

Summary minutes

11th Round Table for the Advancement of Junior Scholars at TU Berlin, 15 January, 2020

Topic: *Networking*

Together with the TU-DOC Office for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Services, vice president for strategic development, junior scholars and teacher education, Professor Dr. Angela Ittel held three round tables to address topics relevant to junior scholars in the winter semester 2019/20.

The round tables are a continuation of the eight round tables that took place in the winter semester 2018/19 and the summer semester 2019 as part of the [Strategy for the Advancement of Junior Scholars at TU Berlin](#) passed by the Academic Senate in July 2018. The objective of the round tables is to open a dialog with target groups involved in the advancement of junior scholars for the discussion and development of their ideas and measures in this area.

The round tables in the winter semester 2019/20 accompanied the implementation of the *Action Plan for the Advancement of Junior Scholars 2019/20* passed by the Academic Senate in July 2019, which contains measures for the advancement of junior scholars which are to be implemented in 2019-2020.

The 11th round table on Wednesday, 15 January 2020 focused on:

Networking

All participants contributed to an intensive discussion of the topic and their contributions are reported in the following summary:

- An introduction was given to the [YAN - Young Academics Network](#) for junior research group leaders and junior professors. The network is an initiative that arose as part of a round table for the advancement of junior scholars, first announced by Professor Dr. Angela Ittel in winter semester 2018/19. The network aims to promote mutual support in academic affairs and cooperation and exchange on university policy issues.
- A participant and member of the Institute for Vocational Education and Training reported on the newly founded “Consumer Didactics” network for junior scholars in German-speaking countries in the field of vocational education and training. Regular video conferences are held as part of the initiative and efforts are being made to acquire funding for a pre-conference to recruit outstanding master's degree students.
- A participant and member of the Chair of Operations Management at TU Berlin reported on interdisciplinary networking activities of research associates at the University. Regular networking meetings often only reach the same people; it is a challenge to address and motivate new people to participate; the regular meeting of the proMotion program for female doctoral candidates was praised as a helpful and successful example. A new networking format was announced at Faculty VII: Brown bag seminars: This format offers topic-specific lectures by individual professors at a networking lunch for junior scholars.
- Funding for networking events for junior scholars is offered by: [Dr. Hans Riegel-Stiftung](#)
- An initiative of junior scholars at Faculty V formed as a result of the discussions on the results of the [2017 WM Study for research associates](#), also reported the challenge of both attracting new people and motivating people to take part on an ongoing basis; lack of time in addition to work commitments is perceived as the most significant problem.
- Participants inquired about funding opportunities for junior scholars offered by [the Berlin University Alliance](#); participation in projects is recommended here, although it is not planned for doctoral candidates to apply on an individual basis; furthermore, it would be more advisable to apply to funding institutions outside Berlin universities if they have greater visibility in the research landscape (e.g. DFG).
- Participants also asked for advice on how they could network effectively within their professional community. One option is asking supervisors for suggestions of contacts and

conferences that would be helpful for extending the doctoral candidate's own network. In general, conferences are considered to be extremely important; if a conference is too large, it may be advisable to attend pre- or sub-conferences; organizing a symposium may also be helpful to get in touch or collaborate with key people in a specific field; another potential method is the independent publication of a collective work.

- Johannes Moes, TU-DOC Office for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Services, presented TU-DOC's networking format for collegial support in small groups: TU-DOC supports doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers during their qualification phase by promoting structured information exchange in small groups.
- Reference was also made to existing networking offers at TU Berlin and within the Berlin University Alliance:
 - In the meantime, universities in Berlin have opened their courses to all junior scholars for mutual participation free of charge, subject to availability.
 - [TU Berlin Dialog Platform](#): This platform offers the moderation of workshops for collaborative research projects, idea development and process development.
- Proposals for further measures:
 - A call for proposals was announced inviting submissions from junior scholars for an event for junior scholars at TU Berlin.
 - In addition to the existing faculty-specific introductory events at TU Berlin, an interdisciplinary Welcome Day could be organized once or twice a year.

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