

Checklist for starting successfully into the doctorate/PhD

First of all **Welcome to the University of Vienna**. You have successfully passed the formal criteria to enrol in a doctoral/PhD programme at the University of Vienna. Starting a doctorate/PhD implies that you will dedicate most of your time in the next years conducting research. This might be a very attractive prospect, nevertheless this decision should be well prepared and several aspects considered. If not already taken care of, there are essential issues you need to clarify before packing your things, coming to Vienna, and finally enrolling into the programme:

- ✓ **Find a professor from the University of Vienna to supervise your dissertation project!**
- ✓ **Inform yourself about possible funding!**
- ✓ **Write a first draft of your research proposal!**
- ✓ **Inform yourself and organize housing and visa issues!**

Below we describe in more detail what needs to be considered:

1. Find a professor from the University of Vienna to supervise your dissertation project!

The most important and also challenging issue is to find a supervisor for your dissertation. Especially if you are not familiar with the University of Vienna, it is essential to make inquiries about potential supervisors and learn more about the key research areas at your future department before you come to Austria and start your doctorate/PhD. PhD and doctoral candidates are expected to contact qualified supervisors who match their research interests and agree to collaborate with them. When contacting potential supervisors it is important to make your concrete ideas and motivation clear, in particular regarding your research plans and why you assume this fits to the supervisor's expertise. A first draft of your research plan can be helpful to convince researchers of the potential of your research project. When discussing your future cooperation it is important that you clarify mutual expectations. Supervision is a time-consuming task. So please also keep in mind that supervisors can only supervise a limited number of PhD candidates in order to ensure the quality of supervision. So, it might occur that a researcher, who works exactly in your field of interest, still has no capacity to supervise you. You can find information and contact details about the researchers and their research interests on the websites of the faculties and departments or the Current Research Information System of the University of Vienna (<https://ucris.univie.ac.at/portal/en/>). Please note that admission itself does not guarantee you a supervisor!

2. Inform yourself about possible funding!

Doing a doctorate is a time-consuming task and requires high commitment. Therefore funding becomes an essential prerequisite so that you can focus on your research. In addition, funding costs for consumables and specific equipment or travel grants might be necessary to perform your research. However, funding schemes are limited and being enrolled as a doctoral/PhD candidate at the University of Vienna does not automatically imply a financed research position. The University of Vienna as well as other institutions such as the Austrian Academy of Sciences offer fellowships or research positions, for which doctoral candidates can apply. We strongly recommend to inform yourself about adequate funding schemes already before enrolling in a doctoral programme. Many countries offer fellowships to their citizens to go abroad and do a PhD. Please keep in mind that even if you receive funding to cover your own costs this does not necessarily mean that this is sufficient to cover all the costs required for your dissertation project.

On the website of the Center for Doctoral Studies you can get an overview about funding possibilities: <http://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/funding-for-doctoral-candidates/>

3. Write a first draft of your research proposal!

The choice of the right topic is crucial, as this decision will influence many aspects of your doctorate/PhD, such as the choice of a supervisor, the research group you will work with, and maybe even your future career. In addition, you are expected to make a contribution to the research in your field, thus, when choosing your topic you should carefully think about the relevance of your research question for your academic discipline. It is also important to give enough thought to the feasibility of your intended research project right at the beginning. Do you need special equipment and facilities and are these available? Do you have access to the necessary material, information, persons, etc.? The admission process you passed successfully does not take your proposed research topic into account. Therefore, it is not guaranteed that your topic will be approved by the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme. At the end of the first year you have to present and defend your research proposal at your Faculty in order to get your topic approved. If your research proposal is well prepared and your presentation was successful, your topic and the supervisor(s) usually get approved by the Director of the Doctoral Study Programme. This public presentation is a first quality check, helping you to ensure a successful start in to your research activities.

4. Inform yourself and organize housing and visa issues!

The University of Vienna cannot assist you in finding accommodation and getting a visa, this is entirely up to you. The brochure „Orientation Guide for International PhD Candidates“ though provides detailed information on these topics and provides contact details of other institutions who may be able to help you with these questions. It also offers further tips and tricks when coming to Austria. You can download this brochure on the following website: <http://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/downloads/handbooks/>

Consultation on the doctorate/PhD

The team of the Center for Doctoral Studies is happy to consult you on further questions concerning your doctorate/PhD:

- Via mail: info.doktorat@univie.ac.at
- Via phone: +43 1 4277 18243 or extension numbers -18236 or -18244
- In person: Berggasse 7, 2nd floor, 1090 Vienna