

Module 4: Career paths, participation, soft skills

The aim of this module is to provide doctoral candidates with the relevant skills, capabilities and fundamental knowledge to independently pursue their career prospects in academia, industry, civic society and politics in a democratic society.

They will be familiarised with organisational and legal forms, areas of activity and working processes in a range of fields and will acquire the essential foundations of the necessary soft skills. The module focusses on developing the participants' international career prospects and on participative possibilities in the individual professional fields. The doctoral candidates will be taught about forms of participation in academic, scientific, civic decision-making and education policy bodies that function on principles of co-determination and self-governance.

Topic I: Career paths and participation (examples):

- Starting a company
- Careers in science and academia (international)
- Careers in (scientific) policy-making (international)
- Careers in academic management
- Participation in academic, scientific and education policy decision-making bodies
- Self-governance and social participation

Topic II: Soft skills (examples):

- Time management
 - Presentation techniques
 - Conflict management
- › Format: flexible, dependent upon the specific example.
- › Attendance: the module is compulsory. Doctoral candidates must attend at least one workshop or seminar on each topic.
- › The individual workshops will be organised by the GEI either internally or with external partners, according to demand and resources. Other formats required for qualification can be arranged independently and externally by the individual PhD candidates.

Programme for 2 and 3 December 2021

Veronika Fuest: Understanding the science system and academic culture in Germany

International graduate schools and research projects present many opportunities for cooperation with researchers from many countries. However, despite much global standardisation, collaboration may be complicated by cultural differences. When they first arrive in Germany, young researchers in particular may be unfamiliar with the peculiarities of the country's academic culture and science system: aspects such as the institutional setting and major actors in the field of science from the national to the local levels, power relations and explicit and implicit rules and regulations –within their university, faculty, school or project team. Cultures of communication, competition and cooperation, hierarchical and lateral relationships, and the ways authority is enacted may vary considerably, both internationally and within academic (sub-) organisations.

Misunderstandings, conflicts and insecurity can consume time and energy. Such situations may arise from divergent preconceptions and expectations concerning, for example, supervisory relationships, leadership, responsibilities, personal interaction, gender roles, professional performance, and research integrity in particular traditions.

[Workshop objectives](#)

Junior researchers from around the world are made aware of specific aspects of German academia and academic culture. The workshop offers ways to adapt and acclimatise to the system. By understanding behaviour and interactions it is easier to navigate academic 'shark tanks' and to be proactive while not crossing any boundaries. Uncertainty is reduced enabling time and personal resources to be better utilised.

[About the trainer](#)

Veronika Fuest is a certified consultant (systemic transactional analysis) and trainer with comprehensive international experience. She has multi-disciplinary academic qualifications, has worked on collaborative research projects at various scientific institutions, taught political anthropology, and carried out various assignments in science management (consultancy, management of ombudsman affairs, internal process moderation), and had conducted institutional analyses within scientific organisations.