

Leibniz PhD Supervision Agreement

between doctoral researchers and the supervision committee at Leibniz institutions (draft)

*This PhD Agreement can be regarded as a template for all Leibniz Institutes and Museums. Thus, **reasonable** modifications and/or amendments are possible and might be needed for each institution, respectively but should be kept to a minimum because this agreement is based on the standard of quality of the Leibniz Association.*

The doctoral researcher and the Leibniz institution enter into the following supervision agreement for the preparation of the doctoral thesis. This is to ensure the high quality of the academic qualification and the best possible supervision and counseling of the doctoral researcher. The supervisors and the doctoral researcher will exchange information on the topics and progress of the dissertation project on a regular basis and will consider strategic aspects regarding career options for the doctoral researcher. Additionally, the supervision agreement defines the rights and duties of the involved parties. The supervision agreement is to be signed at the beginning of the dissertation project. It will terminate upon completion of the thesis defense.

Good Scientific Practice

The PhD committee and the doctoral researcher agree to abide by the rules of Good Scientific Practice of the Leibniz Association¹. For the doctoral researcher, this includes consulting with supervisors or other persons of trust in cases of doubt. For the supervisors, this expressly means the duty to respect the copyright provisions for texts or findings of the doctoral researcher and to acknowledge them accordingly.

Information on the doctoral researcher:

Surname, name:

Date of birth:

University degree:

University of qualifying degree:

Starting date of employment at the institution²:

¹ English version: https://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/fileadmin/user_upload/downloads/Forschung/Leibniz_Association_GUIDELINES_Good_Scientific_Practice_2015.pdf; German version: https://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/fileadmin/user_upload/bilder/Forschung/Forschungsthemen/Leibniz-Gemeinschaft.Leitlinie_gute_wissenschaftlicher_Praxis.27.11.2015.pdf

² The dissertation phase begins with the beginning of employment.

Information on the dissertation project:

The preliminary title of the doctoral thesis is³:

The dissertation project will be carried out at the Faculty of _____
_____ of the University of

4.

The doctoral thesis will be carried out according to the doctoral regulations of the respective faculty.

Thesis supervisor (at the university)⁵: _____

(if applicable) Second thesis supervisor (at the university): _____

PhD Committee

To ensure the supervision at the institution a PhD committee consisting of at least two employees of the institution will be set up⁶. If applicable, a third external supervisor is added to the committee. The committee will be selected jointly by the doctoral researcher and the first supervisor within the first six months (in consultation with the potential members). The doctoral researcher may propose potential committee members. The committee consists of at least two supervisors of which one should be member of the same department or working group and the other should not be member of the same department/working group. In addition, one of the two should be a junior postdoctoral fellow. The supervisor who is best qualified to supervise the dissertation project substantially will be the first supervisor. The second supervisor will be competent to supervise the doctoral researcher concerning structural and organizational issues.⁷ One of the supervisors should be someone with managerial responsibility. The committee must be informed about all important changes during the doctorate.

³ The preliminary title may be given any time until the submission of the exposé (see following section).

⁴ The faculty and/or the university may be given any time until the submission of the exposé (see following section).

⁵ The thesis supervisor(s) may be given any time until the submission of the exposé (see following section).

⁶ The supervisors or the institution can be the same as the thesis supervisor(s) at the university.

⁷ An additional substantial supervision from the second supervisor or an additional organizational or structural supervision from the first supervisor can also be given. This ensures that a postdoctoral researcher or a researcher from another department/working group can be first supervisor. A possible third supervisor may also supervise the dissertation project substantially or concerning structural and organizational issues.

First supervisor at the institution (hereinafter referred to as “first supervisor”):

Second supervisor at the institution (hereinafter referred to as “second supervisor”)⁸:

Third supervisor (if applicable external) (hereinafter referred to as “third supervisor”):

Obligations of the doctoral researcher:

- to submit an exposé of the planned work to the PhD committee within six months of the beginning of the doctoral phase, containing a preliminary time schedule and work plan. This document will be prepared in consultation with the PhD committee and constitutes a reference for the further course of the doctorate,
- to inform themselves about the requirements to conduct a doctorate at the associated university (e.g. credit points, lectures, enrollment etc.; see respective doctoral degree regulations)⁹,
- to register at the appropriate faculty of the associated university at latest upon submission of the exposé,
- to arrange a meeting with the PhD committee at least once a year to discuss and record the progress of the work,
- to present the progress of the research work at least once a year in an appropriate format (doctoral colloquia etc.) in the presence of the PhD committee,
- to participate regularly in the offerings of the institution relevant for doctoral researchers (seminars, colloquia, group meetings and lectures)¹⁰,
- to participate in at least two soft skill courses¹¹ with paid leave and cost takeover by the institution, e.g. scientific writing, presentation skills, writing proposals, etc.

Obligations of the PhD committee:

- to frame the research question in such a way that its completion is possible within at least four years - taking into account the project tasks associated with the employment,
- to comment on the exposé and record the results in written form,
- to review the planned progress of the dissertation (time and work schedules),
- make sure meetings between the supervision committee, including the doctoral researcher and the supervisor(s) at the university (if not the same person) take place at least once per year,
- to provide feedback on manuscripts and written reports in a mutually agreed period,

⁸ The second and/or third supervisor may be given any time until the submission of the exposé (see following section).

⁹ International doctoral researchers with a native language other than German or who are not familiar with the German university system will receive assistance provided by the institution (e.g. through the PhD representative(s) or other responsible contact persons at the institution).

¹⁰ Depending on the offers at the institutions, these can also be conducted by external providers.

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- to support the participation of the doctoral researcher in professionally relevant events (at least minimum of one international meeting, conference, workshop, etc.) through paid leave and reimbursement of costs,
- to provide the doctoral researcher with the possibility to gain teaching experience (supervision of internships, bachelor/master theses) or to hold lectures¹²,
- to support the doctoral researcher in the planning and application for financial resources, considering scholarships, travel grants or stays abroad,
- to discuss possibilities for the potential extension of the work contract with the doctoral researcher in good time.

The first supervisor agrees to provide the doctoral researcher with a meeting appointment at least once per quarter at the request of the doctoral researcher.

In addition, every party has to ensure that the statutory holiday and recreational periods are complied with.

Once a year future career opportunities are to be discussed with the doctoral researcher by an eligible person (e.g. as part of an employee appraisal interview). After completing the doctorate or upon employment ends the doctoral researcher will be provided a qualified certificate of employment (to be written by the first supervisor).

Dealing with conflicts

In the case of conflicts arising between the doctoral researcher and one or more supervisors, those affected may contact the responsible ombudsperson of the respective institution. The ombudsperson mediates impartially between the parties. In the case of the provisional termination of the doctorate, all participants will seek consensual, practical solutions with the support of the ombudsperson.

Working time

The PhD committee and the doctoral researcher jointly determine which amount of the project working time can be used for the PhD project. At least one third of the working time at the institution should be available for working on the PhD project.

Involvement in institutional bodies

The doctoral researcher is given the opportunity to perform the work as a representative of all doctoral researchers at the Leibniz institution or as a member of other committees (works council, equal opportunities representative, etc.), provided that the doctoral researcher is available for this and is officially elected.

Workspace

The institution provides the doctoral researcher with the necessary work equipment and workspace. This includes a writing desk and/or laboratory space, as well as computer and software equipment that is appropriate for the operational requirements and scientific objectives. For longer writing phases, a suitable workspace which allows for concentrated

¹² The doctoral researcher cannot be forced to hold lectures.

work in a quiet environment must be provided. At the end of the doctoral period (writing/finishing the doctoral thesis, exam preparation), the doctoral researcher will be given the opportunity to work at home in compliance with the PhD committee and the respective project/workgroup management.

Special circumstances

In case the doctoral researcher has to provide nursing care for relatives and/or children, as well as longer times of absence due to pregnancy or sickness, individual solutions (e.g. delay of the graduation time, home office) will be arranged with the PhD committee in order to ensure completion of the PhD graduation.

The participants (PhD committee¹³ and doctoral researcher) confirm with their signature that they have read and accepted the supervision agreement between doctoral researchers and the Leibniz institution. The doctoral researcher and the PhD committee are obliged to comply with the supervision agreement. Each participant will receive a copy of the supervision agreement and the guidelines for doctoral studies at Leibniz institutions. The original document will be kept at the Leibniz institution at a central location (e.g. personnel file).

Date, signature: _____
doctoral researcher

Date, signature: _____
first supervisor

Date, signature: _____
second supervisor

Date, signature: _____
third supervisor

Date, signature: _____
head of research project/working group/department for
information/attention (if not a member of the supervision committee)

¹³The second- and third supervisor may subsequently sign after their nomination / acceptance to the PhD committee.