



Agreement on Training and Supervision

The IMPRS and MPIPZ Graduate School aim to provide first class training and education for outstanding doctoral students from all over the world in a stimulating research environment. The competitive doctoral programme will provide students with an excellent starting platform for a successful career in the field of plant biology.

- Doctoral students must enrol at the University of Cologne where they will obtain the doctoral degree upon successful completion of the doctoral studies. The registration as a doctoral student must either happen before or immediately after the project start and the Graduate School office (gradschool@mpipz.mpg.de) supports students during the registration process. Doctoral students must remain registered at the University of Cologne for the entire duration of the doctoral studies. Registered doctoral students at the University of Cologne must become a member of the departmental Graduate School for Biological Sciences (GSfBS) and fulfil the GSfBS Core Programme.
- Each doctoral student should be supervised by a direct thesis supervisor and advised by two more independent scientists. At least one of the two co-advisors should be from another department or institution. One co-advisor can be a postdoc. A third co-advisor can be selected in justified cases. The direct thesis supervisor and the co-advisors comprise the thesis advisory committee (TAC). A TAC should be assembled within the first 3 months of the doctoral studies by the doctoral student and communicated to the Graduate School office. The Graduate School coordinator (gradschool@mpipz.mpg.de) joins TAC meetings depending on availability.
- The doctoral student should write a half-page research proposal within the first 3 months of the doctoral studies and distribute it to the TAC members and the Graduate School office. The proposal conceptually covers the central research questions and how they will be addressed.
- The TAC will meet the student at least four times. TAC meetings are to be organised by the doctoral student. In preparation for TAC meetings, the doctoral student must submit a progress report to the TAC members and the Graduate School office. Reports have to be submitted at least two weeks before each meeting and the Graduate School office informs the doctoral student about the scope of the report. The doctoral student additionally gives an oral presentation at each TAC meeting.
- The first TAC meeting should be scheduled within the first 5 months of the doctoral studies and prepared with a written report of one page. In case of problems or conflicts, the direct thesis supervisor and doctoral student should inform the Graduate School coordinator before this and other TAC meetings. The TAC must approve the student's progress to continue the project beyond the 6-month probationary period.
- The second TAC meeting should be scheduled after 12 months and prepared with a structured written report of about 3000 words. The doctoral student and the TAC should discuss whether the doctoral studies should be continued as originally planned. If the TAC does not approve the student's progress, the IMPRS Steering Board (for IMPRS students) or the Graduate Studies Committee (for MPIPZ Graduate School students) will be notified.
- The third TAC meeting should be scheduled after 24 months and prepared with a structured written report of about 3000 words.
- A final TAC meeting should be scheduled to discuss the content and structure of the doctoral thesis.
- If the doctoral studies cannot be completed within 3.5 years, TAC meetings should take place every 6 month to facilitate submission of the doctoral thesis. Deviations from this rhythm must be approved by the TAC and communicated to the Graduate School office. A final TAC meeting to discuss the content of the structure of the doctoral thesis must be held.

- Appointments for the TAC meetings and the deadline for reports should be scheduled at the beginning of the doctoral studies, when this document is signed by all parties. The Graduate School office will ensure and monitor that meetings take place. Written reports and meeting minutes will be collected by the Graduate School office.
- Each doctoral student must attend a training on Good Scientific Conduct such as the one offered by the Graduate School for Biological Sciences (GSfBS).
- Each doctoral student should have the opportunity to present their work at a conference at least once during the doctoral thesis work.
- Each doctoral student should participate in a minimum of two courses/workshops during the doctoral period. The student selects appropriate courses, integrating suggestions from the TAC.
- The MPIPZ will organize an annual retreat where attendance of students and supervisors is expected.
- All IMPRS students have a travel budget of 2400 € during their doctoral studies (budget is available only within the first 36 months). Only travelling, housing, fees for conferences and/or workshops can be paid from this source, subject to previous approval by the direct supervisor and the Graduate School coordinator.
- All IMPRS students can use up to 600 € of the travel budget (budget is available only within the first 36 months) for online courses instead. The TAC must approve each online course before registration.
- Employed non-IMPRS students have a budget of 600 € during their doctoral studies (budget is available only within the first 36 months) for online courses. The TAC must approve each online course before registration.

Important Dates:

	Date
Project start:	
TAC assembly (within 3 months)	
Research proposal (within 3 months):	
1 st TAC meeting (after 5 months):	
2 nd TAC meeting (after 12 months):	
3 rd TAC meeting (after 24 months):	
Final TAC meeting (e.g. 30–33 months, see above):	
Estimated date of thesis submission (e.g. 36 months):	

Place & date

Doctoral student:

Direct thesis supervisor:

First co-advisor:

Second co-advisor:

Graduate School coordinator:

Stephan Wagner

(if necessary) Third co-advisor: