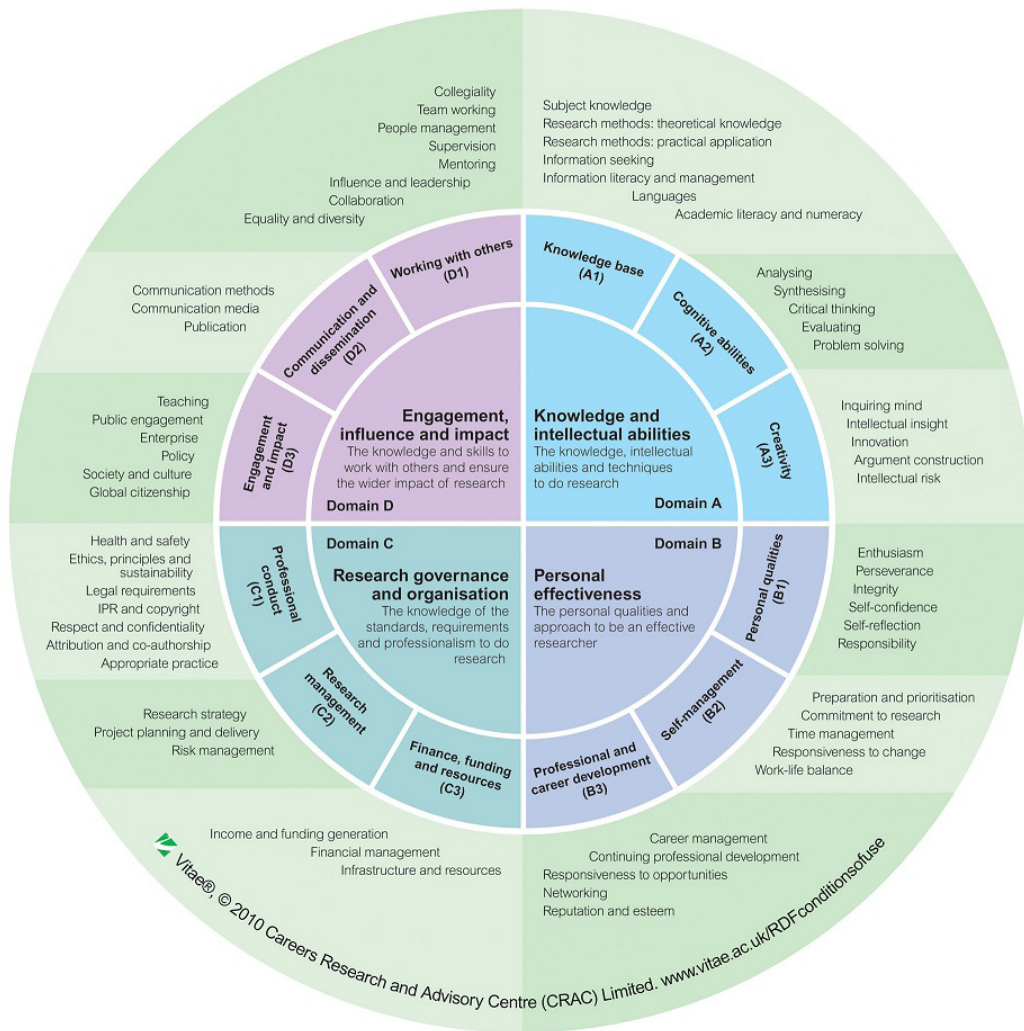
I myself enjoyed the project very much. I know that our Slovak doctoral candidates, but also my Slovak “senior” colleagues, Dušan Meško and Nadja Zemaníková, found the project very beneficial for our institutions. The testimonials of the doctoral candidates say it all. The project has raised the awareness of the importance of personal and professional planning among doctoral candidates. That itself is an important benefit appreciated by most of participants. And what is an added value? The fact that doctoral candidates involved in the project want to continue and prepare a common new project.

I would like to express my great gratitude, my big thank you to all members of the Center for Doctoral Studies at the Vienna University for their enormous efforts, good will and hard work. My (our) special thanks go to: Lucas Zinner, Bianca Lindorfer, Michaela Derntl, Lisette Schmidt, Sylvie Kohli, Allison O’Reilly and others in the Austrian team, and to Ken Wann, our excellent trainer. I (we) enjoyed working with you all and look forward to our further collaboration.

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Researcher Development Framework



Selection of Further Literature

- Jim Austin & Bruce Alberts (2012): Editorial: Planning Career Paths for Ph.D.s, Issue 07 September 2012
- Sue Clegg & Sally Bradley (2006): Models of Personal Development Planning: practice and processes, British Educational Research Journal, 32:1, 57-76
- Svein Kyvik & Terje Bruen Olsen (2012): The relevance of doctoral training indifferent labour markets, Journal of Education and Work, 25:2, 205-224
- Jackson, N. (2001): Personal Development Planning: What Does it Mean?, PDP Working Paper 1, Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre.
- The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, Guidelines Advisory Group (2009): Personal development planning: guidance for institutional policy and practice in higher education.



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