

Tätigkeitsbericht der Studienvertretung Doktorat an  
der TU Wien laut §22 HSG und §20 HTU-Satzung

Activity Report of the Programme Representation of  
Doctoral Candidates at TU Wien in Accordance with  
the Austrian Law Regulating the Representation of  
Students (§22 HSG 2014) and the Articles of the  
Students' Representation at University Level (§20  
HTU-Satzung)

Studienvertretung Doktorat

Budgetjahr 2024/2025 (1.7.24 - 30.6.25)

## **Abstract**

The activities of the representatives of the doctoral candidates at TU Wien during the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 are briefly summarised. They include counselling, meetings, workshops for doctoral candidates, and much more. A short financial overview is given in this report.

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Counselling (Beratung) . . . . .	2
2.1.1	Opening Hours . . . . .	2
2.1.2	Individual Counselling . . . . .	3
2.1.3	E-mail . . . . .	3
2.2	Meetings of the Fachschaft Doktorat and Doctoral Candidates . . . . .	3
2.2.1	Jour Fixe . . . . .	3
2.3	Nominations for Self-Governing Bodies at TU Wien (Nominierungen in Kollegialorgane der TU Wien) . . . . .	3
2.4	Activities in Self-Governing Bodies at TU Wien (Arbeit in Kollegialorganen der TU Wien) . . . . .	4
2.5	Providing Infrastructure for Doctoral Candidates . . . . .	4
2.6	Information and Service . . . . .	4
2.6.1	Website Maintenance . . . . .	4
2.6.2	Information via email . . . . .	4
2.6.3	Social Media . . . . .	4
2.7	Training of the Members of the Fachschaft Doktorat . . . . .	4
2.8	Projects . . . . .	5
2.8.1	Grill Events . . . . .	5
2.8.2	Information Events . . . . .	5
2.8.3	Orientation Programme . . . . .	5
2.8.4	Winterfest . . . . .	5
2.8.5	WinA+ Programme . . . . .	5
2.8.6	Friends of FSDR . . . . .	6
2.8.7	ÖH Elections 2025 . . . . .	6
<b>3</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Conclusion and Outlook</b>	<b>6</b>

# 1 Introduction

In accordance with the Austrian Law Regulating the Representation of Students (Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaftsgesetz 1998, shortly HSG [3]) the main task of the Programme Representation of Doctoral Candidates (Studienvertretung) is the representation of the interests of all doctoral candidates at the TU Wien (see §18 HSG). In our case this comprises the counselling of doctoral candidates, participation in the curricular committee for the doctoral programme (Studienkommission für die Doktoratsstudien), contact to professors and the works council (Betriebsrat), writing official statements (Stellungnahmen), organising workshops, providing infrastructure and much more. The costs for workshops, infrastructure for counselling, etc. are covered by a part of the students' union fee (ÖH-Beitrag) [3] [5]. Since every doctoral candidate is required to pay this fee, we aim to report on the expenses and activities of the programme representation, as stipulated in §19a HSG 1998 and in §20 HTU-Satzung (articles of the students' representation at university level [5]).

It is generally agreed upon that the representation of the doctoral candidates cannot reasonably be done by only five people, as given by law [3]. The five elected students' representatives (Martin Baumann, Lisa Geiginger, Bettina Kern, Christoph Ribisch, Claudia Steinbach [2]) have decided to work and make decisions together with all committed predocs. Due to this decision, all activities of the Programme Representation of the Doctoral Candidates have taken place within the Fachschaft Doktorat, which consists of approximately 10 predocs, including the five official students' representatives. The members of the Fachschaft Doktorat work as volunteers and thus do not receive payment for their work within the Fachschaft Doktorat. All decisions of the Programme Representation have been made during the Jours Fixes of the Fachschaft Doktorat, where every doctoral candidate at TU Wien can participate. Hence, the term "Fachschaft Doktorat" is used in the following instead of "Programme Representation of the Doctoral Candidates".

## 2 Activities

This section is the summary of the activities of the Fachschaft Doktorat during the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

### 2.1 Counselling (Beratung)

One of the main activities of the Fachschaft Doktorat is counseling persons who wish to enroll in a doctoral program and doctoral candidates at TU Wien. We offered opening hours, individual counseling, and counseling via email.

#### 2.1.1 Opening Hours

The opening hours of the Fachschaft Doktorat were every two weeks on changing weekdays at 5.30 p.m., where study-related counselling was offered. The exact dates and times were announced on our homepage. Additionally, each information e-mail sent to

all doctoral candidates included information on the next upcoming counselling option. Approximately 30 doctoral candidates and 15 individuals interested in enrolling in a doctoral program took advantage of this offer.

### **2.1.2 Individual Counselling**

Besides the opening hours, the Fachschaft Doktorat offered individual counselling of doctoral candidates. Nearly 10 people made use of this offer.

### **2.1.3 E-mail**

Most of the study-related counselling was offered via e-mail. On average, around four to five emails were sent to the email address fsdr@fsdr.at per week. The majority of the questions were from people from all over the world who wanted to enroll in a doctoral programme at TU Wien. The members of the Fachschaft Doktorat replied to all of them.

## **2.2 Meetings of the Fachschaft Doktorat and Doctoral Candidates**

### **2.2.1 Jour Fixe**

Every four weeks, the Fachschaft Doktorat had a Jour Fixe. This is an open meeting where all decisions are made and future actions are coordinated. Every doctoral candidate at TU Wien was invited to join these meetings. The day of the week is evenly distributed between Monday and Wednesday, changing with each meeting. This ensures broad participation and avoids the implicit exclusion of students with personal or professional obligations. The information regarding date, time, and location of each upcoming Jour Fixe was published on the website [www.fsdr.at](http://www.fsdr.at). Additionally, some of the Jours Fixes were separately advertised in information e-mails sent to all doctoral candidates.

## **2.3 Nominations for Self-Governing Bodies at TU Wien (Nominierungen in Kollegialorgane der TU Wien)**

The Fachschaft Doktorat must nominate at least four representatives of doctoral candidates for the curricular committee for the doctoral program (Studienkommission für die Doktoratsstudien). Furthermore, it must nominate at least four representatives for the curricular committee for continuing education programs (Studienkommission für Universitätslehrgänge). The personnel decisions were made during a constituent assembly of the Fachschaft Doktorat on 20 June 2023. Three nominations were made.

20 June 2023 Nomination for “Studienkommission für die Doktoratsstudien”. Members: Matthias Schneller, Thomas Kolb, Lisa Geiginger, Bettina Kern; alternate members: Martin Baumann, Lukas Cvitkovich, Thomas Kolb, Thomas Pohl, Christoph Ribisch, Claudia Steinbach, Johannes Steinbach:

2 October 2024 Nomination for “Leitfaden für PraeDocs und Betreuer\_innen”. Members: Christoph Ribisch, Bettina Kern

## **2.4 Activities in Self-Governing Bodies at TU Wien (Arbeit in Kollegialorganen der TU Wien)**

The curricular committee for the doctoral programme had two meetings on 6 November 2018 and 26 June 2019. The most important topic was the revision of the existing curriculum regarding the list of references. Besides the two meetings of the committee, there were several meetings between members of the Fachschaft Doktorat and members of the curricular committee.

## **2.5 Providing Infrastructure for Doctoral Candidates**

The Fachschaft Doktorat has a small office in the main building, room AF EG 32, and one small storage room in Freihaus, Wiedner Hauptstraße 8-10. The office was used for counselling, meetings, organisation tasks, IT infrastructure, and everyday representation work.

## **2.6 Information and Service**

One important task of the Fachschaft Doktorat is to provide information for doctoral candidates. Thus, our website was maintained, information emails were sent, and our Facebook presence was further improved.

### **2.6.1 Website Maintenance**

The Fachschaft Doktorat has a website, [www.fsdr.at](http://www.fsdr.at). In addition to revising existing content, we have also provided new information for all doctoral candidates. For instance, recent changes to the remission of tuition fees (UG § 92 Abs. 1 Z. 5, see [4]) have triggered a number of queries regarding the benefits of active enrollment.

### **2.6.2 Information via email**

We sent three information e-mails to all enrolled doctoral candidates at TU Wien to inform them about news and upcoming events regarding their doctoral studies at TU Wien.

### **2.6.3 Social Media**

The Fachschaft Doktorat also commenced activities on the social media platform Instagram. An Instagram page [1] was maintained to connect doctoral candidates at TU Wien, and provide them with up-to-date information. Our Instagram also serves as a direct communication channel to get in touch with FSDR.

## **2.7 Training of the Members of the Fachschaft Doktorat**

Two training seminars for the members of the Fachschaft Doktorat took place from 25 to 27 October 2024 and from 28 to 30 March 2025, respectively. The goals were to enhance the understanding of current legal norms, discuss the current situation of doctoral candidates, and gather ideas for future work as representatives of doctoral candidates. In particular, our objective is to transfer formal and informal knowledge from advanced and senior members to newcomers at the Fachschaft Doktorat.

The discussed topics included possible improvements to the curriculum and guidelines, the current employment situation of doctoral candidates at TU Wien, and further work in the curricular committee, among others. Measures to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) were discussed, evaluated, and implemented. Some in-depth maintenance work was performed on our homepage, and parts of our internal information systems were improved.

## **2.8 Projects**

In addition to the aforementioned everyday work, the Fachschaft Doktorat organised and participated in various projects, including two orientation programmes and information events.

### **2.8.1 Grill Events**

To get new members and have a general networking event, we hosted a number of grill events on the Donauinsel:

- 5. June 2024
- 10. June 2024
- 23. July 2025

### **2.8.2 Information Events**

Since the Fachschaft Doktorat represents the interests of doctoral candidates across TU Wien, it is crucial to provide opportunities for students to meet and discuss current issues and ideas for their resolution. Therefore, the Fachschaft Doktorat hosted the Winterfest on January 24th 2025, a small party held on the rooftop terrace of Campus Gußhaus (Neues EI, Gußhausstraße 27-29) and the adjacent Kontaktraum. Approximately 300 doctoral candidates and professors attended the party.

### **2.8.3 Orientation Programme**

The Fachschaft Doktorat organized one orientation program for doctoral candidates enrolling in the winter term 2024 and in summer term 2024/2025 on 24 January 2025. These information events offer a first introduction to university life for doctoral candidates at TU Wien.

### **2.8.4 Winterfest**

To get to know the newly enrolled doctoral students we hosted a Winterfest after the orientation program in the Kontaktraum at Gußhaus on the 24.1.2025. This was a great success and is one of our core events to recruit new members.

### **2.8.5 WinA+ Programme**

The so-called WinA+ Programme is an effort of the university's human resource department to provide additional training to selected PhD candidates that are employed at TU Wien. As part of this programme, we provided basic information on the structure of PhD studies at TU Wien.

### 2.8.6 Friends of FSDR

The network "Friends of FSDR" was founded to stay in touch with doctoral candidates who are interested in participating in activities of the Fachschaft Doktorat. The network consists mainly of a mailing list, which is used to inform participants on current and upcoming activities of Fachschaft Doktorat. The number of members on this mailing list has been significantly increased. For the future, this list might be used not only as a pure information channel, but also to solicit volunteers for specific tasks (e.g., support for workshops, contribute to our information events, etc.) or to collect quick feedback on urgent issues.

### 2.8.7 ÖH Elections 2025

A particularly important, although not time-consuming, part of last year's special activities was related to the recent election of student representatives, or 'ÖH elections', whereby providing information and motivating students to participate or even engage as representatives was a primary concern. Voter turnout for doctoral programs is usually comparatively low and attempts to boost participation rates show only mild effects as observed over the last years. Nevertheless, we are quite pleased with the voter turnout for this election.

## 3 Budget

All students (this includes doctoral candidates) are members of the ÖH (Österreichische Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaft - the official representation of students at the national level). Every student is required to pay the student union fee (ÖH-Beitrag). 15% of the fee remains at the national level. The rest of the money is returned to the local representation, in our case, the HTU Wien (Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaft an der TU Wien - the official student representation at the university level). The latter distributes the money according to its articles to the students' representations, the departments of the HTU, representations at faculty level, etc. [3, 5].

The budget of the Programme Representation of Doctoral Candidates at TU Wien (Fachschaft Doktorat) was approximately 16.000 EUR, of which approximately 80% was spent. Money was used for the following items: providing the food and the non-alcoholic drinks served during counselling and at the information events (approx. 650 EUR), to train the members of the Fachschaft Doktorat (approx. 8.900 EUR) and for maintaining our IT and office infrastructure (approx. 3200 EUR). The rest is going back to the HTU Wien, where it is used to set up reserves.

## 4 Conclusion and Outlook

A significant amount of work has been accomplished during the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Besides the everyday work, such as counselling for doctoral candidates, writing statements, and participating in the curricular committee, the Fachschaft Doktorat also organised two orientation programs to guide new and prospective doctoral candidates. One of our most significant challenges for future terms is to attract new volunteers to retain the quality of our daily operation. To that end, options for an extended network of 'Friends of FSDR' is a viable option.

For further information about the work in the Fachschaft Doktorat, please contact us via email: [fsdr@fsdr.at](mailto:fsdr@fsdr.at).

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Vorsitzender der Studienvertretung Doktorat

Lisa Geiginger

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