

1,5-day live-online course How to improve PhD supervision

February 26-27, 2026

This course supports supervisors in reflecting on and developing excellent supervision of their PhD candidates. Participants become familiar with international standards of good supervisory practice and how to give the best support to their PhD candidates. They get very practical tools and tips that can be implemented right away in their own supervisory situation. Exchanging experiences with colleagues and learning about their practice is part of this course as well as discussion of individual topics in peer groups. You get input on the decisive early steps of the relationship between supervisor and PhD student, the entire supervisory process until PhD completion, and tools for evaluating and further developing your supervisory skills.

Course content

1. International developments in doctoral education
2. Biggest problems of doctoral students
3. Time to completion
4. Challenges of supervisors
5. Good practices in supervision
6. Developing supervisory styles
7. Enhancing the supervisor-student-relationship
8. Clarifying expectations
9. Setting up supervision agreements
10. Organising productive TAC meetings
11. Monitoring student progress
12. Self- and peer-assessment

The course includes lectures, exercises and discussion that offer ample room for addressing individual questions on supervision. It is usually given in-house or for closed groups.

For February 2026 however, TRESS ACADEMIC is offering this additional open live-online round, intended for situations where individual supervisors would benefit from timely input and exchange.

Target group

If you supervise PhD students and feel that there are aspects that you would like to improve regarding communication, agreements, expectations, supervisory meetings, or progress monitoring, you are an ideal candidate for this course.

Registration

Please register by submitting a short motivation email with your supervision history or plans to Elija Bleher **by February 15, 2026** at the latest. Registration is binding. The course fees will be covered by the IFU Graduate Program. In case of no-shows the course fees (€ 550,-) will be charged to the research group.

Course Schedule

Thursday, February 26, 2026: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Friday, February 27, 2026: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Trainer

Dr. Bärbel Tress (TRESS ACADEMIC) was awarded a PhD in Landscape Ecology at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. She has many years of experience as a researcher, supervisor and lecturer at Roskilde University, DK, Wageningen University, NL, and the University of Aberdeen, UK. In 2007, Bärbel and Gunther Tress founded TRESS ACADEMIC to provide training in key academic competences for researchers.

