

**Graduate School
„Society and Culture in Motion“
Reichardtstraße 6**

06114 Halle (Saale)

Contact person:
Andreas Herz
Tel: +49 (5121) 883-569
andreas.herz@uni-hildesheim.de

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Participation in group discussions on structured doctoral support

Dear colleague,

The "Chance" research project at the University of Hildesheim investigates innovative forms of structured doctoral education throughout Germany. As part of this BMBF-funded scheme we hope to interest you, as a doctoral student, in taking part in a group discussion. So far we have collected doctoral students' experiences via an online survey completed by well over two thousand people. To gain a deeper qualitative understanding of the users' perspective, we now aim to hold discussions at universities with members of current doctoral programmes – e.g. graduate schools, research training groups, PhD programmes and doctoral programmes. To achieve this, we need your support!

The "Chance" group discussions at your institution should last about one and a half hours and take place from July to the start of September 2011. We would like to invite groups of six to eight academics doing a doctorate together on a programme to reflect together on their experiences of structured doctoral support. The discussion, attended by two members of the "Chance" project, will be recorded for later evaluation. We naturally guarantee that all personal details and organisational data will be made fully anonymous.

The survey results will, among other things, go towards developing recommended actions to be taken to establish quality criteria for promoting young academics and gender equality in doctoral education. This is required as there are as yet hardly any comprehensive empirical findings on structured doctoral support throughout German higher education or research institutes. When the three-year project (2009-2012) is over we will be happy to provide any of the institutions involved with our manual, should they be interested.

You can support our scheme by agreeing to take part in the group discussions along with a research training group, a research school or another existing group of doctoral students. Your contact person in Team Chance can be found at the top right-hand side of this letter. Please name a contact person with whom we can discuss the details of a visit to your institution.

Information on the project in German can also be found on our website, www.chanceprojekt.de.

Thank you very much for your help!

Best regards,

The Chance research project team


Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schröer


Prof. Dr. Meike Baader