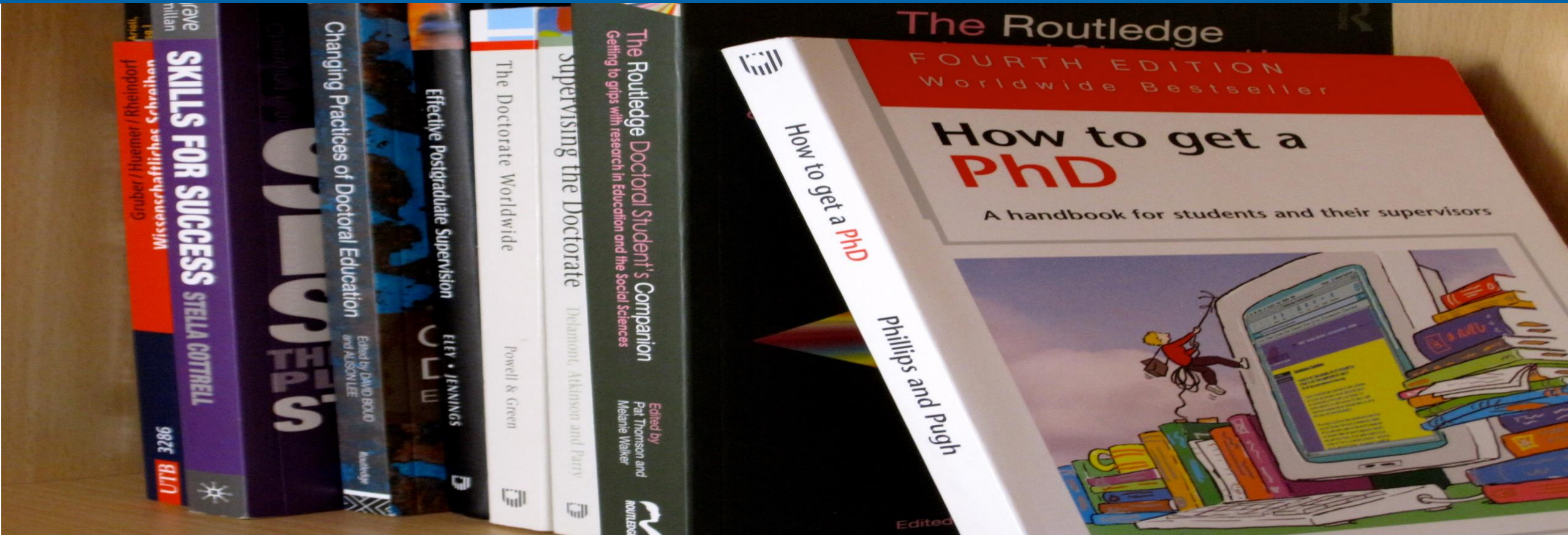# Navigating your PhD at the University of Vienna

Bianca Lindorfer, Research Services and Career Development

Agenda

- The University of Vienna

- The Doctorate – Expectations & General Frame

- Entry Phase of the Doctorate

- Achievements & Responsibilities

The University of Vienna

- One of the oldest and largest universities in Central Europe

- 15 Faculties & 4 Reserach Centers spread over more than 60 locations

- PhD studies in a wide range of fields (Humanities, Social-, Natural- and Life Sciences, Law, Economics,)

- Approx. 5000 PhD Candidates enrolled

- About 40% are international PhD Candidates

Vienna Doctoral Schools

- [Advanced Research School in Law and Jurisprudence](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School of Historical and Cultural Studies](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School in Philosophy](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School of Social Sciences](#)

- [UniVie Doctoral School Computer Science](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School in Physics](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School in Chemistry](#)

- [Vienna International School in Earth and Space Sciences](#)

- [Vienna School of Mathematics | Joint Doctoral School mit der TU Wien](#)

- [Doctoral School Microbiology and Environmental Science](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School of Ecology and Evolution](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School of Pharmaceutical, Nutritional and Sport Sciences](#)

- [Vienna BioCenter PhD Program, joint doctoral school of the University of Vienna and the Medical University of Vienna](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School in Cognition, Behavior, and Neuroscience - from Biology to Psychology and the Humanities (CoBeNe)](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion](#)

- [Vienna Doctoral School in Education](#)

- [Oskar Morgenstern Doctoral School](#)

- [Doctoral School of Philological and Cultural Studies](#)

Early stage researchers are expected to ….

- make an original contribution to the field

- present research findings at conferences, etc.

- engage in scientific activities

- increase your reserach and transferable skills

Recommendation: Increase your PhD awarness

- Learn how the system works

- Get familiar with the common practices at your faculty

- Make sure you know what a PhD actually is

Structure of the Doctorate at the University of Vienna

Entry Phase

Concept development

Research Phase

Realisation of doctoral thesis Project

Submission of Exposé &
Public Presentation
Doctoral Thesis Agreement

Research, Research, Research
Feedback meetings
Seminars, workshops, lectures
Conferences, etc.

Submission
Public defense

Entry Phase

- Specification of the research topic & planning of research project

- Writing your research proposal

- Submition & presentation of research proposal at the faculty within the first year

Recommendation: Attend public presentations to get an idea how it is organized at your faculty

The research proposal | Exposé

- Format
  - Approx. 10 pages

- Content
  - Description of the topic including clear research questions
  - Outline of the state of the art
  - Illustration of chosen methods
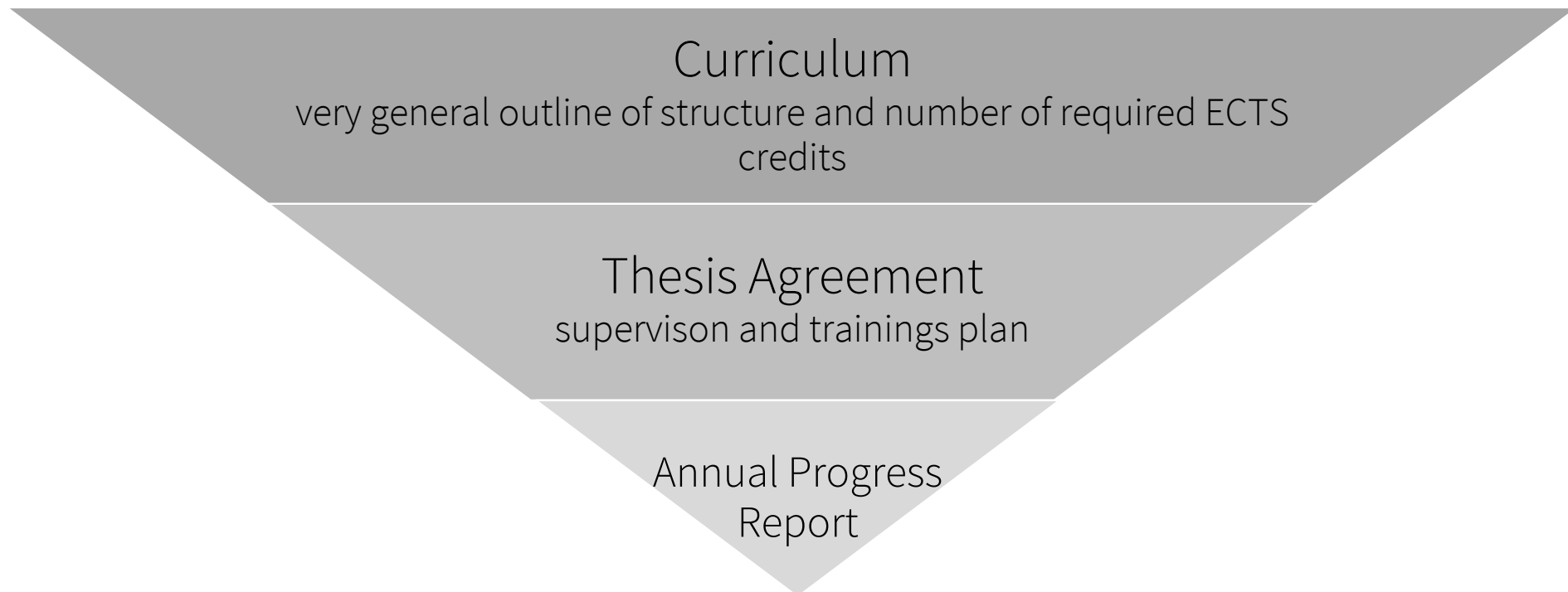 - Relevant literature
  - Time & work plan

Recommendation: Write, write, write ….

- Start writing as early as possible,
- Writing skills can be trained: Many workshops on academic writing are available
- Join a thesis writing group! They are useful instruments to escape isolation
- Check the offers of your school: Many Doctoral Schools provide specific pre-FÖP trainings
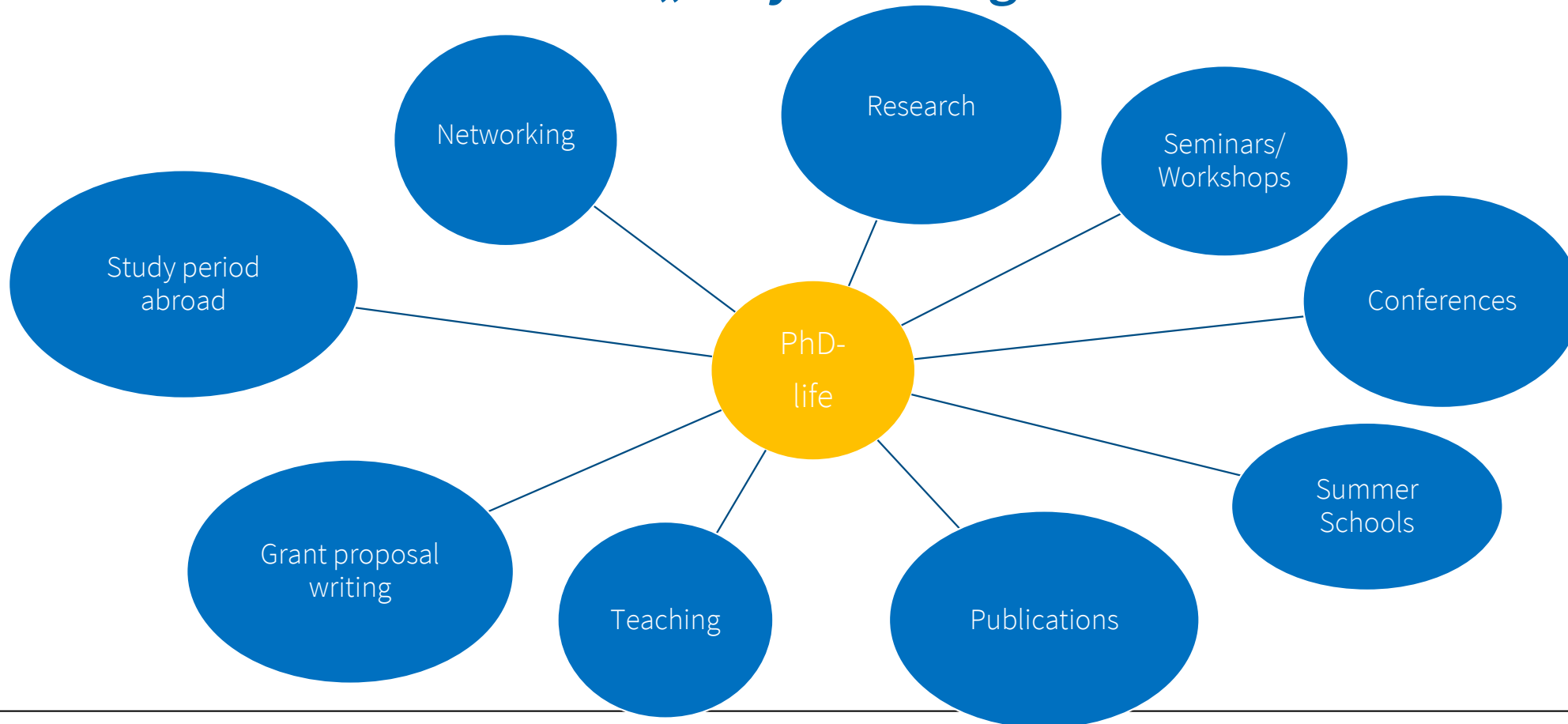
Public presentation of research proposal

- Mandatory within the first year

- Quality assurance & feedback from the Doctoral Advisory Board

- Exchange with peers

- Positiv presentation is precondition for the approval of your topic

- Organisation:
  - 2-3 dates per Semester
  - Registration at the StudyServiceCenter

Achievments

Curriculum
very general outline of structure and number of required ECTS credits

Thesis Agreement
supervison and trainings plan

Annual Progress Report

PhD life includes more than „only" writing a thesis

Recommendation: Make the most of opportunities which arise

- Attend workshops, conferences, seminars

- Take part in training seminars

- Get involved in the activities at your department/of your doctoral school

- If possible, include a research stay abroad

- Build up your future networks, ….

ResearchComp: a tool that …

- helps you to identify and strengthen essential research and transferable skills from early on

- helps you to evaluate your current competencies and set specific goals

- encourages a systematic way of acquiring necessary skills for your career development

Recommendation: Planning is essential

- Master your time management – effective time management is essential

- Set clear milestones

- Use the annual progress report as planning tool

- Start thinking about your life after your PhD early

- Identify skills and experiences needed for your desired career path

Responsibilities

Code of Good Practice for Doctoral Schools (October 2023)

2. Responsibilities of supervisors
Every doctoral candidate has one main supervisor and access to at least one other member of the school (including advanced post docs) who provide complementary advice and feedback. Each school defines the role and range of activities for additional supervisors. Main supervisors are research-active members of the school and are assigned to the candidate (in agreement with the supervisor) by the director.

The main supervisor:
a) promotes the scientific development of the doctoral researcher;
b) commits to supervising the doctoral candidate for the regular comments on the candidate's progress and
c) clarifies the expectations for supervision using the candidate and all supervisors sign the indication of a doctoral thesis agreement, which is amended the
d) supports the doctoral candidate to prepare the
e) clarifies ownership of the data generated during
f) ensures together with the director of the school candidate's own research, personal and prof
school;
g) ensures together with the director of the infrastructure;
h) stays updated about the latest progress
i) encourages that the results are presented
j) verifies that the final thesis complies
k) helps to enforce compliance with
l) helps the candidate to apply for co
m) assists the doctoral candidate in
n) contributes to the reputation a
o) supports the doctoral candidate
p) provides the necessary support
meetings.

3. Responsibilities of the doctoral candidate
Admission ("Zulassung") as a Doctoral student to the University of Vienna and admission ("Aufnahme") to the school are prerequisites to be a member of the school. The school can define particular offers and services (e.g. travel grants) that are restricted to its members and other offers and services that are open to all admitted ("zugelassen") doctoral candidates of the field. Membership in the school can be made dependent on fulfilment of particular obligations (e.g. participation in seminars, presentation of preliminary results etc.).

The doctoral candidate:
a) clarifies the expectations for supervision and agrees upon the practical aspects of supervision using the available forms (Doctoral thesis agreement and annual progress reports);
b) fulfils the requirements of the doctoral school, the curriculum and the doctoral thesis agreement agreed upon at the time of admission, especially the public presentation at the end of the first study year (FÖP);
c) is responsible for setting up a TAC (Thesis Advisory Committee) in close consultation with the supervisor;
d) organizes and prepares adequately for the yearly TAC meeting (in the line with the school requirements);
d) presents their progress at least once a year to the faculty of the school (for instance in the yearly TAC meeting) ;
e) takes the supervisor(s) guidance and feedback into due consideration;
f) participates actively in courses, workshops, symposia and other respective events which promote integration into the scientific community;
g) is committed to the doctoral project and understands that the research work and completion of the doctoral degree studies are ultimately their own responsibility;
h) ensures that the thesis is their own work and that the final version has been read and commented upon by the supervisor(s) prior to submission for examination;
i) adopts and understands the protocol of good scientific practice, the general principles of ethical aspects in science and the ethical regulations of the research field;
j) becomes familiar with the relevant high-quality outlets (journals, proceedings, series, etc.) suitable for publishing the results;
k) includes the University of Vienna as an affiliation on publications resulting from the doctoral project;
l) alerts the supervisor and the director of the doctoral school of any difficulties or delays at an early stage and address these issues honestly in the annual progress reports;
m) provides a regular (at least annual) progress report;

ies of the director of doctoral school
e school is an internationally renowned scholar. The director is appointed by the od of 2 years, the Deans of the involved Faculties provide statements of support. or a teaching reduction.

iool:
nuation of) the school and proposes the leadership team and other elements of isory board)
o the Rectorate, its members and the outside world ties of the DSPL (to be appointed in the usual way) and must oversee the them can be delegated according to the School's governance to a vice-

he University's general rules, the Code of good practice and with ool (if any, named in an "addendum")
e Rectorate;
cluding those made by the internal committees, e.g. concerning

bout the activities of the school,

gs are internationally and

rvisor and has access to other

y Committees);
);

e dissertation projects in

vork on their thesis according to
);

reports by candidates;

regulations (including the
ublic defence);
d placements for doctoral

ry in cooperation with other

Doctoral Candidate

- Your dissertation must be your contribution to the scientific community

- Reserach project is under your management

- **Supervisor(s)**
  - Experts in your field
  - Give guideance, continuous support & feedback

- **Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)**
  - 2-3 mentors chosen by the PhD candidate
  - Meets once a year to give feedback on the PhD project and your personal development

- **Directors of the Doctoral Study Programmes**
  - Responsible for quality assurance
  - Acceptance of achievements, Chair FÖP and Defence,…

Doctoral Schools

- offer a variety of funding opportunities and funding support

- an internationally competitive training environment

- excellent (team) supervision

- networking opportunities with peers and experienced researchers, ….

Join your doctoral school and be part of your local scientific communitiy

Study Service Center

- All adminstrative issues
- Organize public presentation
- Collect your documents and forms
- Organize defence, etc.

Learn more about the university of Vienna

October 3, 13.15-18:00 Hörsaal D, Campus

- HR department
- Personal & porfessional development
- Study law
- Councelling Offices
- Library Services
- Mobility Services

October 4, 8:00-13:00 Hörsaal 42, Main Building

- Entry and residence permit
- Funding possibilities
- Dealing with conflicts and your well-being
- Data management
- Computer Services

Thank you very much!