

EUA-CDE THEMATIC WORKSHOP

Summary of the outcomes of the interactive sessions

Friday, 24 January 2020

World Café table on: Skills training

Moderator: David Bogle

Rapporteur: Murat Ozgoren

Key findings:

- 1. Setting up the Skills Forming Environment is the key responsibility of the institutions (incl. training of trainees, HR Dept., PIs etc) and should be set as Day 1 of recruitment.***
- 2. The post-docs should be given time to absorb the values of skills training by letting them practice and allow some independence such as in junior management***
- 3. The skills set should address the needs of personal well-being (i.e. post-doc stress management), society (i.e. SDGs), industry and entrepreneurship. The training set could become semi-structured and shared as optional certificate programmes.***

World Café table on: Sustainability in research careers

Moderator: Gábor Kismihók

Rapporteur: Paolo Biscari

Key findings:

1. Situation significantly different between doctorates (training activities reasonably well-established, also towards non-academic careers) and post-docs (no training offer). Do we need to rethink postdoc careers as we did for doctoral candidates 10-15 years ago?

2. It is crucial to provide (possibly individual) counselling at the beginning of the career... don't postpone to last minute decision on whether leaving academia!

3. What would you propose as first, most urgent, proposal?

- *Establish individual assistance to help each (post)doctoral researcher identifying his/her best choice for career.***
- *Establish competence assessment centres to raise awareness of own skills***

World Café table on: Well-being support

Moderator: Barbara Dooley

Rapporteur: Pirjo Nikander

Key findings:

1. The UNIVERSITY level:

- *We need to secure both top-down and bottom-up means and measures to secure the well-being of both staff and doctoral candidates.*
- *Identify & analyze key focal points– create act(ion) plans – maintain & monitor*

2. The SUPERVISOR level:

- *We need to clarify the roles and division of labour of supervisors & other (third space professionals), develop training, and make visible and value the role of supervisors. Secure a broad understanding of supervision contents & develop clear practices (academic – industry supervisors).*

3. The DOCTORAL CANDIDATE level:

- *Clear goals and skills analysis, drawing a map for the whole and updating it in itself helps: Why am I doing this – where am I going? Having a plan A and plan B, the use of secondments and mobility*

World Café table on: Teaching careers in universities

Moderator: Susan Te Pas

Rapporteur: Mossadek Talby

Key findings:

1. *Careers are mostly based on research:*

- *research is more valued than teaching for career progression,*
- *No formal training for teaching, but teaching qualification is important,*
- *quality teaching assessment not clearly defined.*

2. *Teaching skills (knowledge transfer) are important for research:*

- *Structures knowledge: Mastery of the taught topic, making better researcher through teaching, academic esteem, good experience to prepare for thesis defense,*
- *Attracts new generations to research and has impact on society,*
- *Vital for institutions to include doctoral candidates in teaching,*
- *Teaching skills are transferable to other situations (outside academia): presentation and communication + other soft skills.*

World Café table on: Careers in the third space

Moderator: Lucas Zinner

Rapporteur: Edwin Constable

Key findings:

- 1. A significant number of workers in the third space had not encountered the description. Very few institutions had an established space in the organisational structure for this group. Career prospects not always clear.*
- 2. A tendency for drifting into the third space. Few jobs advertised with the requirement of (at least) doctoral level training. Consequences for career structures and pay scales. Third space often recognized by two contracts. Often soft money, at least in early phases.*
- 3. All feel that the third space does an important and necessary job well. There is often a feeling that they are not appreciated by either the academic community (threat to resources) or the administration (don't know where to put them/"failed academics"). (EUACDE does not proportionally represent the group although 60% of attendees at meetings are in the third space)*