



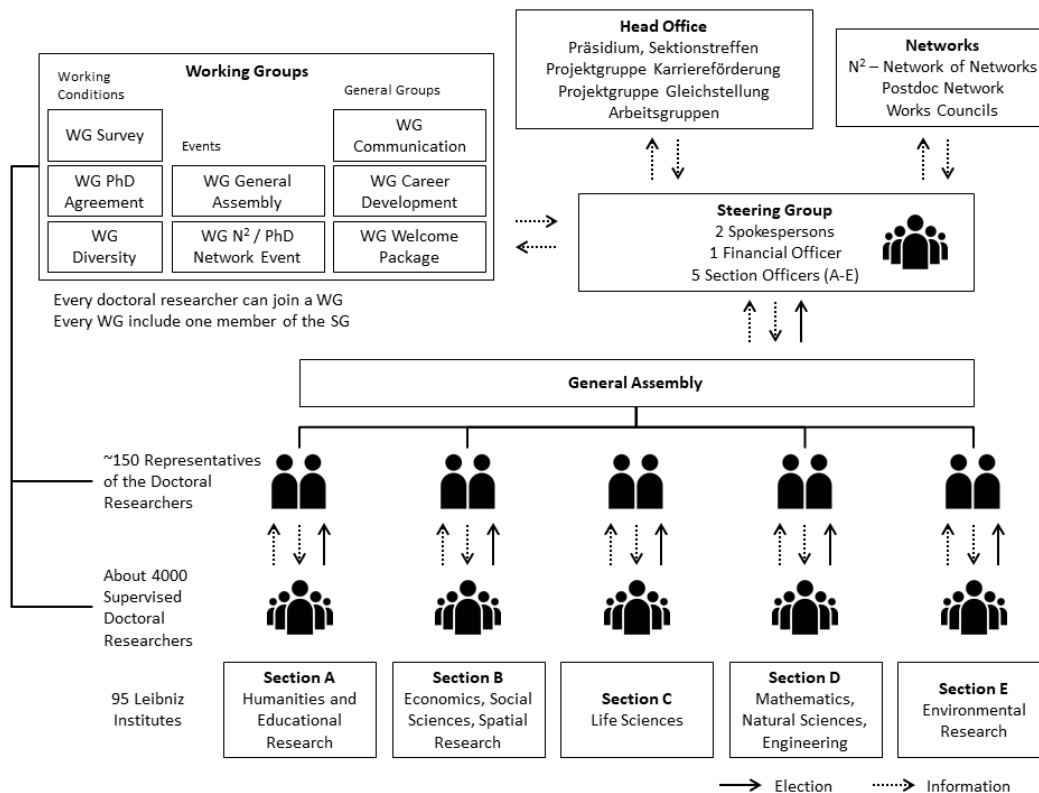
Leibniz PhD Network

Actions and Perspectives 2019

Structure and Aims of the Leibniz PhD Network

The Leibniz PhD Network represents the approximately 4.000 doctoral researchers of currently 95 Leibniz research institutes and research museums. It was founded on September 22, 2016 by an initiative of doctoral researchers within the Leibniz Association. The aim is to achieve an improved networking of all doctoral researchers of the then 89 member institutions and the establishment of a platform for vivid exchange - not only about research, but also about current societal and political issues and their connection to the work of young researchers.

The PhD Network is open for all doctoral researchers within the Leibniz Association and considers itself to be their voice, which implements different interests and aims in multifaceted ways. The network has a bottom-up structure. The doctoral researchers of each research institute or research museum elect their doctoral researcher representatives. These elected representatives meet annually in September during the *General Assembly*. At this occasion, the representatives elect two *Spokespersons* and the *Financial Officer* of the Leibniz PhD Network. In addition, each section elects its *Section Officer*. These eight representatives constitute the *Steering Group* which coordinates the activities of the network and represents the network within the Leibniz Association and towards the general public.



The continuous work of the PhD Network is organized through working groups which - in consultation with the Steering Group - realize the various aims of the network (see “Working groups of the PhD Network”). These working groups are open to all doctoral researchers within the Leibniz Association.

The General Assembly of the Leibniz PhD Network

The General Assembly 2019

The next General Assembly of the Network will take place from 26-28.09.2019 at the Potsdam Institute for Climate (PIK) in Potsdam. The event was co-organized by the PIK and the Steering Group. This year, the event includes some new formats. During a session called “Networking Forum” the doctoral representatives are informed about the structures and activities of the Leibniz PhD Network and its working groups, as well as about the N2 network, and can actively exchange information with respective active members on their questions and voice their own ideas. The network hopes that this will provide more space for exchange and discussion, which was desired by the participants of the past General Assemblies. In addition, there is an optional get-to-know-you program and Prof. Dr. Debora Weber-Wulff from the HTW in Berlin talks about “On Good Scientific Practice and Power Abuse” - a topic that in the year 2018/2019 received a lot of attention in the doctoral network and the general scientific landscape of Germany. Furthermore, in an open discussion and interactive, digital session, the “Discussion on the long-term agenda”, possible new topics will be determined.

The Working Groups of the Leibniz PhD Network

The continuous work of the PhD Network is organized in working groups which realize specific aims of the network, e.g. the organization of events. These working groups are open to all doctoral researchers within the Leibniz Association. Currently, there are seven working groups within the Leibniz PhD Network whose tasks and achievements are described below.

Working Group “Events“- Second N2 Joint Event „From Research to Application“

The Leibniz PhD Network is part of a broader association of doctoral networks, the Network of Networks - N2. The largest association of doctoral researchers in Germany brings together doctoral researcher of the three major independent research communities, the Leibniz PhD Network, the Helmholtz Juniors, and the Max Planck PhDnet. This year, the second joint event "From Research to Application" is scheduled from 13. to 15. November.

At this event, leading scientists from both the academic field and industry will come together with doctoral researchers of the various research fields of N2. In this interdisciplinary atmosphere, presentations, workshops and open debates will be held regarding the role of basic research and how it can contribute to commercial interests. The exchange between doctoral researchers and experienced pioneers as well as thinking basic research and industry together serves mutual exchange, growing networks between disciplines and the discovery of new perspectives.

Working Group “Communication“

As central means of communication, the PhD Network replaced the monthly newsletter by a weblog (<https://leibniz-phd.net/>) which regularly informs about the network’s activities. For the representatives, the blog provides important information and documents for informing the local institutes and provide help on specific topics, like the local structure of the representative bodies. This blog has been proven an easy-access way to efficiently and effectively transfer the information on activities to the representatives, which is demonstrated by more than 12.000 visits in 2019 alone. Content is provided in small units which can be found and shared in a flexible manner without the necessity of reading and forwarding e-mails.

The blog is primarily aimed at doctoral researchers within the Leibniz Association as well as the interested public. The domain is linked at the subpage of the PhD Network at the Leibniz Association and the blog itself refers to the Leibniz Association to emphasize their relationship.

Content management

The network covers all the institutes of the Leibniz Association. This decentralized organization is reflected in the network’s working groups. In the Leibniz Doctoral

Network, the working groups have the key task of implementing the ideas and projects that are intended to benefit the doctoral areas within the Leibniz PhD Networks' community.

The ability to store documents and data centrally and edit them simultaneously facilitates the network's centralized collaboration. For this reason, a cloud hosting service was set up in May this year, to which the members of the workgroups have access. The service is offered by Nextcloud which provides both cloud storage capabilities for documents and data, as well as the possibility to edit the documents in a web interface.

Corporate design

The Working Group Communication presented a first version of a new logo design to the GA in 2018, improved and implemented it in 2019. The new logo is the starting point for a corporate design / style guide on which all documents, presentations, and publications will be aligned in the future.

Working Group "Survey": Survey among the doctoral researchers of the Leibniz Association

Between November 2017 and February 2018, the Leibniz PhD Network conducted a survey among doctoral researchers regarding their working conditions at the Leibniz research institutes and research museums. The survey was developed in close collaboration with different stakeholders within the Leibniz Association (e.g. the Leibniz Head Office, staff council and some Leibniz institutes). More than 1,000 doctoral researchers participated in the survey launched by the Leibniz PhD Network in November 2017. Overall, we achieved a high response rate of 40,5% indicating an overall interest in the topic. The analysis represents the first detailed and quantitative description about the working conditions of doctoral researchers in more than 90 Leibniz Institutes and Research Museums. The results were published in February 2019 and have been met with wide interest by both the media and leaders of the Leibniz Association's institutes. The head office supported the distribution of these results and the Leibniz PhD Networks suggestions for change have been discussed in the presidium, the section meetings, the general assembly of the administration, as well as working groups, such as the AK Recht und Personal and furthermore in the project group for career development under coordination of Prof. Jutta Allmendinger. Based on the results the Leibniz PhD Network suggested changes to the working paper on the doctorate in the Leibniz Association.

Data on doctoral education in Germany are still rare. Since the Max Planck PhDnet and the Helmholtz Juniors also conduct surveys on a regular basis, there are opportunities for collaboration. Since spring 2018, N² has been working on a harmonized survey and for possible meta-analysis of the individual reports. The roll-out of the survey is scheduled for October 2019.

Working Group: “PhD Agreement”

The subgroup “PhD Agreement” was founded on the General Assembly 2017 and set the goal to pass the final template for a generic supervision agreement at which gives an overview of the network’s requirements for proper supervision at the General Assembly 2019.

Working Group: „Preventing Power Abuse“

Power Abuse refers to the systematic abuse of hierarchic structures by those of higher position within the hierarchy. Doctoral researcher often experience power abuse as they are in a hierarchal dependent position that favors their supervisors. Several cases of power abuse in the scientific community have been discussed in the public this year.

This year the Leibniz Doctoral Network has begun to deal with the issue of power abuse. The aim is to better understand the problem and to derive recommendations for action and demands from this understanding.

Against this background, members of the working group attended the workshop "Preventing Power Abuse" in Berlin.

The “Zukunftsworkshop”- Half-Time Meeting of the Working Groups

The format of the "Future Workshop" had been very successful introduced in 2018. This year it took place from 05.-06.07.2019 at the Leibniz HQ in Berlin. A total of 35 doctoral researchers from 25 institutes participated. The aim of this meeting - taking place about half a year after the GA - aimed to facilitate exchange among the active members of all working groups and to take stock of the goals achieved so far what lies still ahead. This Workshop was success as it produced new working groups and new content like the welcome package.

The work of the groups is usually organized via Skype calls and e-mail exchanges, personal meetings are rarely or not possible at all due to the large spatial distance.

Thus, a meeting in person of all active members was the central aim. It enabled identifying, planning and implementing cross working group projects. The meeting had a significant impact on further work within and between the working groups and has greatly contributed to the focus of the plans and speeding up their implementation. The feedback of the participants was also very positive. Due to its success the future workshop is suggested to remain an integral part of the Leibniz PhD Networks activities.

Collaboration with other doctoral researcher networks

N² - The Network of Networks

In the beginning of March 2017, the spokespersons of the Leibniz PhD Network, the Max Planck PhNet and the Helmholtz Juniors decided to engage in a structured collaboration. Therefore, N² was founded as a meta-network. The doctoral researchers of the Max Planck Society and Helmholtz Association already played an important advisory role in the foundation of the Leibniz PhD Network. Since the foundation of N², regular phone calls and personal meetings of the N² board, which consists of the spokespersons of the three networks, have been taking place. Often, representatives from the administrations of the three scientific societies are also present during the personal meetings.

N² represents the interests of approx. 14.000 doctoral researchers at the institutes of the three non-university research societies. After more than two and a half years since its foundation, there have been several achievements from this cooperation. The N² published a political position paper and a position paper on power abuse and conflict resolution, which gained attention amongst our networks. For the three doctoral researcher networks, this collaboration is of great value, as it enables a constant exchange of knowledge and best practices beyond the institutions and individual networks. Furthermore, the N² has become a dialogue partner on doctoral education for stakeholders, like the DFG. Additionally, the external visibility of each of the networks is enhanced by the joint representation.

Networking within the Leibniz Association

For the Leibniz PhD Network, networking and exchange of content with various stakeholders within the Leibniz Association are of great importance. Since the foundation of the Network, several meetings have taken place which initially had

the purpose of making the Leibniz PhD Network known as a relevant representative body to the Association.

Since the GA in 2018, members of the Steering Group and the Working Groups participated in the following meetings and events:

- Participating at the first General Assembly of the Leibniz PostDoc Network in Berlin (19.10.2018)
- PBL Jahrestagung (12.12.2018, Berlin)
- PG Karriereförderung (29.01.2019, Berlin)
- Präsidiumssitzung (12.03.2019, Berlin)
- Leibniz KIM-AG Sitzung (21.03.2019, Berlin)
- Participating at the Leibniz section meetings (April and May 2019)
- AK Recht und Personal (12.05.2019, Berlin)
- Vernetzungstreffen der Ombudspersonen (26.06.2019, Berlin)
- PBL Qualifizierungsseminar (04./05.09.2019, Erfurt)
- PG Gleichstellung (20.09.2019, Berlin)
- Netzwerktreffen Diversität (26.09.2019, Berlin)

Political Activities

In October 2017, the Leibniz PhD Network, as part of N², was coauthor of a political statement entitled “A future for future scientists”. In 2019, the network published a position paper on power abuse and conflict resolution. (www.n2-network.net)

As part of the implementation of the suggested structures the N² is in exchange with the DFG (16.08.2019, Bonn). And will further participate at workshops on doctoral education. Content of the discussion was the length of a doctorate, its payment, and structures for the prevention of power abuse.