



2020 PhDnet General Minutes

4-6 November, virtual – Webex

MPI for Psychiatry
Kraepelinstraße 2-10, 80804 München

Wednesday 4 November 2020 (Day 1)

8:15-8:45 Coffee and Tech Support

8:45-9:00 Welcome and Opening by the hosting Institute (Daniel)

- General Meeting WG (working group) opening
- meeting had to become online via webex because of the pandemic
- introduction the working group
- general rules for the meeting
 - write to SG (Steering group) if you don't want to be included in the public screen shots

9:00-9:30 Opening and Welcoming Remarks by Prof. Dr. Martin Stratmann, President of the MPS

- Very interesting time for us all, see also election in the US
- Warm welcome from Munich, difficult times for the whole society
 - hope we are all physically and mentally fine
 - special burden on the PhDs as many of them are from abroad
 - conditions will stay the same probably for a longer time
 - PhDs who finish have problems finding a job at the moment
 - GA is aware of all of these problems
- Starting with the Pandemic:
 - Managed the first quite well, low infection rates in the MPS

- crisis teams were formed in all institutes and in the GA
- MPS wide regulations were formed
- communication tool MAX was established
- there were weekly crisis meetings long time between the president, VPs (Vice presidents) and SHs (Section Heads)
- pleased to see that the institutes achieved a lot, he gives thanks to the PhDs for their support and engagement
- questions: Home office, contract extensions, communication
 - some of these things were not established and the institutes are autonomous
- we are facing the second wave of infections now
- close contact to Angela Merkel
 - shut down was also recommended by the MPS
 - things are tough and will stay tough
- Home office
 - physical presence in the institutes is allowed
 - but we have to comply to the state rules (keeping distance etc.)
 - work that can be done from home should be done at home
 - no obligation to stay at home though
 - science is competitive and some people have to continue going to the labs
 - conflict of interest, working vs. physical distancing —> directors should take care of this
- business Trips
 - Reduce to a minimum long time
 - abroad: has to be signed by corona task force
 - new rules in Germany: if returning from a risk area one needs to do 10 days quarantine or test after 5 days
- contract extensions:
 - Possibility to extend contracts
 - also possibility to extend stipends abroad
 - Fördervertrag: people working during the pandemic will have the upper limit of duration extend by 12 months as of WissZeitVG and according to MPS rules
- communication
 - very important
 - central tool is MAX
 - in addition there are letters by the president and the general secretary going out to the managing directors and heads of administration
 - they should make the content available to all
 - some letters are published
- number of corona related research projects:
 - pandemic can only be overcome by scientific findings
 - collection of 40-50 projects were sent to the government
 - Modeling the pandemic by institutes and university in Göttingen (joint forces)
 - influenced the decision of the government directly! —> second lockdown

- great autumn as we got 2 nobel prizes in one year, that only happened 25 years ago
 - PhDnet shared the news on twitter
 - Chemistry: Charpentier for CRISPR Cas9
 - Physics: Genzel for the black hole
 - both are the results of 20 years of work
 - both groups mentioned how essential their doctoral researchers were for the findings
 - the success of these two people also shows how successful we as junior researchers are
- young scientists in our society
 - stable conditions to do outstanding science
 - attractive conditions
 - great infrastructure
 - international team
 - no or limited teaching requirement
 - intellectual freedom
 - Fördervertrag is a really good package with 30 days of vacation
 - 50M additional € per year were spent on junior researchers
 - whole new department was established under Dübner-Gee
 - very effective
 - recently established
 - Career perspectives
 - Minerva fast track
 - starts right after the PhD
 - Lise-Meitner Program
 - W2 tenure track
 - Industry track
 - Compatibility of work and family —> Kerstin Dübner-Gee will talk in detail about these things
 - entrepreneurship:
 - big interest of bringing the findings into applications
 - new program to start spin-offs
 - Tenure track
 - not new but important for MPS
 - the idea runs in part into contrast to the idea of MPS
 - MPS should work in new and exciting fields and let go of those that are not interesting any more
 - is heavily discussed at the moment
 - new commission to deal with these discussions, consider the bigger picture
 - senior scientists (permanent positions) “akademischer Mittelbau”
 - Lise-Meitner as a mile stone, includes TT
- Open access
 - committed to the open access model
 - Berlin declaration of the MPS
 - alliance has established a consortium to talk to the journals
 - negotiations are going well, only one that didn't agree yet is elsevier

- positive that an agreement will be there next year
- “Zukunftspaket” from the Government
 - will spend billions to invest in novel fields
 - will also need basic research
 - alliance has proposed 4 topics in this context:
 - Hydrogen as a novel chemical tool, energy conversion
 - artificial intelligence
 - vaccines
 - quantum computing
 - the MPS is active in all these fields
- New team of VPs (Vice Presidents):
 - quick start and very committed
 - Asifa Akhtar: Immunobiology in Freiburg
 - Klaus Blaum: Nuclear physics in Heidelberg
 - Ulman Lindenberger: Computational Psychiatry and Aging Berlin
- Thanks for our activities in the PhDnet
 - standing up for all our people
 - many new and interesting formats
 - very pleased for the good exchange → regular meetings and really good contact
- Stay healthy and thanks

Lindsey:

- Happy to have the president on the Offspring podcast, if the possibility arises

9:30-10:00 Panel Discussion

Host: Cornelia van Scherpenberg (CvS, Phdnet Deputy Spokesperson) | Speakers: Prof. Dr. Martin Stratmann (MS, President of the MPS), Asifa Akhtar (AA, Vice President of the BM (Bio-Medical) Section), Andrea Musacchio (AM, Head of the BM Section), Peter Druschel (PD, Head of the CPT (Chemistry-Physics-Technology) Section)

- **CvS:** Which MPS governing bodies are the most relevant in making decision on the future of DRs? (directed to MS)
 - **MS:** not easy to answer because of the complexity of the society
 - presidential circle
 - Verwaltungsrat (administrative council)
 - Senate, decides on the binding rules, e.g. what the Fördervertag looks like
 - Science is decided within the sections
- **CvS:** we have a new member in the senate, Mai-Thi Nguyen, how is she going to be involved in the senate (directed to the MS)
 - **MS:** prominent young lady
 - representing modern communication in science
 - how can we do communication in future?
 - social media is getting really important

- she stands for this!
- a lot of pressure on the MPS to communicate our science
- the science is getting more important for the society
- Public expects to receive more knowledge from us
- **CvS:** What is your relationship to the president and the Section Heads, how can you support the DRs (directed to AA)
 - **AA:** impressed by the student body!
 - bridge of communication between the president and the section
 - help the president to run the society smoothly
 - a lot of energy and positive spirit
 - very interested in the future of DRs
 - young people have good ideas that the old ones don't have
 - make the society more modern by having a better relationship
- Note, AA took part in the Offspring Podcast
- **CvS:** what do you think the most prominent issues are for the PhDs right now? except for COVID of course (directed to the Section Heads)
 - **AM:** not an easy question,
 - from the PhDnet and MPG-wide survey we see that there are some issues with bad management
 - tremendous effort to find bad behavior and find sanctions for that
 - fear for the future, training we are getting now will open possibilities for the future
 - reflect the diversity of our society in the way we design the programs
 - **PD:**
 - the crisis is affecting the career and we are all worried about it
 - speak openly to your advisers and the managing directors
 - every situation is different, talk a lot and find flexible arrangements
 - make sure to find solutions to the personal needs
 - you are not alone!
 - if there are more systemic issues we can address them together with the VPs and the president
- **CvS:** Young scientists are the future, that means we need leadership at the moment. How can we improve the leadership situation? What can we do to improve management?
 - **MS:** good leadership means that we give good intellectual advice
 - thesis is the first time you do your own science, get advice by experienced people
 - good leadership means freedom
 - bad leadership: only work on one technique
 - how to improve: there is a mixture of good and not that great, majority works quite well so there must be good leadership
 - main tool for us besides the survey is the advisory board meeting
 - talk to the PhDs during the advisory board

- **AA:** good leaders are good listeners, create an environment where we can get feedback
 - we are doing outstanding science
 - but we also want outstanding leaders that treat their staff with respect
 - we need to have a closer eye on all levels
 - training the students, don't be scared to approach your director
 - train the directors: how can we approve their leadership tools
 - we have to be respectful with each other
 - we need a dialog between the generations to help the overall leadership
- **CvS:** There have been rumors that the base salary for PhDs is going to be increased? Can you tell us something about that?
 - **MS :** there are good perspectives and the final decision will be in January
 - Fördervertrag gives you a whole package
 - not only enough money but also freedom
- **CvS:** If you call it a package, we would consider it to be the same for all. However, there is a pay gap within the sections and gender
 - **MS:** there is no gender pay gap
 - we have a minimum wage
 - is the gender pay gap due to the different fields or is a pay gap in the given
 - in the given field it's not tolerable
 - we have to check the data carefully
 - **AA:** there is no bias against women in the society
 - Surprised by the findings!
- **CvS:** there might not be explicit bias or discrimination, but implicit bias, and we need to tackle that

10:00-10:30 Breakout Discussion in the Three Section Rooms

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-11:15 Role of Scientific Staff Representatives

Host: Julia van Beesel (PhDnet General Secretary) | Speakers: Prof. Dr. Eduardo Ros (CPT Section Representative), PD Dr. Gabriele Bixel (BM Section Representative)

- Julia: Do you all know that we have a Scientific Staff Representative at each institute?
- Introducing Eduardo Ros & Gabriele Bixel (4 years in position)

Presentation by Ros and Bixel:

- MPS is a club, has members
- they meet in the scientific council: directors and one Scientific Staff representative per institute
- the SSR needs to be staff scientists, they get elected for three years
- there are three sections
- within an institute, all scientists vote their representative to join the scientific council
- these then vote the speaker
- the speakers go to the senate and participate in decisions
- the SSR speakers go to the section meetings of the SSR, for example to decide on money, new programs for e.g. female researchers
- SSR report back to institutes
- Reach out to your local SSR!

11:15-12:00 Breakout Discussion in the Three Section Rooms

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 COVID-19 Panel Discussion

Host: Sarah Young (SY, PhDnet CPT Section Representative) | Speakers : Ilka Schießler-Gäbler (ISG, PhDnet contact in GA), Lindsey Bultema (LB, PhDnet Spokesperson), Markus Burthscheidt (MB, Chairmain, General Works Council), Christoph Kolbe (CK, Corona task force)

- **SY:** What was the biggest challenge for PhDs during this Corona Crisis?
 - **LB:**
 - Information flow problematic due to federal system,
 - Contract extensions with unclear policy, home-office regulations
- **SY:** How was the Corona task force handling issues of communication? Did you have a clear concept? Which tools were used?
 - **CK:**
 - unexpected situation, it is a learning process,
 - daily meetings started end of February, receiving Questions and gathering topics which were most urgent
 - to find a central structure for communication with reference to pandemic: MAX
 - questions from all members of MPS: they have filter function & consultants
 - difficult to find global regulations, but suggestions to all institutes
- **SY:** How were communication channels used? How was the communication flow during the crisis?
 - **MB:**

- generally good flow of information, but difficulties as well: e.g. no mailing possibility to all members of MPS
- **SY:** how can we reach people better with MAX? How can we spread the word?
 - **MB:**
 - I wonder how many people are actually using it?
 - **LB:**
 - People have still issues accessing MAX
 - **ISG:**
 - COVID information was spread on MAX, but many institutes did not encourage their employees to join MAX
 - Technically, everyone should have access to MAX
- **SY:** Do you know if people on guest contracts have access to MAX?
 - **ISG:**
 - Yes they should have access. Maybe Birgit can give more insight?
 - **Birgit** (member of MPS General Administration):
 - Everybody in the PVS (Personalverwaltungssystem) should have access, but not everybody is in the PVS. Those people should ask their local administration to get included in list
- **SY:** Are there new guidelines due to Corona? Did this change our future?
 - **CK:**
 - positive effects of situation: virtual co-working
 - general home-office standards in future must still be found, needs to fit to safety and health standards, we can't ask people to stay in home office for months
- **SY:** Can we get equipment (computer, desks) for home office? Is there money for that?
 - **CK:**
 - There are no safety standards here yet: employer would need to check the official office standards at their employees home (e.g. at least 8m² space, given air flow, etc.)
 - **LB:**
 - could the works council help with this?
 - **MB:**
 - There is the traditional "telearbeit" / home-office and support with equipment from employer side. Many have that in place.
 - but legal issues must be clarified
- **SY:** Is this an insurance problem? Are you insured in home office?
 - **MB:**
 - Yes, you should be insured.
 - **CK:**
 - If you work for your employer, you should be insured. In traditional "telearbeit" the employer needs to guarantee insurance
 - **ISG:**
 - being outside of the country is more problematic.

- Individual cases must be evaluated by local admin in case of COVID19 situation/ by Corona crisis team
 - We can't support every country. Our "Auslandsteam" have the answers for the respective countries and can tell you if the MPG can cover the costs
- **SY:** What are the regulations if you travel to a risk area (privately). Do you need to take vacations for quarantine?
 - **CK:**
 - Institutes make strange communications here; anything you do privately, you do in your own private time. You can travel into any country, but it is also your private risk if you can't fly back to Germany.
 - We are not allowed to recommend people to not travel to risk areas/ go home to visit families.
 - If you come back to Germany and are obliged to quarantine, you might need to spend vacation days. However, you can try to find an arrangement with your institute before going for vacation. By this you can avoid spending more vacation days
 - **MB:**
 - If you are traveling into a risk area, agree with your director/ employer that you want to do home office during quarantine beforehand.
 - **ISG:**
 - "Betriebsvereinbarungen" (central works agreement) often not including PhDs, so this is a matter of agreement with supervisors in these cases
- **SY:** Is there a possibility that this could be included in the contracts in the future?
 - **ISG:**
 - It will not be included into the contracts in near future, because it is an individual decision to be made by supervisor and/or MPI
 - **MB:**
 - You can have a works agreement in your institute. Otherwise, it depends on your personal agreement with you supervisor. We can not make a central works agreement, by law.
 - **LB:**
 - Are all rules and regulations the same with different types of PhD contracts (Fördervertrag/ Tvöd)?
 - **MB:**
 - I do not know. Generally, scientists have a lot of freedom in the Max Planck Society. Scientists are often left out of works agreements, which is not okay equality wise.
 - **ISG:**
 - The question is in what stadium your research is and what it is about. In the beginning of your research, it might be more difficult to do home office, which is different towards the end when you spend most of your time with writing. It is difficult to implement a general rule.
- **SY:** Are there rules or regulations when an institute has to shut down?

- **CK:**
 - None of our institutes are in danger of being shut down by local health authorities. There is no legal basis for this. We only need to be informed about contact persons. We even had institutes that had 3-4 infections within a month, none of them were close to being shut down.
- **SY:** Can employers enforce COVID-tests, e.g. for coming back to institute?
 - **MB:**
 - If there is a “real” danger this would be a reason, but this is not a blueprint
- **SY:** Who is paying for the tests?
 - **CK:**
 - When returning from risk area, the health-institution pays. If recommendation of institute then it should pay, otherwise it’s the employees decision whether to take test, it’s all voluntary
 - **MB:**
 - institute can ask for a test to enter the institute, but they cannot enforce
 - **CK:**
 - if you are need stay at home: you might be asked to take holidays
- **SY:** Will we have some regularly voluntary testing, like it is happening with professional sport players?
 - **CK:**
 - Institutes can’t decide to have these tests and have them legally binding. The tests are useless, because the tests don’t reflect the current situation, but the one you were in some days ago. I don’t recommend these voluntary testing. Our institutes can’t give medical certificates to prove these tests are correct/ accepted by authorities.
 - **MB:**
 - Health-authorities do not accept these “random” tests.
 - **LB:**
 - Isn’t it mentally stressful to get tested often? What is done from the side of the GA to support mental health of its employees?
 - **MB:**
 - MH is a big issue. There is the EMAP service. There is also the PME (family service).
- **SY:** There is a big discussions on works councils in the chat. Whoever wants to found a new works council in their institute, please contact the General works council/ MB directly, or contact the Steering group and we will forward your request.
- **SY:** Contract extensions: Is there the right to get it?
 - **ISG:**
 - If you were in (paid) home office, you should’ve made progress to your thesis, and therefore can’t claim contract extensions for this reason for the whole time being. However, it is a basic rule that PhDs get funded until the end of their thesis/ project, and your contract should get extended accordingly.

- Covid is a specifically declared reason to get extension: But it must be evaluated and decided individually: did you really face problems to end, and how much longer do you need to prolong for?
 - Generally, you should always ask for extensions. If they are not granted, contact the Steering group and we will try to find a solution, if necessary.
- **SY:** If you were in home office and have children, is this a reason to ask for an extension?
 - **ISG:**
 - Again, you should always ask for an extension, if you cannot finish in due time. Cases have to be treated individually. There are guidelines but no general saying in what counts as a reason to get extension. Generally, you should be funded until the end of your PhD
- **SY:** How is it handled with IMPRSs? Are costs due to extensions covered by these?
 - **ISG:**
 - Finances should not be an issue. Not being able to further fund a PhD is no reason to reject an extension.
- **SY:** Would people on a Fördervertrag get the additional payment (Corona Sonderzahlung)?
 - **ISG:**
 - The “Sonderzahlung” is defined only for people working in the public sector (meaning with a TVöD contract). We try to find common ground with the other research institutes. Unfortunately, right now PhDs (on the Fördervertrag) are not entitled for this payment, but we are currently trying to solve this problem.
- **SY:** Max Planck Schools: Can we all expect 100 % salary at some point?
 - **ISG:**
 - Maybe in the far future every DR will get 100% salary. It might be possible for some people right now, but this is not in the discussion in the moment.
- **SY:** Recommendations regarding wearing masks?
 - **CK:**
 - Masks are effective, even home-made. Higher-quality masks are important when working with e.g. risk people. Also when physical distance can't be guaranteed (e.g. in car with more people). FFP2+ / (K)N95 are very save.
- **SY:** Contract Extensions: Do the directors decide on contract extensions all by themselves? Is the local works council usually involved?
 - **MB:**
 - mostly decision by the directors
- **SY:** Is it useful to contact the works council if you feel you need an extension?
 - **MB:**
 - The works council probably has minimal possibilities to help in this situation. However, it is still good to contact the works council.
- **SY:** Do the general guidelines and recommendations for Corona still apply to institutes outside of Germany?

- **ISG:**
 - It depends. Regarding extensions, we have to follow the law and regulations of the country. If they don't interfere with each other, our regulations are still valid.
 - Florida and Netherlands have different contracts. Their situation is more difficult
- **SY:** Contract extensions: Can contracts be extended when the director leaves/ retires? What would be the process?
 - **ISG:**
 - It is still not solved properly. If a director is leaving, they get a stop letter and shouldn't hire new people. But then directors also leave in between. The institute is then responsible for the DRs. The leaving director or supervisor has to make sure that the DRs are still well supervised and financed until the end of their thesis.
 - Financial wise, the institute should be able to fund the PhD until the end of their thesis. All single cases that were brought to me (Ilka) in the past years could be solved. If you are facing such issue, please contact the Steering group.
 - **LB:**
 - When institutes do not spend all their money, it is lost. Is this true? Couldn't this money be saved for PhDs to ensure their thesis is funded until the end?
 - **ISG:**
 - In theory, institutes could do that. Money not being spend could be "rolled over" into the next year in certain extends. But I am not a financial expert.
- **SY:** What is to expect regarding the raise to the 65% base salary?
 - **ISG:**
 - Will be discussed in the end of November, no details yet, but it is supposed to be fair for everybody
 - **MB:**
 - If you have any questions, please send them to me. Or send them to the Steering group, they will forward them
 - **LB:**
 - If people have questions they would like to discuss with Ilka, please write Sarah and she will organize a personal meeting for you with her.
 - Please fill out the PhDnet Survey, so we understand better how we can help you!

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30-16:00 Central contact and reporting points of the Max Planck Society, with a focus on complaints regarding non-scientific misconduct – was moved to the next day

Talk by Julia Lutz-Seitz from MPS General Administration

- Julia is head of the staff unit for internal investigations
- central reporting points: non scientific misconduct
 - Staff unit is new (1 year)
- Structure of the talk: overview over the general structure, central reporting points and then focus on non-scientific misconduct
- misconduct has many different faces
- finding the right point of contact if you have a problem can be tricky
- 3 questions that might help you
 - institute level or central level?
 - If centrally, there are specific contact points
 - scientific or non-scientific?
 - Seeking consultation or file complaint?
- If the problem is central:
 - Scientific: VPs (Vice presidents) and Section Ombudspersons
 - Non-Scientific:
 - EMAP: anonymous, free
 - Central Officers of MPS
 - Central Reporting Points (here you can also file a complaint, with your lawyers of trust)
- What does non-Scientific misconduct mean?
 - Behaviour against rules of conduct
 - “everything that’s not scientific” - huge variety of settings
 - Leadership of MPS has decided on two channels for filing complaints
 - external: Lawyers of trust: Currently Wirsing-Hass-Zoller law firm, will accept complaints and pass it on to MPS if you wish - can stay anonymous - they will do the communication
 - internal: staff unit internal investigations, in GA in Munich, internal audit department, under hospice of the respective VPs - including leadership in this process! Important to them to protect those that are affected
 - way to insure compliance
 - lower risk of reputational damage of individuals and MPS
 - 4 guiding principles
 - Bound by confidentiality
 - Independence, procedure under the VP, audit department is directly connected to General Secretary! -> short connection to leadership of MPG
 - Objectivity: impartial. Fair, balanced approach
 - Procedural
 - Process: Reception, internal investigation, assessment and evaluation, recommendation of further action to competent authority
 - Decision of Senate to establish the staff unit!
 - General Works Agreement signed a few days ago

- Where to find this information?
 - Poster in each institute with specific information of each person that is taking this role in the institute
 - MAX, Intranet
 - report@mpg.de
 - MPS Code of Conduct: <https://www.mpg.de/14172230/code-of-conduct.pdf>
- Questions:
 - Where to get the poster?
 - should be placed by heads of admin
 - if not, ask them
 - intranet
 - Guidelines for external reps:
 - contact them
 - What about when you are not the target of a misconduct but observe it?
 - depends on the situation
 - relies on our judgment to think about whether we should convey this
 - distribution
 - president introduced staff unit and sent letter last year
 - distribute via PhDnet

16:00-17:00 Reporting Structures within your institute

Host: Nikki van Teijlingen Bakker (NvT, PhDnet BM Section Representative) | Speakers : Prof. Dr. Gregor Eichele (GE, BM Section Ombudsperson), Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Butt (HB, CPT Section Ombudsperson)

- Introduction by **NvT**: What is the role of an Ombudsperson?
- **GE**:
 - Bullying and sexual assaults are not handled by the Ombudsperson; scientific misconduct is the main topic the Ombudspersons take care of
- **NvT**: What is the role the section Ombudsperson?
- **GE**:
 - Each institute has an elected Ombudsperson. They must have a certain level of experience and are elected by the Scientific Staff. You can ask for help regarding issues you are directly affected by (for example authorship of your thesis).
 - The Ombudsperson could also invite other people into the discussion, for example the supervisor, for example regarding credit issues of authorship.
 - At the end of the article, author contributions is usually described and can be used to solve the problem.
 - Sometimes, the local Ombudsperson is not able to resolve the misconduct (or they are involved themselves). Then, the section Ombudsperson (like him) would jump in and intervene.

- If there is a very obvious and severe misconduct, it might be useful to approach the managing director, because that (following the GSP -> good scientific practice) asks for this topic handled by higher hierarchy.
- **NvT:** If an issue arises between a PhD and supervisor higher in hierarchy, how can you maintain confidentiality?
- **GE:**
 - Of course confidentiality is an important matter. But once there is a formal investigation, the accused person needs to know what the accusation is and where this is coming from, because they need to be able to defend themselves.
 - But this can be decided together with the Ombudsperson. In general, the Ombudsperson has to keep cases confidential, unless the PhD is okay to open it.
 - Sometimes, it is actually really important to have a professional from the field outside of the institute to solve a case. For this, cases must be open.
 - Most of the cases I had were solved in a couple of meetings and discussions
 - Authorship needs to be discussed in the group of authors
- **NvT:** How does the MPS ensures the protection of the “whistle-blowers”? And that they can finish their PhD and keep their contract?
- **GE:**
 - It is not allowed that students don't get paid after they graduate/ when an authorship issue arises
 - Sometimes, these discussions become very emotional, which doesn't help from both sides.
 - The Ombudsperson has to prevent escalation and help finding a compromise
- **NvT:** Publishing at the end of our project/ PhD: What if your supervisor does not want to publish the paper?
- **GE:**
 - This is a scientific judgment. The question is: is the project advanced enough to defend a publication?
 - The Ombudsperson would here try to negotiate and find a common way, a possibility that would yield a paper. However, sometimes this is not possible. But this shouldn't keep you from handing in your thesis.
 - Also a question of the amount of work; it should be focused on what the achievements were and try to make a paper out of it.
- **NvT:** What would happen if I've already defended my thesis but still need to submit a paper, but my supervisor doesn't want to pay me
- **GE:**
 - There should always be a way to fund people when working and investing time. Of course, when the supervisor doesn't have the money, the situation is difficult. However, the people did a commitment to each other, the supervisor to support you and the PhD to publish their work. Therefore, the supervisor needs to make sure that you are employed long enough to finish all the work.
 - You can't do a paper, or even additional experiments, when you are not payed/ employed.
- **NvT:** Is there a mechanism that prevents people from hiding issues?

- **GE:**
 - The managing director is usually informed, either by this person or by the Ombudsperson. The vice president is informed of the corresponding section, or it might even go higher. By that point, the accused does not know who is accusing.
 - We have also electronic versions of paper documents/ minutes that are constantly saved, and available as proof for later.
 - However, people might still be able and try to hide issues.
- **NvT:** There are also Ombudspersons at the university where we get our degree from. How is the communication with these?
- **GE:**
 - Although the university is the degree granting institution, they have no rights in pursuing cases.
- **NvT:** What happens if the Ombudsperson of the Institute is performing a misconduct?
- **GE:**
 - Then you go to the Section Ombudsperson.
 - This is also the case if the accused and the Ombudsperson are from the same working group. This would be a case of conflict.
- **NvT:** What happens if we already approached the Ombudsperson of the university? Could the MPS overtake the case?
- **GE:**
 - I never had such a case. Usually I would think the university Ombudsperson would ask the student to approach their institutes Ombudsperson. Otherwise, I would think that there would be collegial working together and solve the case together
 - I'm not the Ombudsperson for my institute, by the way.
- **NvT:** In order to handle requests, what kind of experience do Ombudspersons need to have?
- **GE:**
 - There is a training for them, an online one of course.
 - There is also a new system for the guidelines of scientific misconduct. Each new employee is handed a copy of the current agreement, which is a legally binding document. It is also constantly improved. There is an English translation being made.
- **NvT:** regarding this training, is it mandatory? How many of the Ombudspersons do take it?
- **GE:**
 - There is an annual training in Munich for the Ombudspersons. Local trainings are not only for the Ombudspersons but much broader.
 - For example: how do you document your results? How do you make sure that the documents are handled and available for many years? The institute is responsible for archiving this data.
 - if you go on to other responsibilities you might want to take some information with you
 - also collaborations need to ensure proper documentation

- **NvT:** sometimes it's important not to create bigger problems. Is it possible that the institute doesn't have a formal ombudsperson?
- **GE:**
 - No that is not allowed, every institute has to have an ombudsperson.
 - if there is no ombudsperson, the managing director or the president need to be contacted
 - the ombudsperson is not optional but mandatory
- **NvT:** are we hearing little about scientific misconduct because they do not happen or because the hurdles of reporting are too high?
- **GE:**
 - real data facing is not happening often
 - more sloppy working or the gray zone, where people have a lot of pressure and don't care
 - e.g. with many authors that don't check the manuscript well
 - rule says you are responsible for the paper as an author
 - there is not a lot of misconduct but there is a large gray zone that needs to be worked on
 - the problem is the money to pay the people to work for that
 - good scientists are those that not only do things right but also fast
- **NvT:** in the gray zone, would it be good if the ombudspersons would search for this kind of misconduct by talking to PhDreps etc.? Almost as having an inspection?
- **GE:**
 - if the police goes to check your department you wouldn't feel well
 - sniffing around is not the solution
 - it's in the responsibility of the institute/ people to approach the Ombudspersons if they have a problem.
 - passage 3.6
 - there should be regular updates to the discussions and schooling sessions about good scientific practice
- **NvT:** If PhDreps don't have these courses, please contact your ombudsperson
- **GE::**
 - should be centralized, they are not so easy to get
 - if that was centralized, people would be much better informed
- **HB**
 - If you have a problem: first talk to your supervisor, director, managing director and then take it to the central points

17:00-17:15 Wrap-up

Thursday 5 November 2020 (Day 2)

8:30-9:00 Coffee and Tech Support

9:00-9:15 Opening Remarks by the Steering Group

- Lindsey explaining the plan for the day
- change of plan: Julia Lutz-Seitz will be giving her talk at 3.45PM (minutes can be found for the original time on day 1)
- test vote for the statutes will be today, will start with lunch time until the end of the day
- please fill in the test survey

9:15-10:00 Human Resources Department, ECRs in the MPS

Talk by Kerstin Dübner-Gee (Head of Human resources development and opportunities department of MPS headquarters) and Ilka Schießler-Gäbler (PhDnet contact in GA)

- Introduction of Kerstin by Ilka
- New department of Human Resources in the GA, 2 years old
- very good and professional PhDnet and a pleasure to work with
 - important to have during these difficult times
- Thanks to Ilka as well
- Recap on the year:
 - turbulent year
 - constant consultation with the SG to adjust things
 - HR department a partner in the crisis
 - Home office possibilities for DRs
 - paid leave for parents
 - easy contract extensions
 - Covid-Stipends for people that can't start their research in Germany
 - situation will probably not change until middle of 2021
- Handover to Ilka to have a look at PhD 2019 survey
 - the survey is an important tool for the GA to look at key findings
 - short term contracts: talk to the individual institutes and find out why this is happening
 - support contracts are not transparent enough
 - onboarding group was implemented, PhDnet is implemented in that group
 - TACs
 - should be established according to guidelines
 - survey about TACs, finding the ideal TAC, how can we engage the institutes
 - Improving the culture of support, improving the information flow
- On her slide: **Key findings (PhDnet survey):** short term contracts, poor transparency and lack of information about contractual conditions of support contracts before signature, establishing TACs
- Back to Kerstin

- the needs of the PhDs change with the phase of the PhD
 - Attract and recruit
 - Welcome and On-boarding
 - Navigate
 - Transfer
- Planck Academy
 - inauguration, last big event before the lock down
 - Digital Planck Academy
 - offers for all target groups
 - can find all information in the intranet
 - trying to improve the information on the Planck Academy
 - improve communication
 - sounding board of the Planck Academy, PhDnet is part of the sounding board
 - getting advise from outside to shape the Planck Academy
 - look at the LMS (learning management system) to learn about Planck Academy
 - information will be sent out by the end of November
 - Career seminars and offers
 - new: help for entrepreneurs
 - how to have your own business after the PhD, together with Max Planck founders
- Max Planck current activities
 - Digitization of Planck Academy
 - Developing new virtual tools, to give virtual events and courses
 - Using virtual reality tools
 - Max Planck Leaders Program
 - Seminars and Coaching for directors
 - Seminars for managing directors
 - Developing currently many new seminars (leadership and others)
 - Welcome and Onboarding Projects
 - MPG-wide Alumni Network
 - establish better communication and connection, provide joined seminars
 - Support of young Scientists
 - Project Industry Track
 - PhDnet highly involved
 - number of Companies are growing in the network
 - Institute Surveys on Working Culture
 - the next survey will launch beginning of 2021
 - Project Career Tracking
 - Understand how MPG alumnis fair afterward, what their career becomes like after leaving MPS
 - Max Planck/ Lise Meitner Research Group Leaders
 - The global hiring is very difficult right now in the Corona situation. We will need to develop new strategies
 - Diversity and Inclusion

- Reconciliation and child care
 - EMAP
- Planck Academy podcasts
- Thanks to the PhDnet for our great collaboration! I look forward to continue to do so in the future

Discussion – with questions from the chat answered

Lead by Kerstin Dübner-Gee (KDG), Ilka Schießler-Gäbler (ISG) and Lindsey Bultema (LB)

- **LB:**
 - Is the leadership training mandatory or not?
- **KDG:**
 - It is both. The welcome seminar and the seminar for leadership directors are mandatory
 - the others are not, but this might change soon
 - more trainings will have to come in future
 - should be not only for the new people but also for the people that are already there
- **LB:**
 - what about the group leaders?
- **KDG:**
 - we have to be patient and go step by step
 - vision is to have a holistic program for all career levels
 - at the moment working on the directors but in future every target group will have their own package
 - some of the trainings will have to be mandatory!
 - at the moment solving many challenges
 - e.g. to offer a training and monitor them, problems contacting people, not the right email addresses etc.
 - large problem with the available data!
- **LB:**
 - bureaucratic hurdles, could there be a mailing list for interested PhDs?
 - could we join and help by creating that list?
- **KDG:**
 - agree that this would be a very good way to solve the problem
 - for the Planck Academy working on the a newsletter
 - a director was really worried about having emails send by the PhDnet, he should be the one giving information to the development
 - it is a very diverse situation in the MPS
- **LB:**
 - I would strongly recommend that we meet in the middle, as many directors don't forward the emails sometimes
 - We would wish for a more organic discussion

- Therefore, we would hope to be able to subscribe to a newsletter, and by this be informed quicker/ easier
- **KDG:**
 - I agree, these are good ideas. But please keep in mind that our department is still brand new and we can only do so much. We already have a tight schedule
- **LB:**
 - Whom should we contact when we have difficulties with MAX?
- **KDG:**
 - You should talk to your head of administration. They have access to the SharePoint of Max Planck Society
- **ISG:**
 - One way is to talk to your local administration and ask for being submitted, because it is crucial that you can access information on Covid, and LMS as well
- **LB:**
 - Some directors don't allow their PhDs to join courses of the Planck Academy. What do you recommend?
- **KDG:**
 - We collect these cases and discuss them internally; and also with the president. We work with the directors and have a constant discussion
 - The future of a PhD and which kind of trainings are helpful should be important to the director and is part of their responsibility. They should help the DRs with that!
 - It's also question of generation: new directors are much more open to these ideas, have experienced similar things
- **LB:**
 - if we can get access to the newsletter this would be great

10:00-10:15 N² - Network of Networks

Speakers: Michaela Löffler and Isabella Paredes Cisneros (Spokespersons for Helmholtz)

- Within Germany, we have 16.000 DRs in non-university organizations
- working conditions, career perspectives, impact on society
- regular meetings (every 3 months)
- goals: 100% payments, 4 year contracts, getting rid of stipends, prevention of power abuse
- how?
 - regular contact with head of organizations
 - surveys
 - position papers
 - national projects
- Survey
 - assess the status quo
 - N2 has a much higher impact, issues in all organizations

- harmonized questionnaire
- wide range of topics
- look at all the survey reports
- Survey results
 - publication on the results and comparison is being prepared
- N2 event: from basic research to application
- Power abuse in academia
 - highly hierarchical structures
 - lack of systems for proper reporting
- latest publication
 - power abuse and anonymous accusation in academia, submitted, hope to see published very soon
- Harmonized questionnaire for 2021
- including members: TUM and FAU
- Collaborations: GEW, BMBF
- Survey report summary on December 8th (English) and January 19th (German)

10:15-10:30 Coffee Break

10:30-11:20 Introduction to the PhDnet Working Groups

Each working group coordinator(s) introduced their working group

On a general note, everyone can join the PhDnet working groups at any time. Please talk to your fellow PhDs and tell them about all working groups, and motivate them to fill out the survey.

- Secretary group (Julia van Beesel)
 - new welcoming email
 - Streamlining election procedures and providing better forms
 - many successful elections
 - 6 institutes are not represented yet
- Webgroup (Andrea Bours)
 - Merle current coordinator and thanks to Conny for helping
 - maintain PhDnet website
 - Maintain mailing lists
 - webcontent for working groups
 - FAQ page for next year
- Survey group (Linda Olsthoorn)
 - short video
 - joint survey in N2 for last year
 - preparation of this year's survey
 - coming up with the focus and the questions of the survey

- deciding on the analysis
- presenting the results
- working closely together with the Steering Group
- Aim: having as many people as possible to do the survey
- 2019 results came out recently
 - high numbers of depression/ anxiety
- 2020 survey was just launched
- Please tell all your people to fill it in!
- Questions:
 - can we get the reports from previous years for our institute
 - Who is addressed by this report?
 - How far is the integration with N2 surveys
- better hand over to the next members, will make things easier
- General meeting group (Daniel Heinz)
 - formed in Göttingen, GM was brought to Munich
 - task: check the resources, be on sight
 - contact with the Steering Group and the GA
 - achievements: the meeting happened
 - good opportunity to meet
 - future: hopefully the next meeting will be in person
- general questions:
 - Is there an alumni network for the working groups?
 - there is the max

11:20-11:40 Coffee Break

11:40-12:30 Introduction to the PhDnet Working Groups

12:30-14:00 Lunch

- EO group:
 - questions about the equal opportunities officer
- Career Development and Conference group:
 - merge of the Career and Seminar and Visions in Science Group
 - Career development
 - career events
 - sponsorship funds
 - career resources
 - conference
 - Visions in Science and support N2 event organization
 - career evolution: science2industry web series

- joint effort with Steering Group, PostdocNet and Planck Academy
 - weekly online webinar with alumni, industry speakers and trainers for non-academic careers
 - present event in May 2021
- Open Science group
 - survey from the open science group
 - people are motivated to learn more about open science
 - open science includes public outreach
 - Open access ambassadors conference hopefully next year
 - open science video series/ online course for next year (maybe also on youtube)
 - Does the PhDnet have a say in the negotiation with the publisher group?
 - No
- Offspring
 - Outreach for the PhDnet
 - offspring magazine was released yesterday, will be send around later this year
 - podcast
 - VPs were interviewed and the episode will come out soon
 - virtual meetings 1-2 months
 - maximum work time is 1h per week

14:00-14:45 Recognition of the Working Group coordinators and members

Each working group coordinator and member is formally recognized, their work and effort in PhDnet is appreciated and they receive a certificate confirming their participation.

14:45-15:45 Meet and get to know the working groups

Virtual breakout rooms for each working group – get to know everyone.

15:45-16:45 Wrap-up of Working Group Rooms

16:45 Social and Pub Quiz

Friday 6 November 2020 (Day 3)

8:30-9:00 Coffee and Tech Support

9:00-9:30 Summary of PhDnet Activities

Lindsey Bultema (PhDnet 2020 Spokesperson) presents the Achievements of PhDnet 2020 and Steering group 2020 and gives updates

- Key points SG had for 2020
 - Working conditions
 - involvement in the hiring process of directors
 - collaboration with the Scientific Staff Representatives (due diligence)
 - training for supervision and management
 - Onboarding
 - contracts
 - travel-guide
 - TACs
 - Mental Health - Awareness week and regular tea times
 - Sustainability Network (promoting)
 - PhDnet Survey 2019
 - GA was alarmed by short contracts
 - please fill out the survey
 - raise of the base salary to 65% of the Fördervertrag
 - approved by the German government
 - MPS wants to raise the salary, now debating how to implement that
 - Career Development
 - Planck Academy sounding board
 - N2 collaboration
 - PostdocNet collaboration
 - Max-Planck Alumni Association
 - Survey for career Workshops
 - Career Evolution Web Series
 - Communication
 - within PhDnet
 - social media: twitter +78%
 - MAX: improving together with the GA, several new rooms: SG room, PhDnet room
 - refreshment of the PhDnet website
 - FAQ, still working on it, but in parts already published in MAX PhDnet team room
 - Outreach during Covid-19
 - survey
 - virtual meetings
 - posting recent updates
 - Offspring Podcast and Magazine
 - Open Science: OS survey, position paper
 - General Meeting

- towards the GA
 - handover meeting in Munich (January)
 - Inauguration of the Planck Academy (Feb)
 - meeting with the president (April)
 - meeting the communication department (April)
 - meeting the head of HR (May)
- Activities:
 - Negotiation and Project management workshop
 - Media Training workshop (20s pitches)
 - Virtual escape room
- PhDnet internals:
 - Reformation of the new working group
 - Updated PhDnet statutes
- Financial report:
 - report by Conny: didn't use much of our budget of this year because it's usually spent on travel costs. Will still negotiate a big budget for PhDnet next year, and maybe use it on different things such as trainings for the SG and WGs.
- Outlook
 - Additional workshops and training opportunities for working groups
 - deeper collaboration between SG and WG coordinators
 - Clarification of contract issues, duration, when its received, language
- thanks to Lindsey!

9:30-10:15 General Feedback for 2020

- Look at hiring in a more intersectional way, more diverse, at the moment it's very gender based, but what about more diverse backgrounds?
 - Improve the recruiting of new PhDs
- Are the contracts all the same?
 - normally funded by the Fördervertrag
 - or Stipends
 - or TVöD contract
- Are there some translations for the contracts? Do we have only English translations or also other translations?
 - there is not one standard contract
 - Ilka: there is a standard contract, just a different heading, let us know if institutes change the contracts, they are not allowed to —> have a look at the OHB, the Verwaltungsrat said the contract can not be changed, please do a little survey to find out!
- It's more difficult to connect to people even within the same institute, it's important to strengthen digital meetings, e.g. together with offspring
 - we have to find a way to approach DRs and overcoming the email barrier

- Please try to reach people locally and pass on the emails. Let us know if you need help!
- onboarding within the institute, have the new PhDs meet the PhDrep
 - getting information out to PhDs
 - The system is still leaky
 - you will receive the post and a magazine at your institute
- mental health collective was founded this year
 - good bottom up approach
 - but we need some more top down help
 - offer courses on mental health, aimed at PhDs and supervisors
 - please join the collective
- Keep eyes and ears open for people that are underrepresented within PhDnet
- What about parents?
 - not much has happened within PhDnet regarding parents
 - PhDs have less children than Postdocs
 - The GA is asking for the opinion
 - Postdocs have more say in that
 - reach out to us so we can represent you well
- not only onboarding but also offboarding
 - what are the procedures to graduate?
 - what if your director is leaving?

10:15-10:30 Coffee Break

10:30-11:30 Statutes – presentation of proposed changes and voting on new Statutes

The following sentence was voted to be further included into section 6 Voting and elections:

If possible, every election, physically or electronically, should be held anonymously, and the election procedure should prohibit multiple voting by a single person.

A poll in Webex was used for this minor vote. The results were: 78% yes, 5% no, only 17% didn't answer

After there were no more questions on the proposed changes to the PhDnet Statutes, the vote for ratification of the new Statutes started. Only one delegate per Institute was allowed to vote. The election was conducted by the General Secretary Julia van Beesel using Limesurvey.

Results:

- election was open for 10min
- participation: 61 of 63 participated
- yes: 96.72%
- no: 1%
- no answer: 1%

The proposed and discussed changes to the PhDnet Statutes have been accepted. The new version of the PhDnet Statutes will be published on the PhDnet website soon, and will by this be enacted.

11:30-12:00 SG Elections - Spokesperson

Nominees:

- Lea Heckmann
- Zachary Adams

Results:

- 1 round of election
- 62 of 63 voted
- Lea 80.65%
- Zachary 19.35%

Lea Heckmann is the new Spokesperson

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-13:45 SG Elections – Deputy Spokesperson & General Secretary

Deputy Spokesperson

Nominees:

- Sarah Young
- Florian Teichmann

Results:

- 1 round of election
- 56 of 63 voted
- Sarah 69.64%
- Florian 30.36%

Sarah is the new Deputy Spokesperson

General Secretary

Nominees:

- Florian Teichmann
- Andrea Bours

Results:

- 1 round of elections

- 58 out of 63 voted
- Florian 68.97%
- Andrea 31.03%

Florian is the new General Secretary

13:45-14:00 Coffee Break

14:00-14:50 SG Elections – Section Representatives

Human Science Section Representative

Nominee:

- Aroma Dabas

Results:

- 1 round of election
- 16 of 18 voted
- Aroma 100%

Aroma is the new HSS representative

Biomedical Section Representative

Nominees:

- Renee Vieira
- Marga Albu

Results:

- 1 round of election
- 20 of 22 voted
- Renee 45.00%
- Marga 55.00%

Marga Albu is the new BMS Representative

Chemistry-Physics-Technology Section Representative

Nominees:

- Johannes Bischoff

- Zachary Adams
- Angelika Gedsun
- Aidan Wastiaux
- Beatrice Lansbergen

Results:

- 3 rounds of election
- 22 (in last round 23) out of 23 people voted
- Final round:
 - Johannes 56.52%
 - Beatrice 43.48%

Johannes Bischoff is the new CPTS Representative

14:50-15:00 Coffee Break

15:00-15:45 Announcement of New SG, Outlook and Closing

Communication

- MAX
- Science Communication

Career Development

- Human Sciences special role

Diversity

- between institutes and fields

Open Science

Survey:

- include questions from PIs?

Fördervertrag

- why is it used, when TVöD is better?
- look into HOW Fördervertrag is implemented at the different institutes

TAC

- look at TAC Survey

- TAC template for everyone?
- IMPRS: 69 (some IMPRS have more institutes) - relationship of TAC and IMPRS

GM 2021

- people:
 - Andrea Bours (Hamburg?, but can't host)
 - Aidan Wastiaux (Dresden, could host)
 - Zachary Adams
 - Florian
- in person, but have virtual option - hybrid
- Middle Germany Hub - many interested people already messaged Aidan!!