

Online-Workshop 6: Me & my Supervisor: Creating a Productive Relationship

Date: Wed, 25 March 2026, 09:00–16:30 h (with breaks)

Trainer: Stefanie Henauer

Room: online via Zoom

Capacity: max. 12 participants

Description

In this workshop doctoral candidates will focus on the importance and the complexity of the doctoral supervisory relationship. The workshop will cover three main aspects, namely (1) active design of the supervisory relationship, (2) navigating hierarchies, and (3) effective communication. Participants in the workshop will be introduced to strategies for establishing and maintaining a productive relationship with their supervisors. They will learn how to navigate the sometimes challenging relationship with their supervisor, address problems professionally, and build positive interactions. Advice is given on the basic structure of the supervisory relationship in Germany.

Key contents:

- Information on formal and customary conditions for doctoral supervision (in Germany)
- (e.g., doctoral regulations, doctoral agreements, guidelines for good scientific practice)
- Informal framework conditions: dealing with expectations, demands, and needs—your own and those of your supervisors
- Clarifying the roles: what are the tasks and duties of doctoral candidates, and what are those of their supervisors?
- Supervision styles: how do my supervisor and I fit together?
- Making effective use of supervision meetings: preparation – implementation – follow-up
- Actively shaping the supervisory relationship: goal-oriented and sustainable
- communication and action strategies
- First aid for challenges in the supervisory relationship (e.g., balance between independence and guidelines, degree of interference, lack of feedback, lack of time for supervision, secondary activities for the supervisor)

Methods

The workshop comprises trainer input, exercises, self-reflection, small group work and group discussion.

Trainer

Stefanie Henauer holds a bachelor's degree in psychology (University of Fribourg) and a master's degree in cognitive neuroscience (University of Maastricht). Her research has focused on non-invasive brain stimulation and multimodal approaches to investigating emotion and memory networks in relation to resilience. She also has extensive experience in scientific project management and is a trained systemic coach. As a trainer, she works with groups on topics such as the doctoral phase, project, time and self-management, gender & diversity, and resilience.