

**Project: Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates**

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Partners: Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Lead); Aarhus School of Architecture; Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design/University of Bergen; Orpheus Institute Gent; Glasgow School of Arts; University of Art and Design Linz; Academy of Fine Arts Prague; Zurich University of the Arts; European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)

**Work Package:**

**“Doctoral Supervisors: Multi-skilled Super Heroes or Co-competent Team Worker?”**

**Annotated Checklist / Guidelines**

**“Main problematics of Artistic Research Doctorates Supervision”**

**for conceptualizing artistic research doctorate programmes**

*(target groups: university board members, deans, doctoral programme leaders)*

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## **Introduction**

The main goal of the following “Annotated Checklist for Artistic Research Doctorates Supervision for conceptualizing artistic research doctorates” is to give at hand—for decision makers, deans and programme leaders alike—a structured and annotated list of the crucial problematics of “supervision”/“supervisors” an art university has to deal with when they plan to conceptualize (or to re-conceptualize) and to install an artistic research doctorate programme. At the same time

Clustered in six areas, the annotated checklist assembles the main problematics (issues to deal with) related to supervision/supervisors and records for each of them, how to tackle them. Being a checklist or guidelines, it does not list existing practices, concepts or models. Each of the partner institutions of this project have developed such solutions, concepts and models and the respective practices in their programmes, with different emphases on the problematics listed. In case of interest please contact the respective institutions to get detailed information.

The following checklist list has been developed based on the models, practices and experiences with respect to supervision/supervisors in artistic research doctorates of all of the *eight partner institutions* of the Erasmus+ project “Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates”, including *eleven artistic research doctoral programmes*. To get to know as precisely as possible their models, experiments and experiences of how supervision/supervisors is practiced in the respective artistic research doctorate programmes a *Basic Questionnaire* (see, the respective two documents) was developed, discussed and set up and was answered in a two-loops procedure by the heads of each of the 11 programmes involved.

An analysis of the detailed replies of the *basic questionnaire* has shown that the main problematics in re supervision/supervisors in artistic research doctorate models and programmes are related to six areas.

## **List of Areas**

**Area 1: Conceptualisation (or, re-conceptualisation) of an artistic research doctoral programme**  
Role(s) of the supervisors in the phase of conceptualizing an doctoral artistic research programme.

**Area 2: Actual supervision**

Role(s) of the supervisors during the different temporal phases of the making of the doctorates by the candidates (from the first encounter supervisor/candidate to the post-exam situation).

**Area 3: Research environment und research culture of the university**

Roles of the supervisors with regard to the relation Doctorates (programmes) – contribution to the research culture at the home university.

**Area 4: Robustness and sustainability of supervision**

How can the multi-layered experiences and cognitions of supervisors and supervision within the university be secured, stored and made available for the actual and the future generations of supervisors?

**Area 5: Expertise for doctoral programmes at other universities**

Supervisors are not only involved in supervision at their home university but also asked-for experts as reviewers and examination committee members in other universities’ doctoral programmes. Roles and required competences for this area?

**Area 6: Contribution to the artistic research community**

Additional roles of supervisors beyond their universities are or maybe to contribute (directly) to the international artistic research community, e.g., as writers of articles, presenters at conferences, members of funding agencies etc. dealing with different aspects of supervision.

In the following the main problematics at stake with supervision/supervisors in artistic research doctoral programmes that have to be dealt with are commented, and suggestions how to tackle them are made for all of the 6 areas.

## **Annotations and Suggestions for each Area**

### **Area 1: Conceptualisation of an Artistic Research Doctoral Programme**

A university plans to develop and to implement a new (or a revised) AR doctorate model, in a discipline or interdisciplinarily. Normally the order for this activity comes from the board of the university, the person responsible for the development is the dean or programme leader, who will establish a working group for elaborating the programme. Supervisors are or should be part of the working group that elaborates the programme.

The main problematics in this area to deal with are:

- **Number:**  
*Clarify how many supervisors should be part of the working group “Conceptualisation”.*  
This probably is mainly dependent on the doctorate model the university wants to run (e.g. doctor father/mother model, graduate school; disciplinary or interdisciplinary model).
- **Competences:**  
*Define the competences the supervisors must have to be able to fulfil their role in the working group.*  
To be a good supervisor does not necessarily mean to have the competences to contribute to the conceptualisation of an artistic doctorate programme. The consequences are either to integrate only supervisors in the working group familiar with structural and conceptual thinking (which sometimes is a problem especially at art universities) or/and to be aware of and to clarify the contribution other supervisors can deliver with respect to the aims of the working group.
- **Expectations:**  
*Clarify the expectations you have of the supervisor(s) of the working group.*  
Competences of the supervisors to be considered for the working group are one thing, the expectation of them—expectations from the point of view of the board, dean or programme leader—is something different.
- **Time and finances:**  
*Develop an adequate financial budget and adequate time resources for the supervision's/supervisors' part for the conceptual phase of the doctoral programme.*
- **Regulations:**  
*Decide which aspects related to supervision/supervisors have to be/should be part of the legal regulations.*
- **Triangulation/Interfaces – Administration, supervisors, doctoral candidates:**  
*Fix and describe how these interfaces are served best and function most smoothly (with respect to the content and to the mutual communication).*

### **Area 2: Actual Supervision**

Actual supervision stretches over a time span of four to eight years' research of a doctoral candidate (sometimes even longer). At the extreme, an actual supervision may cover the period between the first encounter doctoral candidate/professor and the post-examination situation. In any case, the time span of a doctoral research includes different phases, for which different competences and different support of the supervisor may be asked.

This time span of a doctoral research can be structured into the following six phases:

1. First encounter doctoral candidate/Professor – acceptance of the doctoral candidate by the professor
2. Development of the proposal – submission of the proposal (to a single professor or a committee)
3. Examination of the proposal and admission to the doctoral studies
4. Doctoral studies/research – submission of the results ('thesis')
5. Doctoral examination
6. Post-examination situation (e.g. Dissemination, career planning)

The main problematics in this area to deal with are:

- **Type(s) and numbers of supervisors:**  
Decide which types of supervisors you want to be involved in the programme (artists, theorists, scientists, PhD-Candidates; internal, external, etc.).  
Fix the numbers of supervisors per doctoral candidate, as well as the different roles of the primary supervisor and the further supervisors.
- **“Musts” - Profiles of the supervisors:**  
Describe the competences, qualification and experiences each type of supervisor has to fulfil to be instated as a supervisor. There are several levels of competences, qualifications and experiences at stake (e.g., professional, communicative, social and psychological competences).
- **Formats for supervision:**  
Define the different types of formats you want to work with (individual, multilateral supervision, group supervisions, graduate school, colloquia, seminars, tutorials, focus weeks, retreats, etc.).
- **Different phases:**  
Decide for which of the phases there should be supervision and for which ones there is none.  
Clarify the (sometimes different) roles and obligations of the supervisors in the different phases.
- **Inclusion/exclusion of obligations and responsibility:**  
Make explicit which obligations are part of the supervision, and which ones are not.  
Fix the obligations of the supervisors in a “supervision agreement”.
- **Analogue / digital supervision:<sup>1</sup>**  
Clarify the different qualities of analogue and digital supervision, the way you want to make use of both of them in difference and in correspondence to each other.  
And in addition, clarify the needs and preconditions that have to be fulfilled for digital supervision.

### **Area 3: Robustness and Sustainability**

With respect to its sustainability, for a doctoral programme, for its attractiveness and for its future, it is crucial to develop and install a model that makes the supervision (and the whole doctoral programme) robust, guarantees its sustainability and improves its quality permanently.

The main problematics in this area to deal with are:

- **Evaluation:**  
Develop a an evaluation model of the supervision processes with regard to triangulation (administration of the institution – supervisors- doctoral candidates alike) and with regard to its periodicity (e.g., annually, biennially).  
The Integral Questionnaire for Input / Feedback / Evaluation alike (see the respective document) developed within this project and within this work package offers a unique, novel form of such a model.
- **Supervision of the supervisors:**  
Define the profile of the ones, who shall do the supervision of the supervisors.
- **Experienced Supervisors:**  
Develop a format for a permanent exchange between experienced supervisors (and, maybe even a training programme).
- **New supervisors:**  
Develop a model for educating and training new supervisors from scratch (e.g., alumni/postdocs, assistants, inexperienced professors).

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<sup>1</sup> The blended version of analogue and digital supervising alike is a practice all artistic research doctoral programmes have been making use of a long before Corona pandemic times. Some of them because their international programme does not demand a permanent on-site stay of the doctoral candidates, and/or quite often doctoral candidates have to travel for their research for a longer time, which makes digital supervision a necessity.

- **Space:**  
*Define and install a space that allows supervisors, MA students, PhD candidates and post-docs to meet (regularly) and to develop a research environment / a research culture.*
- **Sustainability:**  
*Decide by which means the sustainability shall be anchored and the different experiences and gained insights made available for the institution respectively for future supervisors (e.g. regular supervisors conferences, meetings or workshops; reports, guidelines, handbook, publications, etc.).*

#### **Area 4: Research Environment and Research Culture**

Very often, doctoral programmes are dealt with as stand-alone-'applications'. But, for many reasons, doctoral programmes are (or should be) thought of as one element of a broader research environment (normally including labs with research focuses, funded research projects, connecting MA students, PhD candidates, post-docs and research professors). Supervisors of doctoral programmes are a main player in building and living the university's research culture—within and beyond their programme and individual supervising. E.g., organizing and introducing presentations of completed PhDs aiming at the whole university is such a contribution.

The main problematics in this area to deal with are:

- **Contribution:**  
*Clarify what is the contribution supervisors shall deliver to the research culture of the university beyond the supervision towards their doctoral students.*
- **Networking among supervisors within the university:**  
*Develop formats that allow, enable and foster to accumulate experiences and knowledge among supervisors.*
- **Alliances beyond the home university:**  
*Clarify the role of supervisors for alliances to be developed or secured to other (types of) universities and to the art world.*

#### **Area 5 and 6: Expertise for doctoral programmes and for the Contribution to the Artistic Research Community**

In this area and its two domains (doctoral programmes at other universities, artistic research Community) the supervisors play an important role beyond the doctoral programme they are involved in at their home university. As e.g., reviewers for and examination committee members in other universities' doctoral programmes and for national and international research agencies alike, they are asked-for experts, who contribute fundamentally to the improvement of the quality of doctoral programmes and of the development of Artistic Research internationally.

The main problematics in this area to deal with are:

- **Competences, qualifications, experiences:**  
*Define the competences, qualifications and experiences needed for supervisors, to be able to act as competent reviewers and members of examinations committees in doctoral programmes beyond your own university and for/in national and international funding agencies alike.*
- **Artistic Research Community:**  
*Develop and implement ideas how your supervisors as supervisors can contribute to the international artistic research communities.  
Install a research culture that makes it self-evident that the supervisors take responsibilities as writers, presenters, board members, etc.*



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