

European University / Business Forum

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EUA in Research and Innovation: Contribution to the implementation of the Lisbon agenda

- University- Business collaboration: Open Innovation model, “Modernisation agenda” for Universities
 - Responsible Partnering Guidelines (EUA, EIRMA, EARTO, ProTon)
 - Dialogue with Stakeholders: European Business Summit, Regional Innovation (EURADA Conference 2008), European Institute of Technology

- Doctoral education: main link between EHEA and ERA
 - Doctoral Programmes: Third Cycle of Bologna Process, Doctoral Programmes Projects, EUA Council for Doctoral Education (launched 2008)
 - Benchmarking: EUA, US/CGS and University Associations from Australia, Canada and China (Global Summit on Graduate Education, Canada 2007)
 - Employability issues: DOC-CAREERS project, Charter and Code

DOC-CAREERS Objectives

- Development of transferable skills and competences in the context of employability and career perspectives in private and public sectors
- Nature and extent of university and business collaboration in doctoral programmes
- Mobility strategies for doctoral career development (cross-border, inter-institutional, inter-sectoral)
- Requirements for more systematic collection of data at the university level to provide the basis for analysis of doctoral candidate's career paths

DOC-CAREERS

Working Instruments

- University-Business Dialogue through workshops
 - ✓ 1st Workshop “Transferable Skills”
LA FONDATION UNIVERSITAIRE, Brussels, 1st March 2007
 - ✓ 2nd Workshop “University/Business Collaboration in Doctoral Programmes”
SIEMENS AG, Munich, 10th May 2007
 - ✓ 3rd and Final DOC-CAREERS Workshop
SCHLUMBERGER, Paris, 22nd-23rd November 2007
- University Case studies
- Selected interviews with business partners in doctoral programmes
- Consultation with other stakeholders (doctoral candidates, professional associations, etc.)
- Working Group on Tracking Instruments and Data on Doctoral Careers (Universities, UK Grad Programme, OECD)

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General Remarks on mobility and employability (I)

- Career paths of doctoral holders employed in business (in research and non-research positions) are extremely diverse.
- Mobility –within academia or between academia and business– can help to improve the prospects for employability, especially outside academia.
- In general, mobility is particularly valued by business employers of highly skilled professionals. The value lies in the exposure to different environments and in the benefit that the individual gains from learning and playing different roles, interacting with different people and building up his/her own network of contacts.

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General Remarks on mobility and employability (II)

- Doctoral candidates and graduates in Economic and Social Sciences have normally more limited opportunities than in Science-Engineering-Technology and Biotechnology-Life/Medical Sciences to participate in structured collaborative programmes.
- In general, university-based doctoral candidates should be persuaded that moving from academia to business is not a second choice but a legitimate first choice, that could also help to mitigate brain drain.

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General Remarks on transferable skills and mobility

- There is a group of core competencies common to all fields that make a doctoral holder employable outside an academic context. They are related to communication, negotiation and management skills, as well as the ability to apply creative thinking and the capacity to adapt to business contexts and deal with complex and multidisciplinary work.
- Training in, and raising awareness of, transferable skills is needed for doctoral candidates to widen their range of employment opportunities and mobility horizons.

Mobility Schemes in Early Stage Research Preliminary Outcomes (I)

From Case Studies on University-Business Doctoral Schemes:

- University-business partnership is based on personal trust
- Structured doctoral schemes are more common in Science-Engineering-Technology and Biotechnology-Medical/Life Sciences than in Economic and Social Sciences fields
- Type of approaches:
 - ✓ Private initiative from large business: Usually initiated by business, well structured, based on good contacts in university
 - ✓ Private initiative from SME: Usually sectorial and regional approach with public support (National schemes or EC Structural Funds)
 - ✓ University-led: usually project based, dealt with case-by-case by initiative of individual professor or research team
 - ✓ Public-Private partnership: structured programme lead by government

Mobility Schemes in Early Stage Research Preliminary Outcomes (II)

- Business main roles:
 - ✓ Co-supervision of doctoral candidate
 - ✓ Working facilities and contract (full or part time)
 - ✓ “Real” Data supplier

- Provision of specific employment opportunities at the end of doctoral studies:
 - ✓ Usually provided when scheme is
 - Private initiative from large business
 - Public-Private partnership
 - ✓ Not very often provided when scheme is
 - Private initiative from SME
 - University-led

Mobility Schemes in Early Stage Research Preliminary Outcomes (III)

- Diversity on employment outcomes:
 - ✓ In overall, around 50% of doctoral graduates first employment destination is outside academia.
 - ✓ Secondments of academics in business or business employees in academia are valued by R&D-intensive business but
 - ✓ There are structural and environmental factors (e.g. career benefits, peer group recognition) inhibiting the regular movement of employees between the academic and non-academic sectors.

University Career Tracking of Doctoral Holders: Challenges and Benefits

- There is a general lack of university institutional follow up on doctoral holders professional destinations. EUA is examining good practices in the DOC-CAREERS project.

- Main challenges include:
 - ✓ Representativeness of respondents: bias to academia and to the successful
 - ✓ Institutional commitment: senior management and academics
 - ✓ Implementing findings and recommendations

- Main benefits include:
 - ✓ Developing doctoral training schemes
 - ✓ Defining institutional profile
 - ✓ Reinforcing partnerships with business

Concluding Remarks

- Mobility between sectors is considered a “must” by business employing highly skilled professionals, although there are serious barriers.
- Doctoral programmes and knowledge transfer are intrinsically linked. Schemes with business participation are a strong vehicle to enhance university-business mobility and the necessary evolution in “mindset change” in all stakeholders.
- Behind the formal procedures such as joint supervision or placements in business, successful long-term university-business cooperation processes are holistic, – i.e. the soft part of the relationship is very important and continuous face-to-face experience is mandatory to build trust and durable partnerships.
- Institutions should track their doctoral graduates to become significant drivers at institutional, national and international level and to inform doctoral candidates of their potential employment options.
- Support of governments as facilitators for university-business cooperation processes and growing awareness of IPR are important structural factors.

Thank you for your attention