



Writing Contest of the Graduate Academy and the Heidelberg Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences (HGGS)

“Super-Vision – Successful PhD Partnerships and Where to Find Them”

While there are many factors that can influence doctoral candidates' PhD experiences, both in terms of their performance and achievements as well as their intellectual growth over time, the relationship between them and their supervisor is likely to have the most significant impact. As such, effective doctoral supervision plays a key role in ensuring PhD candidates' general success.

In the best of cases, rather than establishing rigid hierarchical relationships, candidates and supervisors constitute strong, mutually beneficial partnerships which are based on open communication and positive reinforcement. This enables them to build on each other's strengths, knowledge bases and areas of expertise, often allowing them to make outstanding achievements in the process.

More importantly, positive experiences of doctoral supervision are likely to have equally beneficial long-term consequences for both parties even years after a candidate's original thesis submission.

By creating lasting bonds between different generations of academics, a positive experience of doctoral supervision may often foster the establishment of emergent academic networks, ultimately laying out the foundation for further research collaboration. More often than not, such networks will in turn end up influencing even younger generations of researchers as the supervisor-PhD candidate cycles grow and diversify. In addition, this process is likely to have an even broader area of influence as it frequently creates links between universities and non-academic sectors, in particular when former PhD candidates pursue career paths outside of academia.

With all of this in mind, we would like to invite current PhD candidates at all dissertation stages to share with us their positive thesis supervision experiences. Here are some guiding ideas to help you get started. However, feel free to come up with your own - these are just some examples!

Guiding Ideas

- How has your supervisor's encouragement helped you through difficult phases of your project?
- What do you appreciate most about your relationship to your supervisor and how, specifically, has your research benefitted from it?
- In which situation(s) do you recall having been thankful for your supervisor's support?
- Do you recall a situation where you and your supervisor benefitted from each other's feedback and/or counsel?
- What good decisions have you made based on your positive relationship with your supervisor?
- In which way have you and your supervisor dealt successfully with differences in opinion and/or general disagreements?

What are we looking for?

Original, creative and inspirational texts portraying your positive experiences of doctoral supervision.

How to participate? (Submission guidelines and eligibility)

- Submit a **written text of 8.000 characters or less**. (The genre and style of the submission are open so feel free to be creative!)
- Contributions can be in **English and/or German**.
- The contest is open to all PhD candidates who are currently accepted at a Faculty of Heidelberg University (Annahme als Doktorand).
- Please give the following **details** when submitting your text by email: doctoral discipline, faculty, admission date by the faculty, name of primary supervisor.
- The **deadline** for submission is **June 1, 2020**.

Entries (as a Microsoft word or PDF document) should be sent to graduateacademy@uni-heidelberg.de

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some prospective participants of this competition indicated that for avoiding any kind of conflict of interest or bias they prefer to remain anonymous and/or to use a pseudonym for their text. This is absolutely fine with us, but please be reminded that we need your full contact information for the submission in order to establish eligibility and handle the prizes for the winners. Furthermore, we would kindly request you to also check with any actual people who may appear in your text whether or not they wish to remain anonymous. For any further questions on the matter, feel free to contact us directly.

Why participate? (Prizes and recognition)

By participating you will have the chance of winning **one of three vouchers for the amount of EURO 150** to be spent on coaching, materials, or professional mobility such as conferences, research visits, etc. related to your academic work.

The three winning entries will be made available online on the **websites** of the Graduate Academy and the Heidelberg Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences (HGGS). In addition, the authors will be invited to present and discuss their submissions in a **podcast** hosted by the Graduate Academy.

Depending on the number and quality of the entries, the Graduate Academy will consider editing a **special volume** with a selection of the contest submissions to be published by Heidelberg University Press.

Contact information

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