

VERITAS_WP2_Heidelberg University: Guidelines for Road-Map-Development

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*The guidelines give a number of distinct suggestions of how to develop the **road-map** into the right direction. However, every road-map will be **individual** and needs to be tailor-made considering the specific, local conditions and prerequisites at the single Armenian HEIs as well as the regional and national conditions. The road-map will serve as a kind of **master or business plan** to guide HEIs through the process of implementing PhD study programmes and embedding them into an **overall institutional, regional and national education strategy**.*

In blue, a perspective time horizon is given.

1. The road maps should start with a general **introduction**, in which the principles of higher research-oriented education will be highlighted. These principles were discussed in detail in WP_1. The introduction should also state how the success of the programme in a following evaluation will be measured according to the implementation of key principles of modern higher education. The introduction should thus contain at least the following issues:

- Statement to recognize Salzburg principles and the principles of modern higher education as ideal conditions for a modern PhD education.
- Statement to recognise competition for funds, resources and for the best talents as a key driving force for research development.
- Statement to recognise the need for a transparent evaluation procedure of all measures, which the programme applies for and for all measures during the implementation and execution of the PhD study programme.
- Statement for an open, scientifically based admission and promotion process.

January 2015

2. Formulation of **specific aims and definition** of the PhD study programme

Before formulating the aims, a **“reality-check”** (see 3) needs to be thoroughly implemented. The road-map will neither benefit from formulating non-realistic goals

nor from defining non-ambitious mediocre aims. The definition of aims and the “*reality-check*” have to go hand in hand and have to be developed in parallel.

In particular, specific statements should be made to clarify the following topics:

- Disciplinarity of the PhD study programme: define if you want to run a programme with a focused topic in a defined discipline at an individual institute or a restricted number of closely collaborating institutes, or if you want to generate a faculty-overlapping PhD programme, possibly as a structural framework for several smaller sub-programmes with individual disciplinary definitions.
- Human Resources of the programme and skills of current staff: Is the faculty able to train PhD students in an appropriate way in terms of disciplinary, research-oriented education and training in non-research-oriented skills? All staff involved in the PhD study programme needs to be adequately trained, motivated and integrated into the common initiative.
- Intersectoral elements of the programme: Are industrial or private partners involved in the programme?
- Size of the programme and duration of the programme: how many positions can be advertised at which phase of the programme? How is funding ensured? What is the ratio between fixed and competitive funding? If there is no internal funding, is the aim to apply for funding along with the foundation of the PhD programme?

March 2015

3. “Reality Check”: what are the current and expected frameworks, in which the programme can be set up? In particular, one should focus on the analysis of the following issues, which were extensively prepared in WP_1:

- Institutional, Regional and National framework
Is the suggested PhD study programme in line with regional and national conditions and authorities? If there are obstacles in that respect, can they be overcome and, if yes, how? Could there be a compromise?

(How) Is the PhD programme in line with the current undergraduate education at the given institution(s)? In other words, how can a student be promoted from Bachelor and Master education to the PhD phase? How are all cycles coordinated? How is an ideal individual “trajectory” for all cycles defined? How can students exit the cycles, what are their options at the individual stages and how can external students enter the “trajectories”?

- Legal framework
 - Restrictions to open admission (see above: regional and national conditions)
 - Restrictions to open, experts-evaluated PhD promotion (see above)

Here, it is important to define the competences of individual Armenian HEIs in comparison to conditions that are defined by regional or national authorities. The road-map also needs to define who is formally responsible and therefore in the “drivers seat” for admission and promotion of PhD students.

- Administrative Framework
 - Restrictions due to teaching or administrative load
 - Possible restrictions of open choice of research topic, autonomy of HEIs (see above).
- Financial management:
 - Access to core funding (University)
 - Access to private funding
 - Access to industrial funds
 - Access to sustainable funding
 - Access to possible competitive funds national
 - Access to possible competitive funds international

March 2015

4. Definition of PhD study programme contents

This is the most important part and follows as a **synthesis of the specific aims and the “reality-check”**. The contents contain the **single measures**, i.e. a clear description of what is going to be implemented, when does the programme start, when should certain milestones be reached (timeline!) and how are the measures going to be implemented. If there are obstacles along the road to reach the individual milestones, how can they be overcome, i.e. how can bridges be built to reach the next milestone?

Clear evaluation criteria and quality control measures have to be incorporated to all individual steps (Individual steps may be: advertisement, selection, admission, supervisions agreements, course-work, research-oriented training, transferable skills programme, career-development, international exchange, monitoring research progress, promotion standards, publication strategies).

April 2015

5. Impact of the programme

What is the **added value** of a novel structured programme as compared to running PhD education with individual appointments? In how far does the programme strengthen the **overall institutional strategy and focus of the entire university/institute**? In how far does the programme help to develop research foci from which the national research community will benefit? The programme should not be established for self-sufficiency but to establish innovative structures in a sustainable fashion.

June 2015

6. Evaluating the programme: guidelines for finishing or sustaining the programme. The road map should also define how all steps and the entire programme will be **evaluated** (see above). **Criteria** need to be formulated, by which the programme can be evaluated in a realistic way. If certain criteria are matched, the programme may be sustained and extended. In turn, if criteria are not matched, the programme will peter out.

June 2015

7. Conflict management

The road map should also comment on the management of potential conflict situations, how they will be kept to a minimum by implementing fair and transparent processes and how conflicts will be dealt with when arising.

June 2015

Finally: References

Key statements should be appropriately referenced.