Vienna Doctoral School of Philosophy
Training Strategy

Overview

This strategy sets out how the Vienna Doctoral School of Philosophy (VDP) will support its researchers to develop the knowledge and skills they need to produce excellent doctoral research and pursue fulfilling future careers.

Training Objectives

Doctoral study is a unique opportunity to gain subject-specific expertise and to make an original contribution in a specialist academic field, in the form of a successfully defended doctoral thesis. Beyond this, it is important for doctoral researchers to develop the wider knowledge and skills they need to pursue fulfilling careers, whether within or outside academia.

A distinguishing feature of the VDP is that it supports doctoral research in a large variety of philosophical topics, traditions, and methods. VDP researchers are therefore strongly encouraged to engage with as many of these as possible, through colloquia, conferences, workshops, summer schools, and other (formal or informal) discussion forums. In doing so, they will not only enrich their doctoral experience but also broaden their capabilities for future research and teaching in philosophy.

Doctoral researchers will also need to get to grips with many procedural aspects of the profession, such as:

- preparing and submitting conference abstracts
- preparing and submitting work for publication
- participating in peer review processes
- managing research collaborations
- organizing philosophical events
- editing philosophical volumes
All of these academic activities rely on a range of transferrable skills that will be highly valuable even to those pursuing non-academic careers. They include, for example:

- communicating with clarity and style
- independently managing time and workload effectively
- working constructively with others as part of a team

The VDP aims to support its researchers’ learning and development in the areas discussed here, by providing a structure in which individual training needs can be identified and met throughout the period of doctoral study.

**Individual Training Plans**

The VDP has developed a template for doctoral researchers to use in identifying their individual training needs, and specifying how they expect to meet these needs: [https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/training/](https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/training/).

Researchers are encouraged to draw up an individual training plan as soon possible after starting their doctoral studies. They may find it helpful to refer to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Individual training plans should be developed in close collaboration with supervisors, who will be co-signatories. They should be forwarded to the VDP Coordinator ([vd-philosophy@univie.ac.at](mailto:vd-philosophy@univie.ac.at)) to help inform the VDP’s training strategy.

Researchers may wish to append their individual training plans to their doctoral thesis agreements (completed after a successful public presentation). It is recommended to update the individual training plan at least once per year; and it is requested that updated training plans are forwarded to the VDP Coordinator ([vd-philosophy@univie.ac.at](mailto:vd-philosophy@univie.ac.at)).

Doctoral researchers will naturally develop extensive philosophical expertise through their ongoing research and teaching activities. Therefore, some training needs will be fulfilled ‘on the job’. However, it is likely that doctoral researchers will also need to pursue some formal training opportunities, in order to develop the wider knowledge and skills they require.

**Doctoral Center Training**

The Doctoral Center provides university-wide skills training for doctoral researchers. For more information, see [https://forschung.univie.ac.at/services/veranstaltungen-trainings/doktorandinnen/](https://forschung.univie.ac.at/services/veranstaltungen-trainings/doktorandinnen/).

The VDP will work closely with the Doctoral Center on an ongoing basis, on the continued development of its training offer. This work will be informed by the needs identified in VDP researchers’ individual training plans (and via other communication channels, such as progress reports).
The Pragmatic Academic

The VDP’s ‘Pragmatic Academic’ training is designed to complement the central training offer for doctoral researchers. For more information about the scope and objectives of the Pragmatic Academic, see https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/events/pragmatic-academic-workspace/. VDP members will have priority access to Pragmatic Academic training sessions, even if these sessions are also made available to wider audiences.

It is anticipated that at least four Pragmatic Academic sessions will take place during each academic year. The schedule will be developed on an ongoing basis by Sarah Fisher and Judith Martens, with oversight from the VDP Steering Committee. The training offer will be informed by the needs identified in VDP researchers’ individual training plans (and via other communication channels, such as progress reports).