

Finished Project "Jena House for Young Researchers" (2011-2017)

Until November 2017, the Stiftung Mercator supported the development of the Graduate Academy with the Jena House For Young Researchers project. For the first time in Germany, both the postdoc and doctoral phases are being supported.

As part of this project, excellent conditions for doctoral candidates and postdocs are being created. In addition, models are being developed that have to do with graduate-level support nationwide.

Shaping the Qualification Phase after the PhD and Supporting Postdocs

The phase between finishing a PhD and entering a permanent position either within or outside academia is possibly the most difficult part of a young academic's career path. At the same time, this phase was seldom paid attention to by universities and politicians. There was very little information about postdocs and it was also unclear how much responsibility should be taken for these individuals.

This project in Jena focuses on public discussions about the framework of the postdoc phase and on support measures for postdocs at Jena University.

Supporting the Representation of interests and Networking of Doctoral candidates and Postdocs

The common interests of doctoral candidates should be discussed at the university. Because of that, the project Jena House for Young Researchers supports the constitution of a doctoral representation.

In addition, various formats are being developed in which doctoral candidates and postdocs can be engaged and help to support each other, e.g. "[doc4doc](#)", a programme in which doctoral candidates offered workshops for other doctoral candidates. The basis for all of these activities is the House for Young Researchers Zur Rosen, which serves as a center for meeting and networking.

Development of a Qualification Programme on Fundamental Questions of Sciences and Humanities

For a leading position in academia, one needs to be an excellent researcher and teacher as well as have solid 'soft skills'. In order to develop these skills, there is a wide variety of support in different subject areas and in central university departments. But how is reflection on the basics of one's own academic work cultivated? Where are knowledge, orientation, and critical judgment of fundamental questions of sciences and humanities trained? Those who want to research with clarity, to consciously take on responsibility, and to work in an interdisciplinary environment need to be able to reflect on these levels.

Within the framework of this project, interdisciplinary workshops are being developed for doctoral candidates and postdocs. They deal with topics such as responsibility for research, academia and society, interdisciplinary competences, or basic stances of the theory of science. The communication with an lay audience was also trained in workshops or projects like "Show your research".

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