

Collegial coaching program

for doctoral researchers at TH Köln

Since 2016, the Graduate Centre has been offering a coaching program for doctoral researchers in cooperation with the Equal Opportunities Office and the Center for Academic Development. Places are available for doctoral researchers at any stage of their doctorate.

Goals

- Specific competence development
- Decision-making confidence in self- and project management during the doctoral period
- Strengthening of professional doctoral networks
- Support during the doctoral process
- Preventing and dealing with challenging situations

Contents

The doctoral process is rarely straightforward. As a doctoral researcher, you are undertaking a complex research project with high intellectual demands, a high level of responsibility and a risk of failure. At the same time, you develop scientific and professional skills that lead to a coherent career plan.

Perseverance, goal-oriented behavior, methodical research approaches and a motivating working environment are of great importance during the doctoral process. It also aims to strike a balance between the different areas involved in the doctorate process. In addition, a balance should be achieved between the different areas of responsibility involved in the doctoral process.

The coaching program supports you in the process of a doctoral project

- Early identification of potential challenges
- Structuring processes with foresight
- Mobilizing resources
- Developing competencies
- Change of perspective

The coaching offers you the opportunity to look at your doctorate from different perspectives and to analyze the process on a meta-level. The collegial coaching format also implements a structure that allows you to generate individual and joint solutions in the group along the doctoral phases and challenges that arise. Moreover, group counseling also encourages participants and empowers them to tackle and overcome challenges. By reflecting on the coaching process, you will have the opportunity to develop successful self-management to optimize your individual success, leading to successful career planning, along with the added value of networking.

In addition to the exchange in the coaching group, there will also be an opportunity for an informal lunch break with all participants of the coaching program.

Coaching workshops

Ongoing program with regular appointments every 2-3 months

Next dates:	27.10.2025, 12.01.2026, 09.03.2026, 08.06.2026 (all Mondays)
Duration:	3 hours each
Language:	English
Number of participants:	max. 8 per coaching group

Individual Coaching

If required, we also offer a limited number of individual coaching sessions (usually organized virtually via Zoom) on fixed dates. One-to-one coaching sessions of 90 minutes each offer you the opportunity to discuss individual topics and specific questions and to work on them in advance or in parallel to your participation in peer coaching.

Your Coaches

Dr. Antje Schultheis



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Antje Schultheis studied social sciences at the University of Göttingen and obtained her doctorate in political science from the University of Kassel in 2009. As a certified coach, she is active in various fields, including lecturing at numerous universities, coaching for professional development processes and for scientists. In addition, she founded the consulting and coaching company as.empowerment, which specifically focuses on coaching and consulting in the field of education. Antje Schultheis has been coaching female doctoral candidates at TH Köln since the beginning in 2016.

Dr. Christian Dumpitak



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Christian Dumpitak studied biology at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf (HHU) where he completed his doctorate in 2003 at the Institute of Physical Biology. As a certified workshop instructor and coach, he has extensive experience in the areas of higher education didactics and academic staff development at national and international level. Since 2009, Christian is managing director of "iGRAD - Interdisciplinary Graduate and Research Academy Düsseldorf" of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf.

Application

Have we sparked your interest? Then please send us a short email (graduatecenter@th-koeln.de) with the title of your dissertation, the name of your supervisor, your preferred language for coaching and your preference for a mixed-gender group or a gender-segregated group. Together with the coaches, we will discuss which group suits you best. Places are on a first-come, first-served basis.