



# Online Session "Promotion im Dialog"

## Meet the FU Doctoral Council

11.02.2026 | Anita & Stephi



## What exactly is a Doctoral Council?

The Doctoral Council represents **all doctoral researchers at the university**. It was introduced in the State of Berlin with the new Berlin Higher Education Act (Hochschulgesetz). At Freie Universität Berlin, it consists of two elected members per department, i.e. a total of 22 members. The current council consists of **seven** people as some departments did not see any nominations.

*Representing all PhDs  
Doctoral Council has 22 seats  
Currently 7 active members*

## What rights and influence does the Doctoral Council have?

Representatives of doctoral researchers can **speak and propose motions** in the Academic Senate and Department Councils. They can also take part in meetings and events organized within the entire academic environment of Berlin. They hold four voting seats on the DRS Permanent Commission. The Council **must be consulted on changes to doctoral regulations** and can issue recommendations to all university bodies.

*Voice & participation  
Mandatory consultations  
Right to issue recommendations*

## What are the tasks of the doctoral representatives?

The Doctoral Council **represents the interests** of doctoral researchers towards the university leadership and other bodies. We focus on, among others, improving supervision standards, creating a better support system for international doctoral researchers, and building a stronger student community to advocate for our common needs.

*Better supervision  
Support for International PhDs  
Stronger community*



# MEET THE COUNCIL

**Spokesperson:**  
Anita Kowalczyk

**Deputy:**  
Johanna Fritzi Momm

**Department of Education and Psychology**

Sophie Christine Eicher  
Susan Bochert (Dep.)

**Department of Law**

Frederik Jäger  
Maren Lena Vogel

**Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy**  
Anita Kowalczyk  
Stephanie Himpich  
Sarah Lewandowski (Dep.)

**Department for the School of Business and Economics**

Oscar Andres Arias Rojas

**Department of History and Cultural Studies**

Johanna Fritzi Momm

**Department of Earth Science**

**Department of Physics**

**School of Veterinary Medicine**

**Department of Mathematics and Computer Science**

**Department of Philosophy and Humanities**

**Department of Political and Social Sciences**



## HOW ARE WE ELECTED & HOW YOU CAN JOIN

1. The election is a **majority vote** within the meaning of the Electoral Regulations of Freie Universität Berlin (FU-WahIO).
2. The doctoral candidates of each department elect **two members** and **two deputies** to the Doctoral Council.
3. Council members are appointed for **2 years**.
4. **All** doctoral candidates at FU are entitled to vote.
5. The nominations are submitted to the respective **departmental election board**.



# WHAT WE ACTUALLY DO

Academic Senate

Development Planning Commission (EPK)

Executive Committee, Selection Committee

for the IBEF (Interpretative Edu. Research)

Department Board Meetings

Complaints Management Working Groups

DRS Supervisor Award Commission

On-demand meetings with the President &

Vice-Presidents

**REPRESENTATION**

FU Welcome Day

Berlin Doctoral Councils' Symposia

Doctoral Get-Togethers

Networking Meetings for new Doctoral  
Candidates

BUA-based events

**TBA** Pulse Panel Discussions

**COMMUNITY**



# WHAT WE ACTUALLY DO

## Academic Senate and Department Councils

Direct voice and influence  
on the new doctoral  
regulations

Early insight

High-level networking

Advocacy

## DRS meetings

Support for our day-to-day  
work and initiatives

Reach-out

## Complaints Management in Cases of Discrimination

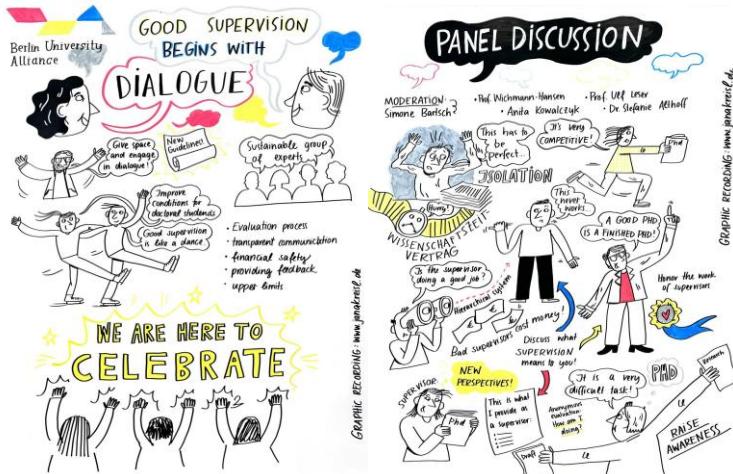
Development of rules and  
procedures

## Development Planning Commission (EPK)

Right to speak and submit  
motions with regard to the  
current structural plan  
adjustments

# WHAT WE ACTUALLY DO

## Good Supervision Culture BUA project



## Berlin Doctoral Councils' Symposia (FU, TU, HU, Charité)

Building a Berlin-wide Doctoral  
Student community  
Organizational structure  
between universities  
Joint statements  
Working group projects



## GET INVOLVED

You can develop your skills and expertise in:

- **policy making**, by negotiating directly on doctoral regulations,
- **public advocacy**, by campaign on issues like budget cuts, research integrity, improving working conditions for doctoral researchers, but also anything else that you find important,
- **community building** and networking,
- **academic development**,
- **inter-university collaboration** by representing university's doctoral researchers in city-wide (or national?) symposia and councils,
- internal **council strategizing**, direction, communication, etc.



# HOUSEHOLD BUDGET CUTS: WHAT WE KNOW

1. Budget cuts were imposed by the Berlin Senate and aimed at city's higher education and research sector, **affecting all major universities**.
2. The FU funding has been cut by approx. **37 million euros**. This is part of wider cuts of 250 million euros planned for Berlin's research and tertiary education sector.
3. Areas for reductions include **personnel/recruitment costs**, material and central management funds, and research (infrastructure, equipment).
4. Plans **2027 remain unclear**, and the use of reserves for 2025 and 2026 means many planned construction projects must be revised.
5. We want to make sure **Doctoral Students are informed** and that their concerns are heard.

Read more <https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/haushaltskuerzungen-berliner-senat/index.html>



# HOUSEHOLD BUDGET CUTS SURVEY

You will find these questions like...

1. How aware are you about the potential impact of these cuts on your department?
2. How has information about the budget situation been communicated within your department/institute?
3. If you anticipate an impact, how do you expect it to demonstrate?

PhD student survey



How are PhD students in Berlin affected by the budget cuts?





# HOUSEHOLD BUDGET CUTS SURVEY

- The survey is open **until February 28th!**
- Results will be presented & discussed:
  - directly with the FU President and Vice President,
  - during the Academic Senate session in April,
  - via departmental channels.

PhD student survey



How are PhD students in Berlin  
affected by the budget cuts?





# COMING SOON....

- PhD **Get-Together** and networking events,
- Pulse **surveys**,
- **Panel discussion** organized together with DRS - discussion on separation of supervision and evaluation,
- **International PhDs' Focus Group**,
- Expanding our **reach** - LinkedIn & Newsletter.



# HOW WE COMMUNICATE & HOW YOU CAN BE HEARD

## Website and the contact form:

<https://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/promovierendenvertretung/index.html>

Doctoral representation of the Free University of Berlin



The doctoral representation represents all doctoral students at the Free University of Berlin, regardless of individual or structured doctorate. [more...](#)

Seat of the doctoral representation at the DRS  
Image source: David Auerhofer (Editor: DRS)

### Kontaktformular

Wir freuen uns über Fragen, Anmerkungen und Anregungen. Wir sind zu erreichen durch dieses Kontaktformular oder unter:

[promovierendenvertretung@fu-berlin.de](mailto:promovierendenvertretung@fu-berlin.de)

Die einzelnen Mitglieder der Promovierendenvertretung können auch persönlich kontaktiert werden. [mehr...](#)

Das Kontaktformular ist anonym. Falls Sie eine persönliche Kontaktaufnahme unsererseits wünschen, hinterlassen Sie bitte Ihre E-Mailadresse im Formular.

Pflichtfelder sind mit einem Sternchen gekennzeichnet.

Ihre Nachricht \*

### Email:

[promovierendenvertretung@fu-berlin.de](mailto:promovierendenvertretung@fu-berlin.de)



### PhD student survey



How are PhD students in Berlin affected by the budget cuts?

