

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SPECIAL ISSUE

Doctoral programmes: a springboard for professionalisation?

Doctoral training in the social sciences has undergone profound changes over the last two decades on every continent. One of the challenges of these changes, linked in particular to the increase in the number of doctoral students, concerns professionalisation and integration into the workplace. To what extent does doctoral training prepare students for careers outside the academic field, and what are the interdisciplinary skills that doctoral students need in order to make the most of their doctoral thesis outside the university?

The aim of this special issue is to answer this question by examining doctoral programmes and the ways in which they are set up, in order to analyse how they address the future careers of doctoral students at the same time as the successful completion of the PhD. Focusing in particular on the transformations of doctoral education and its effects, this special issue will analyse the forms of commitment of academics on the basis of the intentions and values conveyed by the doctoral training and support systems that they help to develop. While doctoral support provided by supervisors has recently been documented (Chachkine, 2023), the aim of this issue is to examine a broader range of support provided to researchers in training as they develop their research posture. We would like to invite contributors to take an evaluative look at doctoral programmes.

By the term 'doctoral programme', (*dispositif* in French), we mean 'an intentional, strategic and finalised arrangement of humans and artefacts' (Albero, 2022: 136) underpinned by three interdependent dimensions: the ideal – the dimension that provides both the ideal and conceptual horizon towards which the project tends – the functional reference – which corresponds to the implementation of the system, and the lived experience, i.e. the 'doctoral experience' (Berthiaume et al., 2020). In other words, the aim is to evaluate doctoral programmes in their three dimensions, by understanding the possible tensions and convergences within and between each of them. The evaluative view of the systems can be understood as a critical function that questions the value of an action with a view to confirming, adjusting or even radically modifying it (Mercier-Brunel & Jorro, 2022).

This issue will feature in different international contexts, so as to bring together different viewpoints and gain a better understanding of the mechanisms put in place to a) support doctoral students; b) improve the conditions for the feasibility/completion of a doctoral thesis in the social sciences and humanities in a global scientific context; c) guarantee the integration of doctoral students, both within and outside the university, in other organisations. This issue will explore a wide range of avenues likely to lead to a better understanding of the mechanisms and improved conditions for carrying out a PhD thesis in the social sciences and humanities, particularly with regard to gender and material resources (including access to scientific literature), but also with regard to sensitive contemporary social issues to which current generations of PhD students are paying increasing attention, particularly in terms of their social responsibility and commitment. We welcome contributions addressing these topics and their many combinations.

References

Albero, B. (2022). Dispositif. Dans A. Jorro (dir.) Dictionnaire des concepts de la professionnalisation (2e éd. actualisée) (p. 135-139). De Boeck Supérieur.

Berthiaume, D., Bosson, M., Elston, V. et Skakni, I. (2020). L'expérience doctorale : état des lieux et propositions de structuration. DevPro.

Chachkine, E. (2023). Accompagnement doctoral. De l'écriture de recherche à la professionnalisation des doctorants. Revue internationale de pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur, RIPES. 39(1). <https://journals.openedition.org/ripes/4404>

Mercier-Brunel, Y. & Jorro, A. (2022). Évaluation. Dans A. Jorro (dir.), Dictionnaire des concepts de la professionnalisation (pp. 197-200). De Boeck Supérieur.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals for articles (500 words maximum) should be sent to Maryvonne Charmillot (maryvonne.charmillot@unige.ch) and Valérie Ouedraogo (claudvale@yahoo.com) by 31 July 2024 at the latest.

PROVISIONAL EDITORIAL TIMETABLE

- May 2024: launch and circulation of the call for articles
- 31 July 2024: receipt of submissions (500 words or 1 page max.)
- End of August 2024: responses to submissions
- End of December 2024: receipt of texts
- April 2025: return of expert opinions to authors
- End of August 2025: receipt of revised texts
- End of October 2025: final acceptance (management of delays)
- November-December 2025: collaboration with the journal for finalisation
- January-February 2026: issue published