

"The GRADE workshop GET STARTED was a truly enriching experience that went beyond the exchange of academic ideas. It offered a valuable space to engage with fellow PhD researchers not only on a substantial scientific level but also on the challenges of maintaining balance between research and personal life. I found the open and reflective discussions deeply inspiring.

They reminded me that pursuing a doctorate is as much about intellectual growth as it is about self-awareness and community.

I left the workshop feeling both motivated and grounded, with renewed clarity for the path ahead."

Bonald Pärkola

PhD Candidate

Social Sciences - Goethe University



Foto : Jürgen Lecher

Get Started Identifying Opportunities and Challenges – Setting the Compass

Objective

Doing a doctorate is a complex and long-term project. If you plan correctly, you will be ready for an expedition on the sometimes winding paths through the world of research.

An important prerequisite for a successful doctorate is a systematic approach. In addition to defining personal goals, this includes setting up a good supervisory environment, determining a suitable doctoral topic and an initial conception of the work stages. This way, the classic stumbling blocks won't throw you off track and you can ensure lasting motivation.

Description

Participants will clarify the central requirements of their doctoral situation and recognize in which areas there is still catching up to do. The focus is on the following points:

- **The basics of the start-up phase:** Developing constructive objectives
- **Doctoral research as a process:** Demands and stumbling blocks
- **Impetus for the years that follow:** The right PhD topic
- **Maintaining a relationship:** Dealing with your doctoral supervisor
- **Contacts in academia:** The thesis committee and further supervisors
- **My skills profile:** What additional qualifications do I need – for now and later?
- **Get started:** My next steps

Methodology

The workshop will be adapted to the specific knowledge and needs of the participants, which will be determined in advance via an online form.

This course is practice-oriented and includes knowledge input as well as active and interactive parts, such as dialogues, individual and group work, role plays, etc.

Trainers



Dr. Gunnar Seemann
GOLIN WISSENSCHAFTS-
MANAGEMENT, Berlin

Dr. Gunnar Seemann did his doctorate in electrical engineering and information technology and then headed a [junior] research group in Karlsruhe and Freiburg for 15 years. Since 2020 he has been employed as a coach and trainer in the Young Investigator Network of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. In addition, he works as a freelancer.



Dr. Matthias Köhler
GRADE - Goethe-Universität
Frankfurt

Matthias Köhler is Deputy Managing Director of GRADE and has previously held various positions in academia, research management, and science policy.

Organizational Information

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| Language / Format | English / On Campus |
| Target group | Doctoral Candidates in the early stage of their doctorate from all faculties |
| Date | Thursday, 18 June 2026, 9:00 – 17:00 Friday, 19 June 2026, 9:00 – 16:00 |
| Registration | Click here for registration |

