

Mind(ing) the gap: Harnessing diversity of international doctoral candidates at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

11th EUA-CDE Annual Meeting, Ljubljana, Slovenia

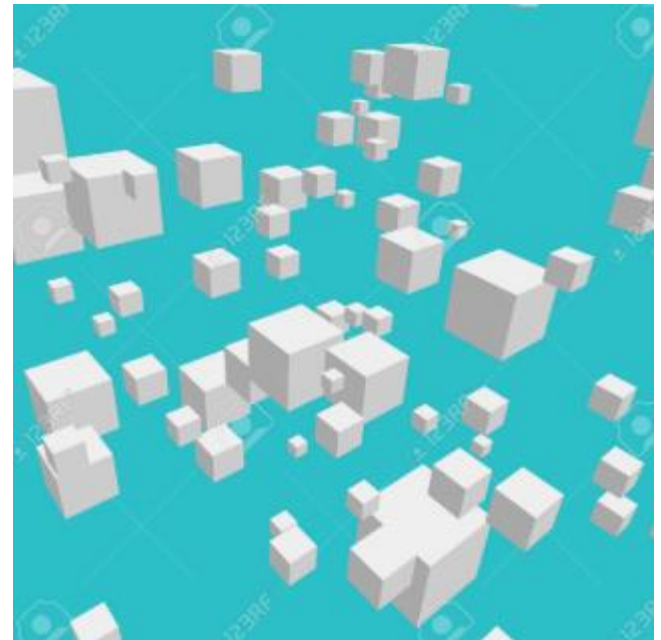
VU International Office

Sandra Hasanefendic

Adrian Verkleij

June, 2018

Endless debate



Dutch doctoral education-loose structure

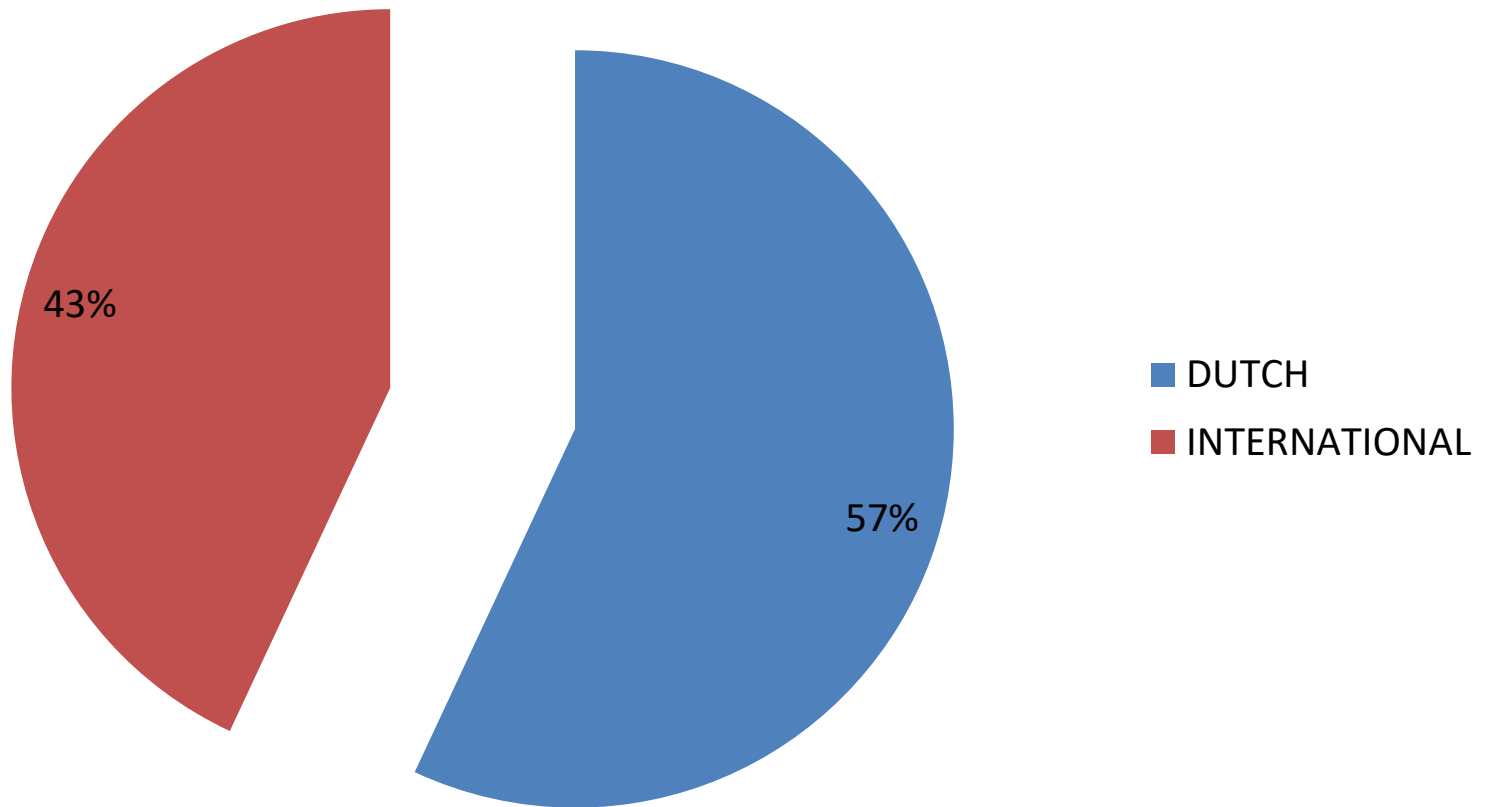
- Employed PhDs (beginning of a research career)
- Mainly Dutch nationality
- Loosely structured trajectories
- No registration tracking, no formalization of admission process
- No tuition fees
- No training or coursework
- Research core activity and sporadic teaching
- Supervisor is the main person in the doctoral trajectory

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

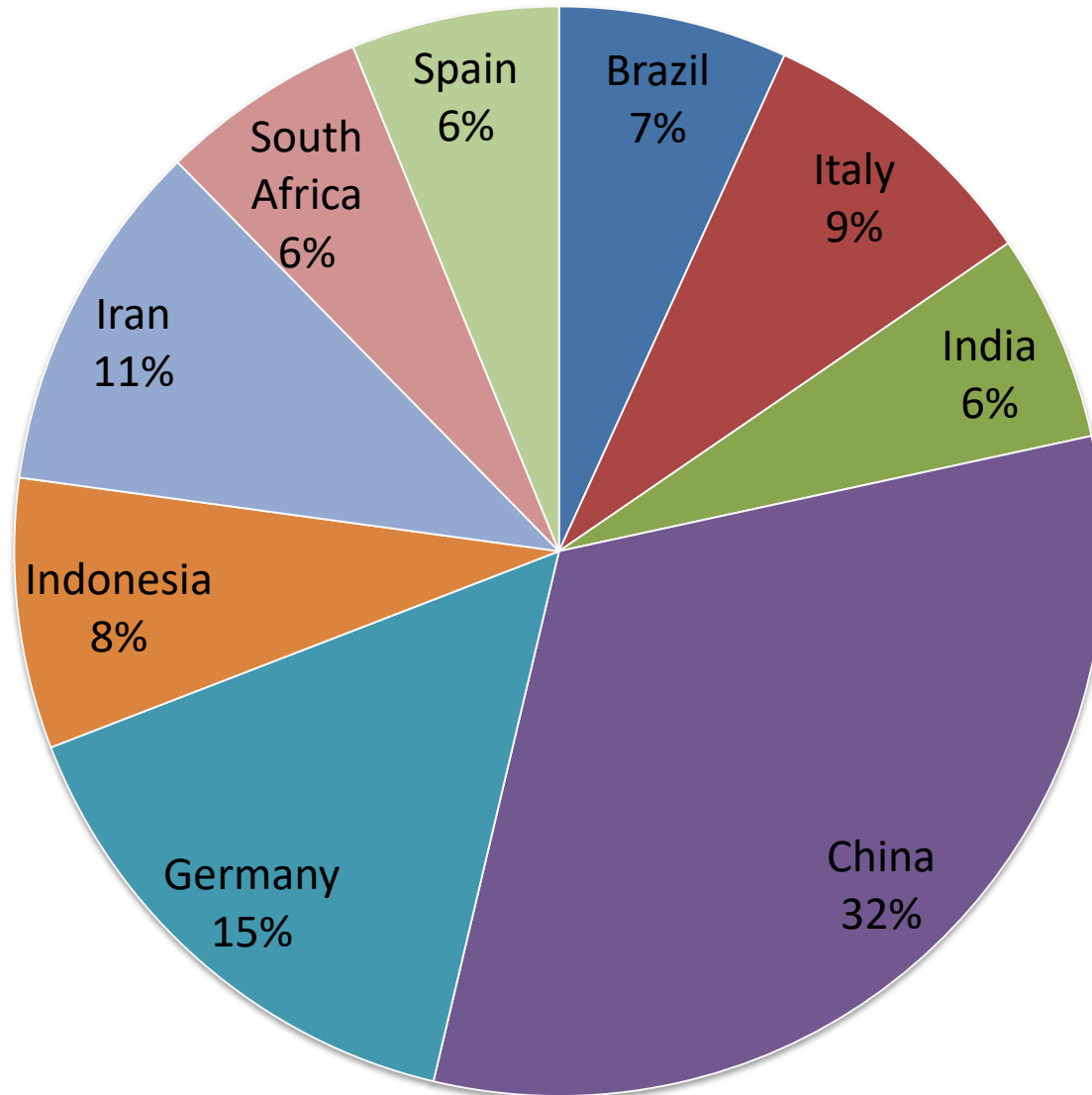
- 2018



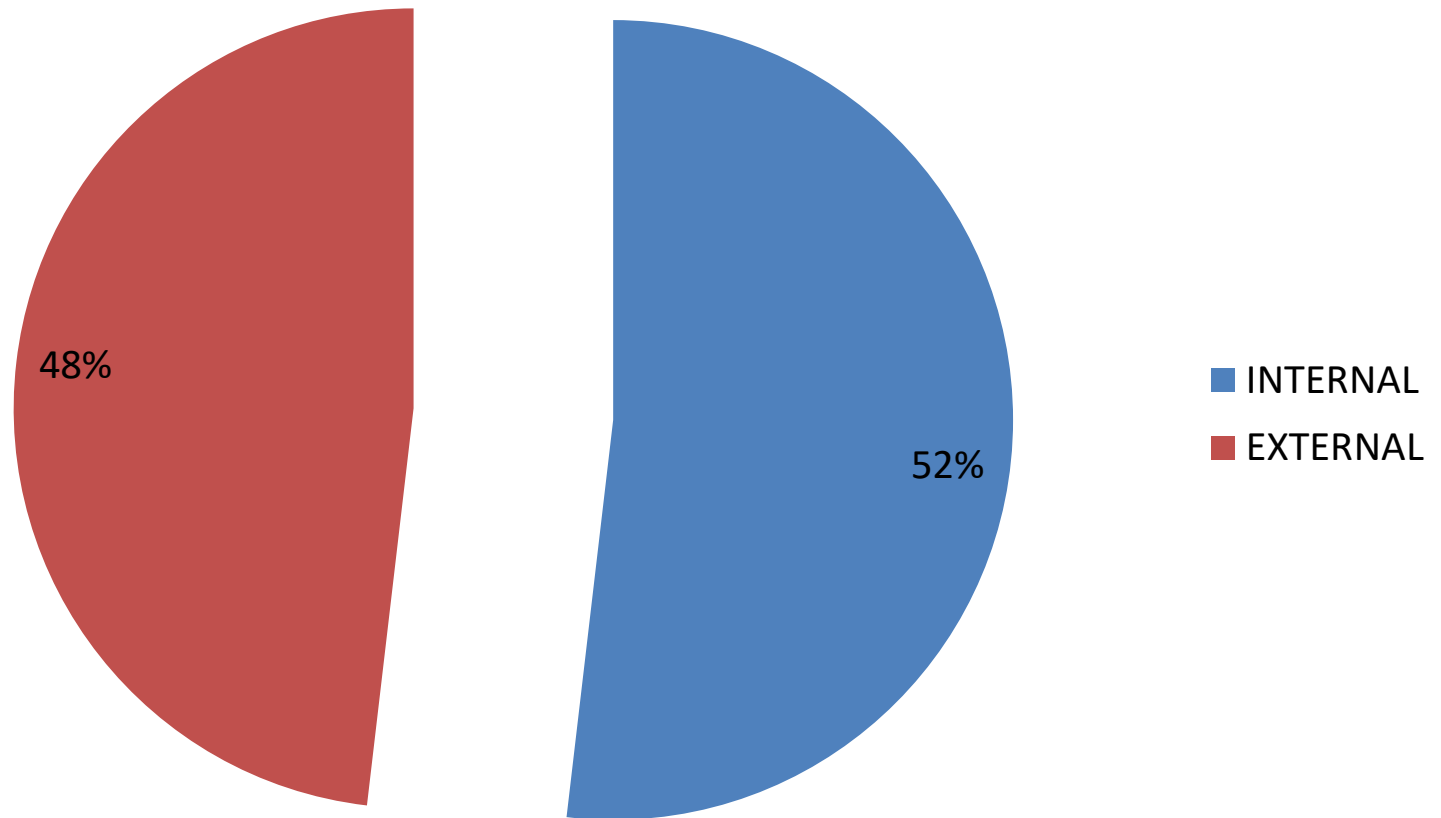
Dutch and international PhDs 2017



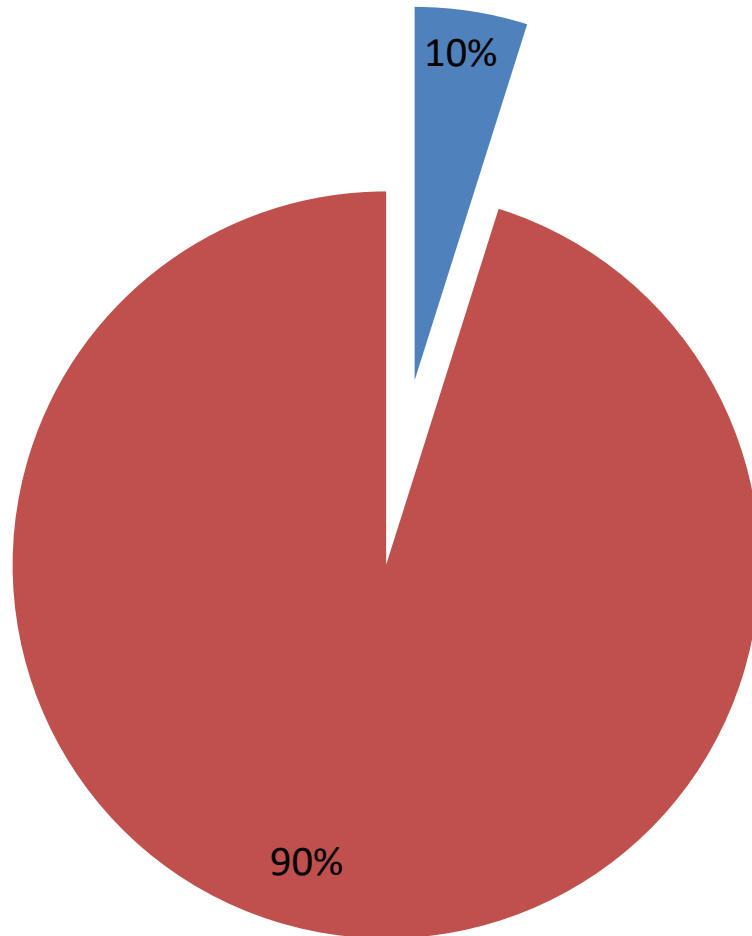
Nationality of PhD candidates 2017



Employed-internal versus non employed-external



PhD candidates 2017

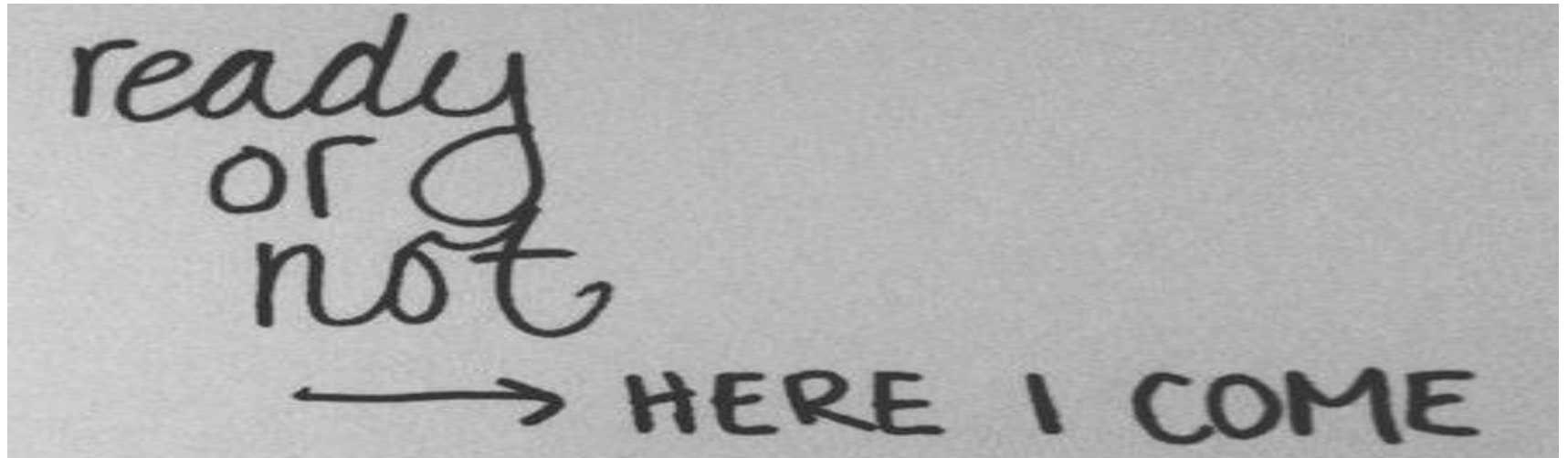


In 2017, cc.2173
PhDs (incl. VUmc)

- PhD candidates
- Bachelor and master students

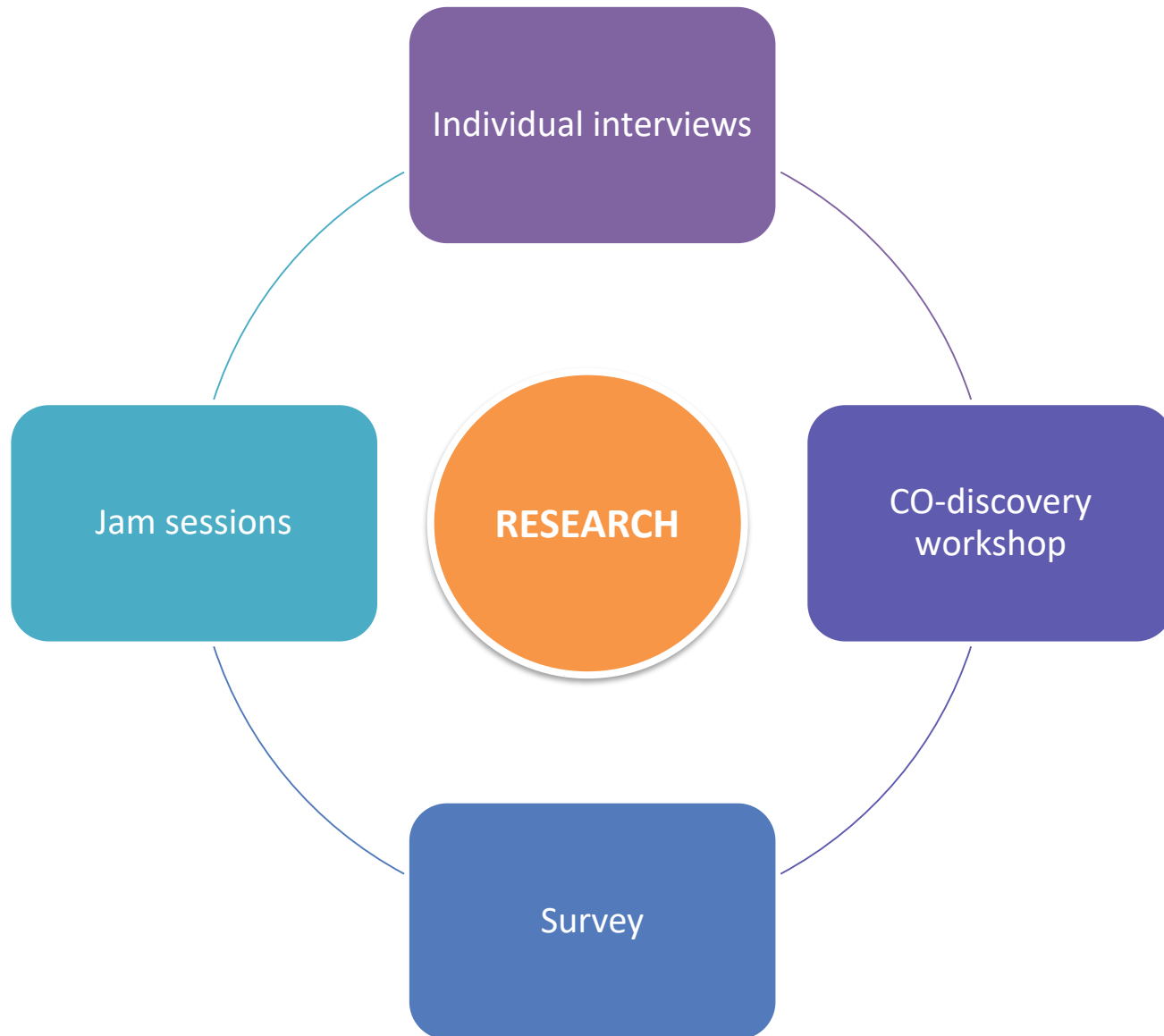
Challenge to the traditional doctoral education system/shifting mindsets





- research into wellbeing of our international PhDs in 2017

Research



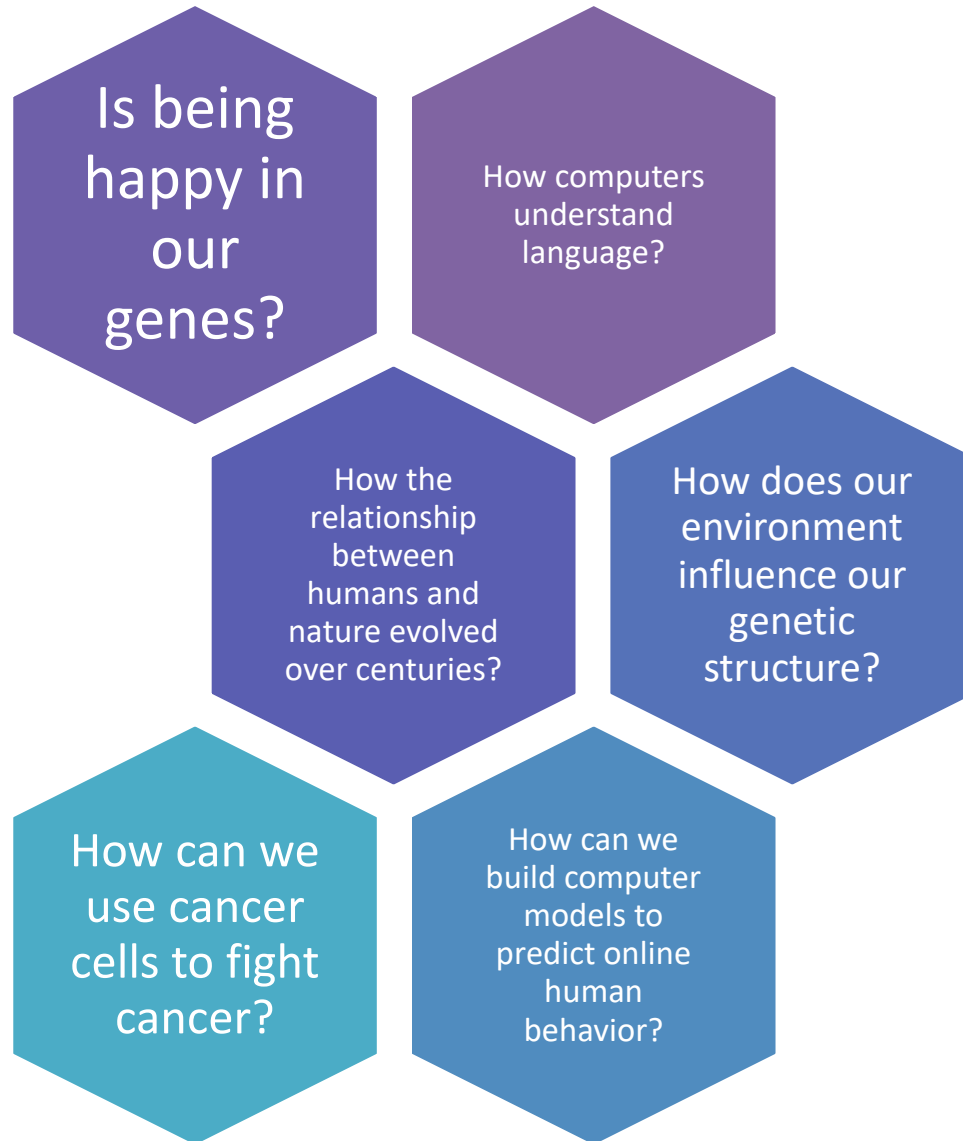
International student services



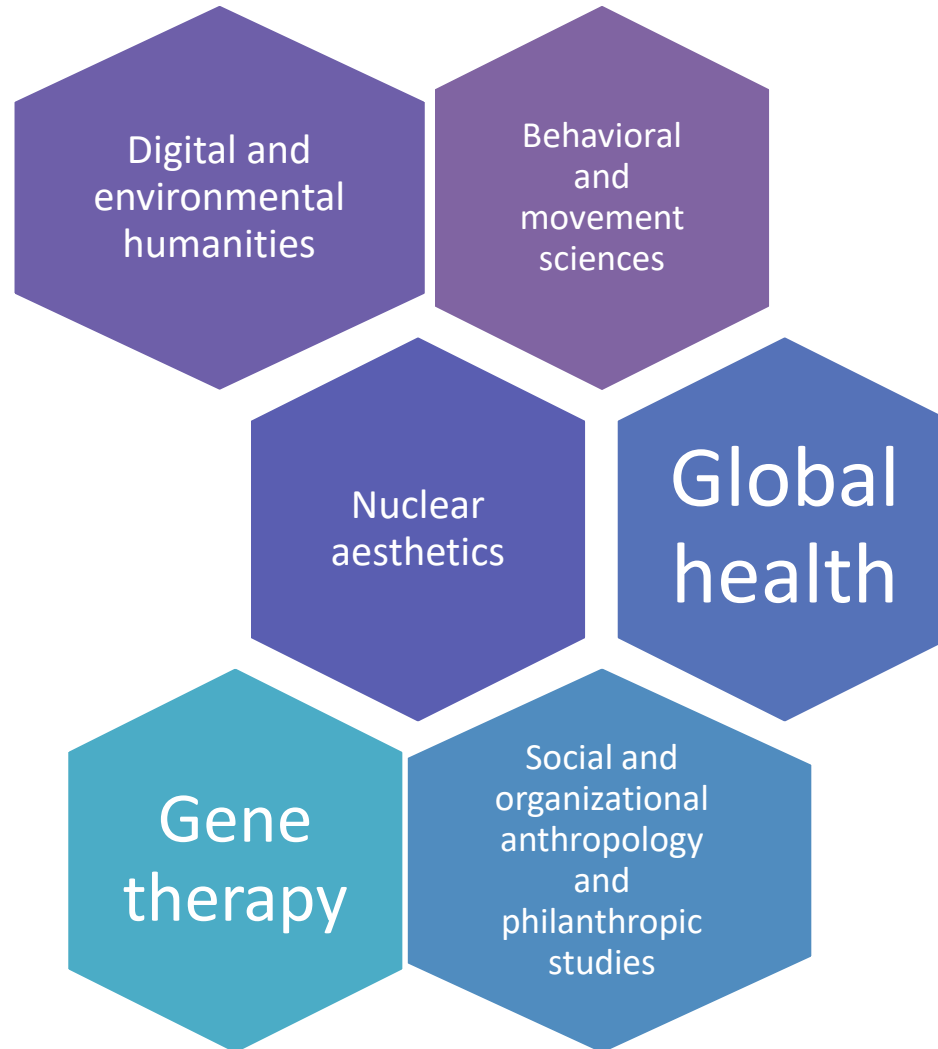
**International
Office**



Research quality and diversity



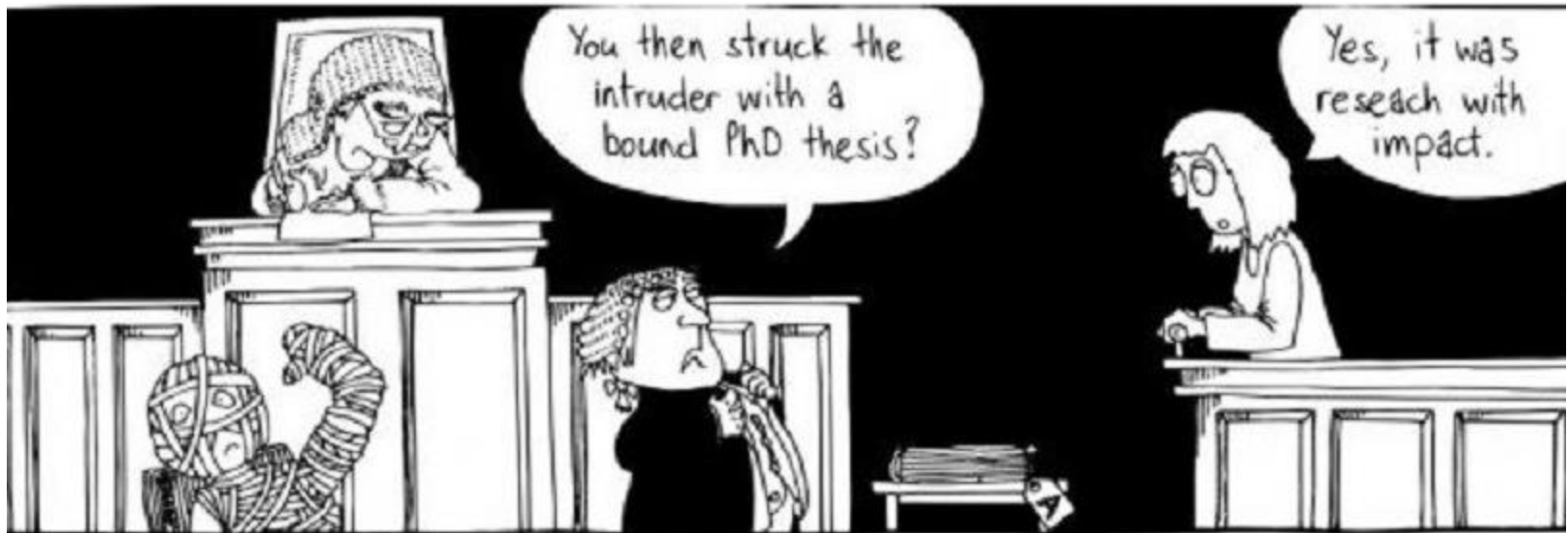
Unique and innovative research



Flexible PhD training and personalized approach



Research excellence and impact



Amsterdam, openness and diversity



Studying and graduation

Bachelor

Master

PhD

Before arrival:
Application

Admission

Arrival

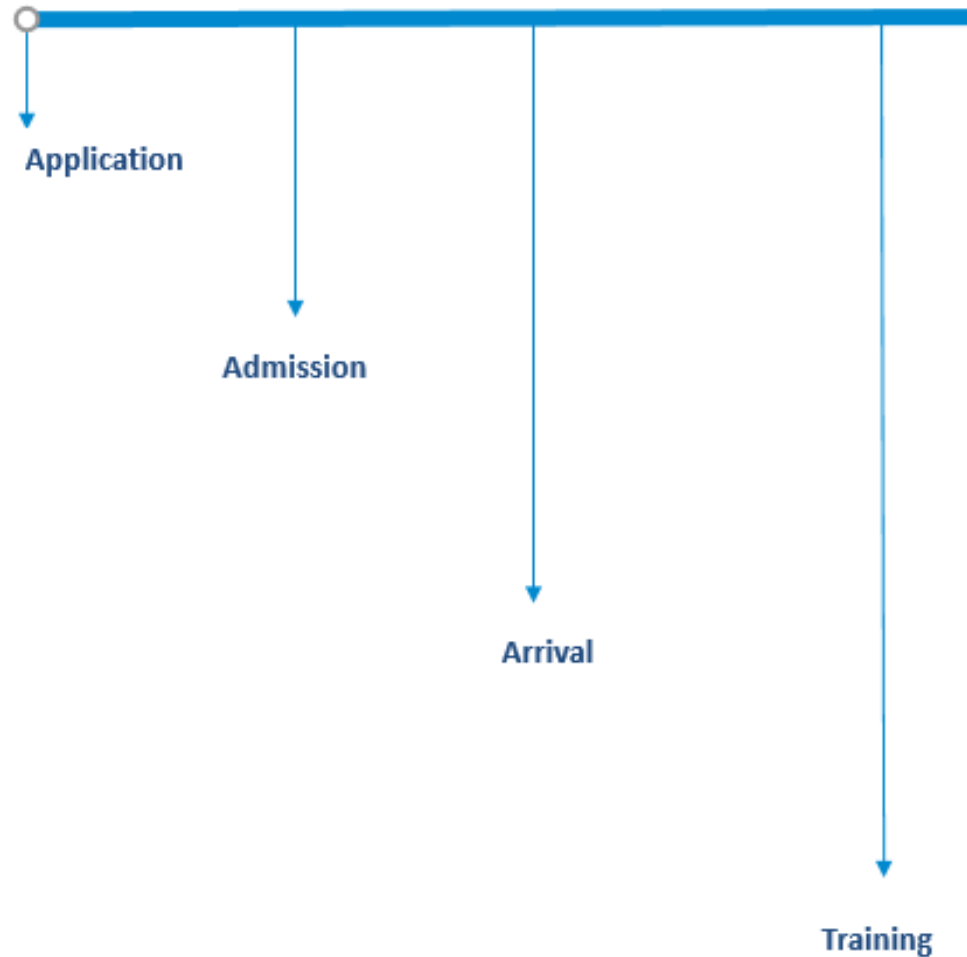
Training

Wellbeing

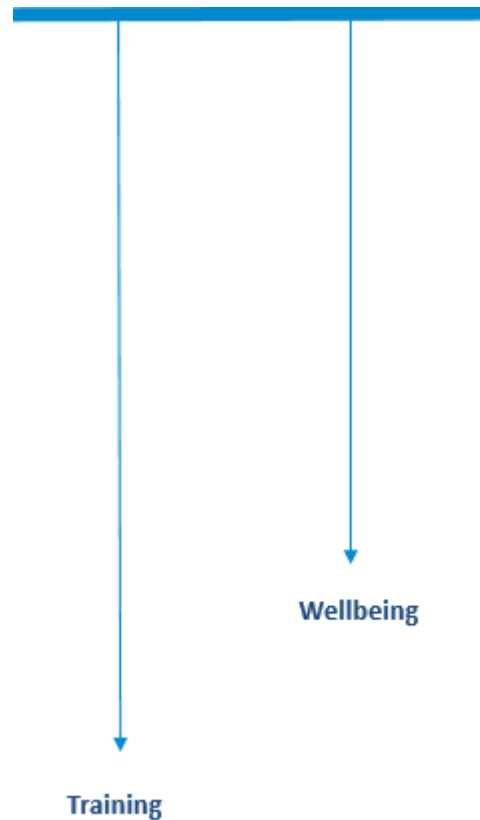
Employability

Career
development

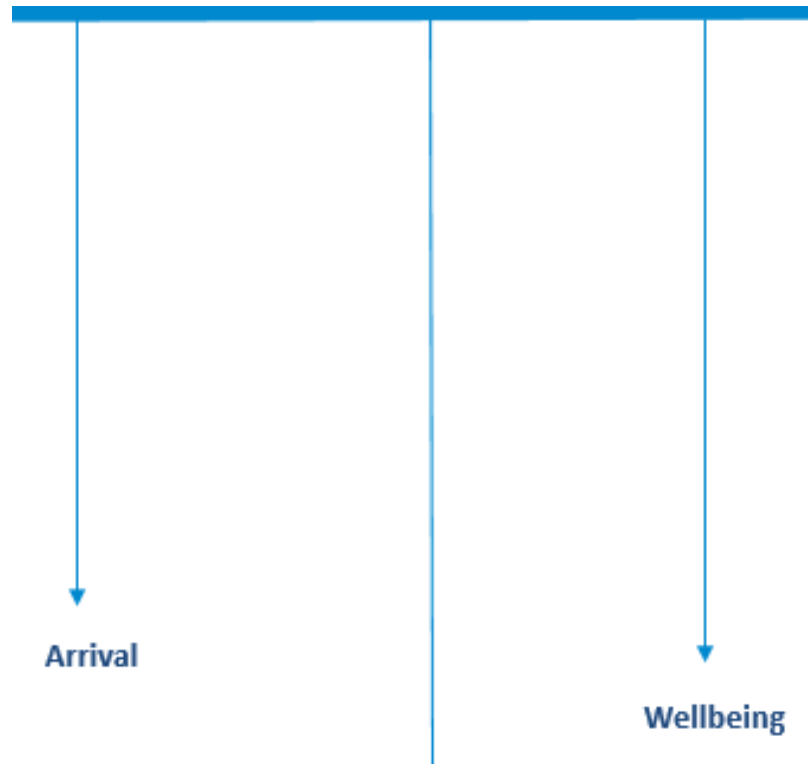
Implicit information and/or non-existent information



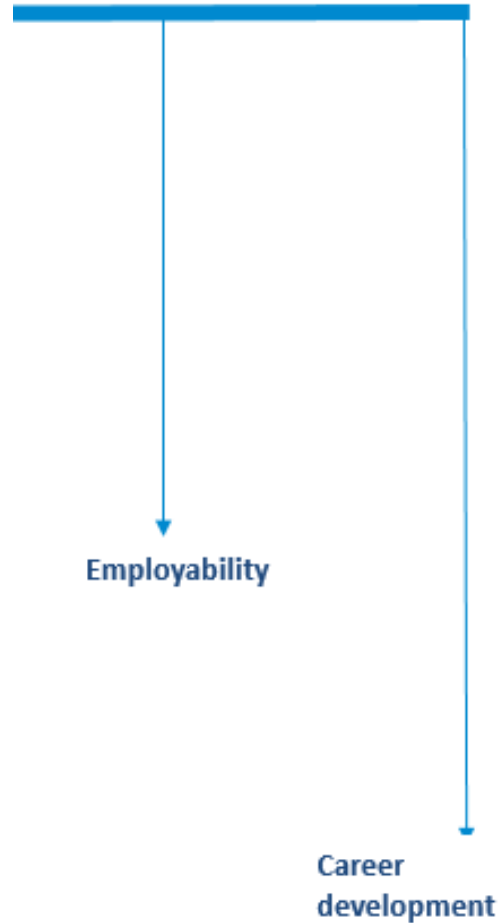
Research culture and language challenges: institutional unpreparedness



Integration and wellbeing



Lack of soft skill and career related training



What did we do about it?

Website



PHD PROGRAMME

PHD AT VU AMSTERDAM

Information about our doctoral education and why choose VU Amsterdam.

APPLICATION, ADMISSION AND FUNDING

All of the necessary information on how to apply and available funding options.

INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL PHD CANDIDATES

As an international PhD candidate you need to arrange your visa, housing or sign up for Dutch language courses.

DOCTORAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Get to know what your training options are, how to do a research stay abroad and how to actively participate in (re)designing doctoral education at VU Amsterdam.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION SUBMISSION AND DEFENSE

All you need to know about the final stages of your PhD.

AFTER YOUR DEFENSE

You are going to finish your PhD soon and now what? Learn about your possibilities and explore opportunities.

CONTACTS AND FAQ'S

General information and contacts.

GO DIRECTLY TO

- > [Application](#)
- > [Housing/accommodation](#)
- > [Funding opportunities](#)
- > [Mobility](#)
- > [PhD Gatherings](#)
- > [Career opportunities](#)
- > [Contacts and FAQ's](#)

APPLY FOR A PHD

APPLY →

PHD PROJECT VACANCIES @VU

Search for vacancies →

Generic email for all information and contacts
related to PHD programs and studies at the
VU: phd@vu.nl

Website: application form

- 30 applicants
- Cc. 50% acceptance RATE

7 Iran
2 Brazil
2 Turkey
1 Mexico
1 Zimbabwe
4 Nigeria
1 Pakistan
1 Uzbekistan
1 Germany
1 Lebanon
1 Bangladesh
1 Malawi
2 Indonesia
1 America/USA
2 Ethiopia
1 India
1 Afghanistan

3 Medicine
6 Sciences
2 Law
1 FGB
3 Theology
7 Social Sciences
3 Humanities
5 School of Business and Economics

PhD Brochure/PhD Handbooks

SEE YOU AT
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM!

PHD AT VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM



"The structure provided by the University and my supervisors are amazing, but what I love the most about Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is its international environment. Here we can share experiences and perspectives with people from all over the world, which enriches us as researchers and contributes to our scientific work. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is a living proof that diversity inspires us and brings out the best in us, as people and as scientists."

JULIANA SENNA

Ph.D. Candidate at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration of the Faculty of Social Sciences



"During my childhood, I always dreamt of coming to Europe as I am from Serampore in the state of West Bengal in India, which was a former Danish colony. I am currently doing my Ph.D in Human Movement Sciences at the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and also a mobility period at the KU Leuven, Belgium. I am an Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate fellow.

I really like the interdisciplinary research environment provided at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. We have some great research facilities in our department. I have wonderful colleagues whom I enjoy working with and I think I have the best supervisors as they always strive for excellence and making sure I become an independent researcher."

SAUVIK DAS GUPTA

Erasmus Mundus Ph.D. Candidate in Human Movement Sciences at the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences

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De Boelelaan 1105
1081 HV Amsterdam
The Netherlands

E phd@vu.nl

WWW.VU.NL/PHD



CAMPUS UNIVERSITY

9 FACULTIES AND 12 INTERFACULTY RESEARCH
INSTITUTES IN THE VIBRANT AND MULTICULTURAL
CITY OF AMSTERDAM



OUTSTANDING
EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH

**TOP
RANKED**



2173

PHD CANDIDATES



>43%

INTERNATIONAL PHD CANDIDATES



AROUND

450

DISSERTATION AWARDS PER YEAR

PHD CANDIDATES FROM ALL OVER THE
WORLD

>50

NATIONALITIES



VU INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



#VUAMSTERDAM_INTERNATIONAL



AMSTERDAMSTUDENTS.COM



LOOKING FURTHER

PHD AT VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

At Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, we provide research intensive PhD programmes organized in graduate schools of nine faculties: Humanities, Theology, Social Sciences, Law, School of Business and Economics, Movement and Behavioral Sciences, Sciences, Medicine, Dentistry-CTA.

We offer customized training and supervision with a strong emphasis on the development of research skills as well as transferable skills such as the ability to work in teams and collaborate. Our doctoral graduates are internationally oriented, multi- and interdisciplinary, curiosity and results driven, and creating an impact in science and society.

Earning a PhD doctorate from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam often leads to a career as a scholar and researcher in universities, and universities of applied sciences; non-profits and think tanks; consultancies and corporations.



ACCORDING TO THE
ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE
UNIT AMSTERDAM IS
THE 5TH SAFEST
CITY IN THE WORLD

RANKING AND REPUTATION

The high quality of research and education at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam can be demonstrated by its consistently excellent performance in international rankings. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ranks among top 200 in all major international rankings.

RESEARCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT

CROSS DISCIPLINARY AND INTERFACULTY RESEARCH
Research at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam covers a wide range of fields that often cut across disciplinary boundaries. Our interfaculty research institutes enhance the scientific quality and the societal impact of research, and enjoy an excellent reputation due to their successful PhD and research Master's programmes, worldwide recruitment of staff and students, and active participation in international networks and consortia.

AGCI	Amsterdam Global Change Institute
AIMMS	Amsterdam Institute for Molecules, Medicines and Systems
A-LAB	Institute for criminological research
VUmc CCA	Cancer Center Amsterdam/ VUmc Institute for Cancer and Immunology



AMSTERDAM HAS
44 MUSEUMS
 40 PARKS

DID YOU KNOW THAT

ACCORDING TO MERCER'S 2017 QUALITY OF LIVING RANKING, AMSTERDAM IS RANKED 12TH WORLDWIDE, AHEAD OF LONDON (40TH) AND NEW YORK (44TH)

WITH
258,000
STUDENTS, AMSTERDAM IS A GREAT AND LIVELY PLACE TO STUDY



AMSTERDAM HAS
165 CANALS

AMSTERDAM HAS
834,713
INHABITANTS

AMSTERDAM HAS
MORE BIKES
881,000
THAN PERMANENT RESIDENTS

SUMMER SCHOOL AND GRADUATE WINTER SCHOOL

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers intensive courses to PhD candidates, given by national and international professors and PhD candidates, during summer and winter months. For additional information please contact: PHD@VU.NL



PHD GATHERINGS

You do not have to go through the process of doing a PhD at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam alone. We have an extensive and international PhD community that organizes social, movie, theater, sports and family events once per month and is run by two PhD candidates. For more information contact: PHD@VU.NL or follow up via VU International Staff group at WWW.MEETUP.COM



OVERVIEW OF MONTHLY COSTS AS A PHD CANDIDATE

- Rent for housing: €750 (studio for one person)- €950 (family flat)
- Food: €250
- Insurance: €100
- Public transport: €50
- Books: €50
- Other costs: €60
- Total: €1260 (incl. studio for one person)- €1460 (incl. family flat)

PHD LIFECYCLE



WHEN YOU APPLY

The application for a doctoral program can be done via the website WWW.VU.NL/PHD

In order to apply via the website you will have to provide a short research proposal, prepare a CV, choose a preferred supervisor and be in possession of a (research) Master degree, among other requirements. Faculties may require further information for application of which they inform the applicant within a few days after online application.

WHEN YOU ARE ADMITTED

Admission of PhD candidates is handled by either the graduate school of the designated faculty, or one of the faculty departments at which you candidate will be officially registered.



VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM SERVICES

At Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam we help you with visa/ immigration and arrange

housing before you arrive. Visit WWW.VU.NL/INTERNATIONALOFFICE for more information.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Welcoming and onboarding of new PhD candidates is very important to us. Join the international staff network by sending an email to ISN@VU.NL. International staff network also organizes events throughout the year. The events are all held in the Global Room.

The Global Room is available for hosting events including workshops, information sessions, presentations, small social gatherings and network sessions targeting an international staff audience. The Global Room also serves as landing spot for international staff to informally meet or work.

DURING YOUR PHD

We place high importance on doctoral education and training. Our faculties offer high end research, disciplinary and transferable skills training courses to their PhD candidates. They also stimulate and often financially support PhD candidates to attend conferences and participate in workshops, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam summer and graduate winter school.

Hora finita operating system

Planningsdashboard van "T. MW Promovendus 1"

Projectplanning

start traject	26	06	2014
beoogd eind traject	26	06	2014
beoogde promotiedatum			
definitieve promotiedatum			

Openstaande taken

1 van de 8 ingeplande taken zijn al afgerond
er zijn 7 taken waarvan de deadline binnenkort verstrijkt, of
verstreken is

openstaande taak	deadline
Task 19	13-10-2014
dataverzameling	02-11-2014
lab werk: test materiaal verkrijgen, daadwerkelijk werk in lab	02-11-2014
dataverwerking / analyse	02-11-2014
statistische analyse	02-11-2014
analyse plan opstellen	02-11-2014
onderwijs volgen/ geven/ TSP-activiteiten	13-12-2014

[Open de projectplanning](#)

Promotiechecklist

Check	Omschrijving	Verantwoordelijke	Deadline	Uitgevoerd
✓	Belofte wetenschappelijke integriteit Open de pagina " belofte wetenschappelijke integriteit "	promovendus	26-06-2014	28-10-2014
✓	Projectbeschrijving invoeren Open de pagina " projectbeschrijving "	promovendus	26-07-2014	21-11-2014
✗	Tsp vaststellen Digitaal inleveren bij je Graduate School	promovendus	25-06-2014	
✗	Promotie aanvragen Open de pagina " Promotie aanvraag "	promovendus	26-12-2013	

Training en professionalisering

8 van de 30 benodigde EC behaald
Er moeten nog 18 EC ingepland worden

100% van de geplande doorlooptijd is verstreken
27% van de benodigde credits zijn behaald

■ reeds behaald
■ ingepland
■ nog in te plannen



komende trainingsactiviteiten	startdatum	einddatum
Advances in Genetic Epidemiological Research and Data Analysis	20-11-2014	20-11-2014
Basics in Psychology and Psychosocial Factors (Research Master)	13-10-2014	13-10-2014

[Open de trainingsoverzichtspagina](#)

Resultaat- en ontwikkelingsgesprekken

R&O Gesprekken	datum
2 jaar	23-11-2014

[Open de resultaat- en ontwikkelingsoverzichtspagina](#)

Regulations and policy



DOCTORATE REGULATIONS

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	PROCEDURAL REGULATIONS	P. 23

Doctorate Regulations - last amended on 1 February 2016

Manage expectations (arrival, training)

- **Bridging Programs** (pilot with Faculty of Social Sciences, September 2018)
- **Pre-doc program Indonesia** (pilot in June 2019 together with Groningen University, Leiden University)
- **Pre-departure English Lessons** and **Academic English courses** (Indonesia)
- **Academic English** training courses (offered several times per year by all our graduate schools)
- **Graduate Winter School** (January 2019)

Integration activities (wellbeing)

- **Orientation Days with goody bags** (September, 2018-to introduce twice per year either at each faculty or for the entire university)
- **VU PhD Gatherings** (started April 2018; PhDrinks, PhDiscuss, PhDFamily)
- **Personalized service and guidance: PhD candidate advisor** (VU-wide-phd@vu.nl)
- **International Staff/PhD candidates Network Meetings and the Global Room** (meetup.com) (since 2017)

VU International Staff/PHD candidate Network

Rector: Vinod Subramaniam



- Welcome and greeting
- Living in Amsterdam: Introduction on taxes, social security, childcare options, insurances, maternity leave, optional model
- Lunch with Dutch colleagues
- Being an international staff member (e.g. international PHD candidate) at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Rector address/President of the Board address
- Campus tour

Global Room



The Global Room is available for hosting events including workshops, information sessions, presentations, small social gatherings and network sessions targeting an international audience. The Global Room also serves as landing spot for internationals to informally meet or work.

Retention focus (employability and career development)

- **Job to job counselling** (competences and networking; how to apply for jobs effectively; how to be successful using LinkedIn-given by HRM)
- **Career events** (e.g. 8 June for life sciences students 'From academia to Industry'; IO)
- **PhDiscuss** (VU PHD Gatherings organizes alumni events; IO support)
- **Career Thursdays** (career workshops twice per month)
- **Online Career Coaching** (only internationals-retention-6 weeks, 6 sessions, 6 students)
- **PhD Mobility Project** (in progress; IO)

Bottom line

- Structure of the entire PhD lifecycle made an impact
- Evaluation in a PhD Arena (April 2018; next one September 2018 etc.)

Take away message

“Hard on structure, flexible on content”

- Harnessing diversity through structure of the entire PhD lifecycle
- Flexibility to organize their trajectory
- Not about whether or not to structure but about **WHEN** to structure

Thank you

- s.hasanefendic@vu.nl
- acl.verkleij@gmail.com