



GRADUATE
ACADEMY



TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DRESDEN

Newsletter 01 | 2013

Dear readers and members,

with the opening of the Graduate Academy, a central location has been created on the main campus where the university's junior academics can meet and exchange ideas. The goal of the GA is to ensure long-term improvement of the general conditions for young researchers at TUD and to offer support that is tailored to their needs during the doctoral and post-doc phases.

In future, in addition to our home page, we would also like to use this newsletter to provide information on current developments to everyone who is interested. I hope you will very much enjoy reading the first edition.

Yours sincerely,

On your marks, get set, go!

The Graduate Academy of TUD has begun its work. Its main focus is on providing advisory, qualification and funding support for doctoral candidates and post-docs. At the same time, the Graduate Academy will offer a platform for networking and exchanging ideas.

The preparations for the opening of the Graduate Academy (GA) have been in full swing since February this year: The first members of staff have begun their work, concepts have been developed, rooms occupied and a website designed. Since August 1, the GA's doors have been open to everyone who is interested in what we do.

As an interdisciplinary service point for young researchers, the GA is aimed primarily at doctoral candidates who receive their PhDs from TUD and at post-docs employed at our university. Anyone who has registered via the online portal and been

accepted as a member can take advantage of the many services on offer: These include providing advice and information on questions concerning both the doctoral and the post-doc phases, funding programs (among other things in the form of travel grants and short-term fellowships), participation in interdisciplinary qualification programs as well as in networking and subject-specific events.

The GA has received more than 500 registrations and has already welcomed about 200 doctoral candidates and post-docs as members since we opened. We are delighted with the great interest shown in the GA. The first round of calls for applications for the funding program, which closed on October 15, was also very popular. (see p. 3 for more on this). Registration for courses of the qualification program is now possible and there are still plenty of free places available (see p. 2 for further details).

Now we are looking forward to the first comments from you. Let us know what you think and share your ideas on developing the GA. After all, we aim to target our services to the needs of the junior academics at our university. We are already eagerly awaiting your suggestions. *KU*



The GA Team (from r. to l.): A. Haase, Dr. A. Bledau, Dr. K. Ulbrich, C. Bejan, N. Pluta, Dr. S. Cuevas, A. Beutel, Dr. K. Jordan (Managing Director), Prof. Dr. G. Rödel (Director)

(Photo: R. Lohse)

The Qualification Program Begins in WS 2013 | 2014



For several weeks now it has been possible to enroll in the Graduate Academy's qualification program. We have already received numerous registrations. The first workshops and seminars start in November. You can look forward to lots of exciting experiences!

What do twenty sticks of spaghetti, a piece of string, masking tape and a marshmallow have to do with leadership competence and team development? A great deal, because in the "Marshmallow Challenge", an exercise already employed in many leadership training programs, these things are used by a number of teams to build a tall tower within a set time. The team with the tallest structure wins.

The aim of this exercise is to recognize that in a team you have a variety of abilities and qualifications, all of which are necessary to achieve the best possible team result. Also, communication and creative processes and the role of the individual within the group can be analyzed when solving a new type of task within the team. Together with the exercise itself, follow-up evaluation

and reflection on the experiences of the exercise are of particular importance, as it is only by doing this that the individual can organize the experience into a personal knowledge structure and then apply it again later on.

As in this example, all the workshops of the Graduate Academy focus on action-oriented learning settings which facilitate concrete experiences. To achieve this, we have been able to welcome on board experts with many years of experience. To find out who exactly they are, take a look at our Internet site under the heading "Qualification Program". There you can find photos and profiles of all the trainers together with all the information you need on our seminars and workshops for winter semester 2013 | 2014.

Three questions to :

Dr. Rolf Koerber, freelance trainer and instructor of the "Leadership skills for young researchers" workshop

1. What characterizes good leadership?

In good leadership the most important thing is to reflect on your actions. Good managers in leading positions have to be able to put themselves in the shoes of their staff and assess the consequences and effects of their own leadership skills. This includes being able to recognize your own weaknesses and admit mistakes. Above all, though, good managers are protective of their staff, they are loyal and in return can expect loyalty from staff members.

2. Can you learn leadership?

Not only can you learn leadership, it's something you really have to learn. There may be 'born leaders' but in the end good leadership is a skill that can be learned.

3. What should you avoid?

Actually, if you observe Kant's categorical imperative, you'll be on the right track: Abridged and applied to managers this means: Treat your staff as you would like to be treated and avoid doing everything that you would not like to experience in your supervisors.



Dr. Rolf Koerber (Photo: Anne Beutel)

New Graduate Academy Funding Program to Start Soon

The first application round of the GA funding programs met with great acclaim among our members. Now, from the middle of November, Wrap-Up Fellowships will also be advertised, making a valuable addition to the Graduate Academy's funding portfolio. They take into account the financial requirements for the time between the doctorate and postdoc phase. In the following we outline for you our Wrap-Up Fellowships.

Wrap-Up Fellowships - What lies behind this term?

In this context, "to wrap up" means "to put the finishing touches to something". That is exactly what the GA's Wrap-Up funding program is aimed at. We would like to enable future postdocs at TUD to have a six-month follow-up phase directly following their doctorate so that they can publish their thesis and research results, participate in conferences and other specialist events, and prepare themselves for their next career move - preferably in science and research.

Who can apply?

Doctoral candidates of TUD can apply after submitting their doctoral thesis. The prerequisite for making an application is membership of the GA. This can be applied for with a few mouse clicks on the GA website.

How high is the level of financial support?

The basic grant comes up to 1,518 EUR per month. Costs for travel and materials are also covered, as is a family allowance, if applicable. So, for example, the maximum monthly support for applicants with two children is 2,121 EUR.

Does the GA provide any other support for junior researchers in this phase?

In addition to financial assistance, the GA does indeed pay particular attention to providing help that is not of a material nature during this intermediate phase. Those funded by the Wrap-Up scheme can expect active support in their projects from their particular chair at TUD. Also, specifically targeted practice-oriented GA events relating to the subject of "scholarship and career" teach interdisciplinary and academic compe-

AT A GLANCE

WRAP-UP FUNDING:

- six-month follow-up phase at TUD upon completion of your doctorate
- basic monthly grant of up to 1,518 EUR
- additional subsidy for materials and travel costs as well as a family allowance if you have children
- eligibility: doctoral candidates of the TUD who have submitted their dissertation
- application deadline: January 15, 2014

tences and equip scholars for their next career move.

You can find out more about the Wrap-Up Fellowships and application procedures on the GA website from the middle of November onwards.

CB



Introducing our Members

We would like to use the last page of our newsletter to tell you more about the GA's members. What motivated them to tread the path of academia? Are there any tips and tricks can they pass on? What do they personally expect from membership in the GA? Dr. Mandy Hommel will launch this series of profiles on behalf of the group of post-docs.



Dr. Mandy Hommel (Photo: private)

Dr. Mandy Hommel came to academia via a number of detours. After a traineeship in banking, she worked for several years in a variety of posts in the banking sector, and during her employment acquired professional qualifications in banking and banking management. A degree in business education and a period of employment with a personnel service provider followed. Since 2008 she has been research associate at the Chair for Business Education. She completed her dissertation at the end of 2011.

GA: What motivated you to embark on an academic career after you had already worked in other professional contexts?

MH: What fascinates me about academic work are the opportunities it offers to go into issues in depth, to become deeply and intensively involved in subjects and concepts, to research them and to contribute to gaining new insights. I enjoy sharing this enthusiasm for academic

subjects with my students. Seeing them develop during their studies is a source of great delight.

What were the greatest challenges you faced during your doctoral phase?

For a doctoral candidate, this applies first and foremost to the standards you set yourself to deliver a high quality scholarly work. Then, there are many other tasks in teaching and academic self-administration which have to be fulfilled on a daily basis. To avoid losing sight of the dissertation project, you need to set priorities again and again, to organize and motivate yourself: in my view these are all significant factors for success. I am very grateful to have my family, who have never felt like an additional burden but have enriched and balanced my life.

During the last two years you have been to Great Britain and Australia for research periods and were able to take your family with you. Can you give us any tips on how to organize such a trip? What were your most memorable experiences during these periods abroad?

I can only recommend that anyone wanting to do this should start asking colleagues who have experience of living abroad for advice as early as possible, and should plan well in advance. You need to begin planning particularly early if you are applying for funding. The question about the most memorable experiences is hard to answer because I can look back on so many experiences. What I found really remarkab-

le was seeing the open-minded way my children adapted to each of their new schools in these completely new environments.

What expectations do you have from the Graduate Academy?

I expect a first-class education program targeted to the needs of doctoral candidates and post-docs. I see the Graduate Academy on the right track with its first course program. I hope the program will be extended further to include dates outside the semester so that everyone who is intensively involved with teaching during the semester can also have the chance to take part. AB

Last but not least:

- The new TUD Information portal "academic careers" offers with immediate effect information gathered for young academics (www.tu-dresden.de/wiss_karriere)
- **Next application** deadline for the GA's internal funding program: January 15, 2014
- GA-DAAD appeal:
Get your own research assistant!
Doctoral candidates in the Natural Sciences, Engineering and Life Sciences can apply to the DAAD for an international research assistant within the context of their doctorate (www.daad.de/rise)

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