

## 2025 EUA-CDE THEMATIC WORKSHOP

# Establishing and advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in doctoral education

Hosted by University of Minho  
16-17 January 2025 | Braga – Portugal

### *Draft programme as of 21 October 2024*

The 2025 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop will address the key role that equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) play in doctoral education, where significant progress has been made in diversifying doctoral candidate bodies and enhancing EDI in all its dimensions.

The approach towards this topic varies significantly among European universities, reflecting diverse national and institutional contexts. In some cases, doctoral schools have direct responsibility for implementing EDI-related activities, while in many institutions the overarching strategy is managed by the university. Given this complexity, the upcoming Workshop will explore how doctoral education can be instrumental in influencing and contributing to the university-wide EDI policies – notwithstanding whether a university has long-established or emerging practices on the topic. Through keynote speeches, plenary and hands-on group-work sessions, the EUA-CDE community will not only gain valuable insights into how to develop and implement EDI plans, but also explore ways to embed EDI into their doctoral programmes and curricula and foster a more inclusive culture and community within doctoral education in Europe.

Hosted by the University of Minho, this event will offer a safe space for conversations and learning, fostering meaningful discussions on the state of play and showcasing institutional strategies and current practices from EUA-CDE member universities. It will also offer concrete suggestions on the path forward to establish and advance equity, diversity and inclusion at all stages of the doctorate, from the application procedure until graduation. Over two days, participants will have the opportunity to share their own experiences, dive deep into emerging trends and key challenges and consider how to turn awareness into actionable policies and initiatives that foster a more inclusive, diverse and equitable research environment for current and future generations of doctoral candidates.

Participation in the Thematic Workshop is reserved to EUA-CDE member universities only. As EDI is a university-wide topic that concerns everyone, all members of the EUA-CDE community – including academic leaders, doctoral education managers & professionals, EDI staff, doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers – are invited to join the Thematic Workshop and engage in an open dialogue around this important topic.

### Wednesday 15 January 2025

15.00 – 18.00

Meeting of the Portuguese network of doctoral schools

WET

This regional roundtable will gather members of the [Portuguese network of doctoral schools](#) and other representatives active in doctoral education at Portuguese universities. The main topic of the meeting will be a discussion of completion rates and measures to increase it. Guests from the EUA-CDE community are welcome. In case you would like to participate, please contact us at [info@eua-cde.org](mailto:info@eua-cde.org) no later than 13 December 2024.

### Thursday 16 January 2025

09.30 – 10.15

**Official opening**

WET

10.15 – 11.15

**Plenary session I**  
**Setting the scene – the big picture**

EDI is a crucial topic in doctoral education and in university life as a whole. However, EDI also plays an important role in European society in general. This session will set the scene for the Thematic Workshop by providing insights beyond academia, diving into the key role EDI plays at universities – and offering short introductions from practitioners on what EDI means for doctoral education specifically. This session provides inspirations and insights on what we can learn from this bigger picture for doctoral education and how the latter and university level EDI policies and practices influence each other.

Keynote I: Presenting the bigger picture of EDI in Europe, beyond the university sector

Keynote II: Setting the scene - EDI at universities

Short high-level-perspective panel: Introducing EDI at the doctoral level

This panel will discuss the integration of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) dimensions in doctoral education, with insights from three EUA-CDE member representatives. The discussion will begin by outlining the core objectives of EDI and its growing relevance for doctoral schools/programmes across Europe. The speakers will provide an overview of how their institutions are addressing EDI within their doctoral education frameworks, sharing examples of strategies and policies designed to ensure inclusion, diversity, and equitable access for doctoral candidates.

11.15 – 11.45

*Coffee break*

11.45 – 12.45

**Plenary session II**  
**Deep dive: EDI current practices, new initiatives and challenges at EUA-CDE member institutions**

The first part of this session will present key evidence from EUA-CDE members about new ways to promote equity, diversity and inclusion at the doctoral level and it will offer

current practices, inspiring initiatives and programmes aimed at embedding EDI in doctoral education. Participants will also have the opportunity to learn about the main challenges connected with these activities and how to address them.

The second part of this plenary will introduce an interactive element by inviting the community to exchange experiences and reflections with their peers on how to better promote EDI and to play a more active role in actioning change at their institutions.

12.45 – 14.15 *Group photo and lunch*

**14.15 – 16.00** **Group work on EDI policy practices**

This core session of the 2025 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop offers participants the possibility to share their experiences and engage in focused group discussions on the design and implementation of EDI implementation plans at their universities. They are encouraged to share their experiences on how EDI initiatives shape doctoral education at their institutions and what EDI dimensions are reflected in their respective doctoral education curricula.

Participants will be grouped based on their institution's current activities in EDI policies and practices: e.g., (1) emerging policies and practices: creating an EDI implementation plan, (2) revamping existing EDI implementation plans, (3) reflecting on and refining of established EDI policies and practices. The session will feature several parallel roundtable discussions, each moderated to foster meaningful dialogue, based on the following questions:

1. What are the EDI implementation plans, tools, and/or support that exist at your institution and how are these put into practice by your doctoral programmes? How could EDI implementation plans and curricula be further developed at your institution and included in doctoral programmes?
2. What are the main steps and priorities to consider when designing an EDI implementation plan?
3. Has your institution developed guidelines or specific activities in order to promote inclusive and equitable practices for the recruitment of doctoral candidates and the hiring of doctoral school staff?
4. Does your doctoral school have a committee/body exclusively dedicated to promoting EDI at the doctoral level, or is the EDI strategy managed at the university level? In the latter case, what is the role of doctoral education?
5. What activities has your university developed to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion for the staff working at doctoral schools/programmes?
6. What are the key challenges when it comes to activities towards equity, diversity and inclusion in doctoral education?
7. What are the main barriers to equity, diversity and inclusion in doctoral education at your institution?
8. What are the actions and strategies implemented at your institution to address those barriers, how is doctoral education involved in their development? What

are key aspects that you think are currently missing at your university or doctoral school when it comes to EDI?

9. When thinking about initiatives that have already been established, how do you evaluate their progress?
10. What do your doctoral candidates learn and reflect about in the area of EDI during their journey?

16.00 – 16.30 *Coffee break*

**16.30 – 17.15 Reporting from group work and discussion**

19.30 – 22.00 *Reception & gala dinner*

## Friday 17 January 2025

**09.00 – 10.15 Breakout sessions**

These breakout sessions will focus on four selected topics, identified based on the outcomes of the group work session organised the previous day. During the reporting discussion on Thursday, participants will have the opportunity to select one of the proposed topics according to their preference and expertise, ensuring a more personalised and enriching experience in these breakout sessions.

10.15 – 10.45 *Coffee break*

**10.45 – 12.00 Interactive session**

### **Bringing your doctoral education forward with EDI**

What are the emerging issues and persistent challenges when it comes to EDI in doctoral education? Should we reconsider and refresh our approaches, and what steps are needed to make progress and identify new lines of action in this area?

In this last session, participants will be encouraged to engage in a collective discussion about how to shape the future of EDI in doctoral education by thinking about the current state of play in Europe and reflecting on what is missing to foster a more inclusive, diverse and supportive research environment. Based on matrix and backcasting methodologies, participants of the workshop will explore different possible scenarios to enhance EDI practices and exchange with their peers, charting a forward path towards greater diversity and inclusion in doctoral education.

**12.00 – 12.30 Reporting of the outcomes of the interactive session and discussion**

**12.30 – 13.00 Closing session**

13.00 – 14.00 *Lunch*

15.30 *Social programme*