

European Doctoral Programme
in Career Guidance and Counselling



Programme Profile

1. Goals

The European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) aims to train future academic and practitioner leaders in the field of career guidance and counselling to become interdisciplinary researchers with strong leadership and teaching competences. The programme is a joint initiative of the European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling (ESVDC) and the Foundation of the Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe (NICE Foundation), and is supported by higher education institutions from more than 10 European countries.

The ESVDC and NICE jointly offer ECADOC to support higher education institutions and research bodies across Europe in offering specialised doctoral training to PhD candidates in our field. In a single European country, setting up a structured doctoral programme on career guidance and counselling – or even career-related questions – is hardly possible or sustainable - due to the high specialization and the low number of research centres within even the larger countries. Doctoral researchers in the domain of career guidance and counselling tend to either work solitarily, or to be enrolled in broad structured doctoral programmes at their universities, e.g., in the domain of education, social sciences, or psychology. Under these circumstances, doctoral researchers with a focus on career guidance and counselling can barely gain deep insights into the specialised research and development efforts that are taking place across Europe, and tend to suffer from a lack of fruitful exchange – a great barrier to innovation in our field.

2. Offer

To achieve our goals, we organise annual summer schools for doctoral researchers working on a dissertation related to career guidance and counselling. Our aim is to accompany doctoral researchers through the entire pursuit of a doctorate through summer schools, which are relevant at each stage of doctoral research – whether people are just identifying their topic, or have already published many of their results.

ECADOC Summer Schools typically attract 20-28 doctoral researchers from more than 15 countries every year. We try to organise the summer schools without a fee, and try to support doctoral researchers in funding their participation (travel and accommodation).





The central objectives of our summer schools are to:

- Support doctoral researchers in finalizing their research projects.
- Introduce doctoral researchers to state-of-the-art research approaches and methods and engage them in deliberating about general scientific standards.
- Stimulate the development of a European research community in our field by offering doctoral researchers opportunities to work together and identify joint research ideas.
- Support doctoral researchers' professional development and open up different perspectives for the time after their doctoral studies.

Therefore, ECADOC Summer Schools generally comprise four learning modules. To stimulate interdisciplinarity and advancement at each level of a PhD project, ECADOC summer schools offer a wide array of methodological training at different levels (from novice to advanced). Through collective academic supervision (see below) and poster presentations, participants' skills for communication and training are promoted alongside learning related to their personal research projects. Networking activities, group work and collaborative problem-solving aid the development of a European research community and the development of skills for intercultural and interdisciplinary communication and cooperation. Keynotes and presentations from researchers, policy makers and expert practitioners foster discussions and exchange beyond the narrow reach of personal research topics, and thereby stimulate the participating researchers' understanding of the entire field of questions related to career guidance and counselling, thereby building bridges between research, policy and practice in line with the NICE Memorandum.¹

3. Innovation Management

ECADOC Summer Schools focus on advancing research in the domain of career guidance and counselling more generally. For this purpose, ECADOC is guided by a jointly crafted European Research Agenda for Career Guidance and Counselling², which shall be updated regularly in the future. The European Research Agenda delineates six core areas of research, which is relevant for our field, and pronounces burning research questions in this domain. Keynotes, methodological workshops and other contents of ECADOC Summer schools are selected to promote innovation in the domain of career guidance and counselling in alignment with the areas of innovation detected in the European Research Agenda.

¹ Reference NICE Memorandum

² Reference ERA



4. Quality Management

ECADOC Summer Schools are hosted by universities that belong to the ECADOC network. ECADOC is governed by a Scientific Committee, the members of which are jointly elected by the Executive Board of the ESVDC and the NICE Foundation's Board of Directors. The Scientific Committee is responsible for the selection of hosts for the summer schools and the overall quality management of all ECADOC learning events.

The following quality management instruments are employed to assure and enhance the quality of ECADOC Summer Schools:

Selection of participants: We only admit people to ECADOC summer schools as participants, who are currently working on a PhD related to career guidance and counselling. No exceptions are allowed, so to ensure the common goals, status and interests of the group in this respect. To assess the relevance of the research projects, our selection committee reviews a 1-page description of the PhD research project from each participant. Our selection criteria demand a broad national diversity of the participants, and we try to offer financial support in cases, where applicants wouldn't be able to cover their costs for the summer school themselves or through their universities. We accept no more than 28 participants, to assure a good group size for networking and community building. Each member of the selection committee evaluates the applications of all applicants, who haven't been selected by ECADOC partners, so to enable fair, criteria-based judgments when there are too many suitable applicants (which has generally been the case so far).

Understanding the participants' interests and preferences: At each summer school, we ask participants for wishes and recommendations for future summer schools via a joint Delphi evaluation at the end of the summer school, and a quantitative evaluation several weeks after the summer school. The Delphi evaluation allows each participant to stress positive aspects and points for improvement, which can then be endorsed by all other participants (so to see, how many people share the assessments). The quantitative survey then asks for feedback to standardised questions (e.g. quality of each workshop, distribution of time to different activities). Participants are also asked to specify, which kinds of workshops, contents, and activities they would enjoy in the future, allowing them to formulate their personal interests and preferences freely.

Peer review of summer school: The scientific committee puts together the summer school's programme, under the leadership of the summer school's host. Once a first draft is ready, we collect feedback from the community of all ECADOC partners, i.e., the senior academics who jointly support the programme.



We try to implement as many proposals as possible to enhance the programme. At the summer schools, we invite a colleague with a lot of experience in the supervision of doctoral researchers to observe all activities of the summer schools and to speak with participants, so to provide us with critically-constructive feedback after the event. We ensure that our peer evaluators don't have a conflict of interest in terms of evaluating their own work, but we believe it to be good that they are members of our academic community, who themselves want the summer schools to be excellent.

Preparatory activities expected from contributors: All contributors, particularly people offering workshops, methodological seminars, keynotes, and food for thought, are asked to provide an abstract. The scientific committee uses these abstracts to finalise the programme and to ask contributors for adjustments, if necessary. We expect workshops and seminars to dedicate at least half of the time to activities, which actively involve the participants, e.g., group discussions or exercises. Additionally, contributors are asked to provide literature for deepened learning, which is made available to participants via a Moodle platform. Contributors are also asked to constructively work with the diversity (age, academic disciplines, research paradigms, English-speaking competence) of the participants.

Preparatory activities expected from all participants: We are convinced that the participants' preparation for the summer school activities is just as important for the quality and enjoyment of learning, as our own preparation. All participants are required to engage in preparatory activities, including the preparation of poster presentations of their research projects (beginning with the third summer school), and the preparation of a presentation for collective academic supervision. Collective academic supervision is the point of the summer school, where the participants work together in small groups of four doctoral researchers, moderated by senior academics, where each participant shares a challenge of her/his PhD project, and receives feedback from peers.

Scientific committee monitoring at the summer school: During the summer schools, at least one member of the scientific committee is always present, so to keep an eye on the process, and intervene, if necessary. The summer school's host is relieved from any sorts of supervisory activities, to be able to focus on the management of the event. The members of the scientific committee regularly touch base to discuss the development of the summer school, and make changes to the programme, if necessary.



Community building: Developing a European research community is both a goal of our summer schools, and a means of quality assurance. We want our participants to enjoy a community spirit at the summer schools, including (but not limited to) a culture of mutual respect, openness to diversity, authenticity, and inclusiveness. At the beginning of the summer schools, we organise ice-breaking activities to evoke an ambiance, where everybody feels safe to speak with anyone else, seeking for commonalities, but also accepting differences (in line with Scott Peck's approach to community building). As scientific committee members, we try to lead by example, and intervene, where necessary, to support a positive community-building process and the development of shared norms of fairness, respect, inclusiveness, scientific rigour, etc.

5. Certification & Academic Standards

All participants who have successfully taken part at a summer school receive a certificate for international mobility. The higher education institutions that host the summer schools generally award 6 ECTS points for the attendance of an ECADOC Summer School at the level of doctoral studies (EQF Level 8). Of course, the higher education institutions where doctoral researchers are conducting their doctoral research remain in charge of deciding, whether to count these ECTS points towards the mandatory learning activities of their doctoral candidates in line with their institutional policies.

The ECADOC summer schools have been conceived to promote competences in line with the European Competence Standards for the Academic Training of Career Practitioners (www.nice-network.eu), specifically the generic professional competences of Career Specialists at the doctoral level (EQF Level 8), the competences to:

- Provide academic training and supervision to career practitioners,
- Conduct and disseminate research and develop fundamental theories, and
- Promote specialised research and training in career guidance and counselling.

Our ECTS recommendations are based on the estimated student worktime in hours, which is dedicated to learning activities related to the summer school (see following page), with 1 ECTS corresponding to 25 hours of work.



6. Learning Outcomes, Assessment and

Calculation of Estimated Student Worktime per Module³

Learning Outcomes	Educational Activities	Assessment	Estimated Student Work Time (h)
Self-presentation and reflection as a researcher in the international and interdisciplinary field of career guidance and counselling (CGC)	Preparation of an abstract on personal PhD research topic in English, a CV in English, and preparation of a personal profile for the ECADOC website.	Review of the application materials through three professors and the program manager.	25
Academic communication competences for interdisciplinary, international audiences	Preparation of a poster presentation of personal PhD project (DIN à 1) for exhibition during summer school. Preparation of a presentation of a PhD-related research challenges for discussion with peers during collective academic supervision (CAS) activities, drawing on CAS guidelines.	Poster presentation and exhibition at summer school. Presentation and participation in CAS at summer school.	50
Expansion of knowledge on qualitative and quantitative research methods related to CGC, as well as competences for supervision, leadership and education in CGC	Pre-summer-school reading, participation in qualitative and quantitative workshops with diverse practical exercises and discussions; participation in workshops for the advancement of leadership, supervision and teaching competences.	Active participation in discussions and exercises, supervised by ECADOC professors from across Europe.	50
Expansion of theoretical knowledge of CGC domain, cutting across disciplines, and building of connections with researchers across Europe	Participation in theoretical discussions around keynote lectures (with sociological, psychological, ethical, political, and educational perspectives); participation in community-building and group-dynamic activities, and networking activities.	Active participation in activities and discussions, moderated by ECADOC's scientific committee.	25

³ The concrete curriculum of each summer school must be adapted each year to suit these learning outcomes.

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