ADVANCEMENT OF **EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS** AT GOETHE UNIVERSITY

GOETHE
UNIVERSITÄT
FRANKFURT AM MAIN

"I know you well: a student still, I see, / Mossy Sir! After all, a learned man / Studies hard, and does the best he can."

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

There are certainly many interpretations of these lines in the history of the analysis of the adjacent text. In the context of modern sciences, though, this can also be interpreted as vouching for the necessity of an ongoing discussion about the content of research and the continuous need for further qualifications throughout the course of a scientific career. Recognizing, accepting and creatively using the latter is not easy in the complex structure of modern science, with its many facets, ranging from research to administrative work and the resulting diversity of the various occupational and career opportunities.

With this in mind, Goethe University has taken up the challenge of recognizing the scientific contributions of our young colleagues and supporting them in their pursuit of scientific independence and personal responsibility. By adopting the concept for the advancement of researchers who are in the early stages of their careers and by developing the necessary structures and formats for this endeavor, we are able to provide them with need-based offers to help them obtain further qualifications, counselling and mentoring, and to particularly support them as they transition between career stages. Focus is placed on individual career planning and the independent development of their own respective careers. Against this backdrop, we consider it appropriate to dissolve the classical and clearly defined structures between doctoral students and postdocs and to apply this support to the individual level of knowledge and expertise as required.

Of course, the central element of the advancement of researchers who are in the early stages of their careers is and remains the scientific project which, carried out at the highest of levels according to the highest scientific standards and accompanied by experienced colleagues, lays the foundation for further careers in the most diverse positions of science, society and business. In order to implement this, not only are the content and infrastructural prerequisites at Goethe University excellently met, but the framework conditions are also laid down in guidelines and framework regulations. It is important to live them and regularly check their suitability for practical use, as well as to ensure that they are current and relevant.

The concept that you have before you is the product of the work of many people! First and foremost, I would like to thank the early career researchers who have taken up this topic intensively in their working groups and have constructively co-designed this concept. In addition, I would like to thank the members of the senate commission dealing with the interests of early career researchers and the senate for their constructive cooperation and willingness to jointly create (and finance) a structure for the advancement of young colleagues. Last but not least, I would like to thank the colleagues from GRADE, FuN, the Equal Opportunity Office, RSC, PE/OE and many other units (see page 16) for implementing this concept.

To all of the researchers who are in the early stages of their careers, I wish you success as you pursue your passion and conduct your research, and I hope that Goethe University can act as a launching pad for you and your work.

Yours truly,

Enrico Schleiff

CONCEPT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS AT GOETHE UNIVERSITY FRANKFURT

PhD students, post-docs in the orientation phase and decision-making process, habilitation candidates and leaders of junior research groups are all crucial for contributing ideas and inspiration towards the high-quality research and teaching methods of today and tomorrow. In recognition of their research, teaching and academic contributions, Goethe University acknowledges them as early career researchers. Goethe University strives to offer them optimal conditions for their own development regardless of their career goals. Goethe University therefore considers the support of early career researchers as one of its primary objectives. It aims to promote independence and creativity, openly recognize achievements and open up attractive career opportunities both within and outside the academic world. With this concept, Goethe University is implementing its belief that discipline-specific, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary support is of vital importance for the successful development of early career researchers. Another important aspect is the support with career advancement, especially with

the transitions between different career stages: university degree, a PhD, a post-doc and a professorship or careers outside of research and academia. Such transitions are characterized not only by opportunities and challenges, but also by uncertainty. To support the researchers in their development, decision-making and any changes associated therewith forms the basis of our concept. Furthermore, Goethe University aims to promote individual competencies, creativity, the ability to analyze and the ability to (self-) criticize. These are the foundations for the development and strengthening of leadership personalities which are mandatory for responsibly shaping the futures of academics, business, and society. For researchers who find themselves in these stages of their careers, Goethe University will continue to develop its advancement programs and combine them into a coherent structure, allowing for customized support aimed at individual needs.[1] Supervisors, the departments and central institutions equally share in the responsibility to implement Goethe University's concept.

[1] An overview of the current and planned support mechanisms can be found in the "Overview of Goethe University's Advancement Programs for Early Career Researchers".

CONTENT

1.
OBJECTIVES

Goethe University wants to accompany and support researchers who are in the early stages of their careers with academic development that successfully moves them closer to their desired career paths according to their individual personalities, potential and goals. The concept is based on a pluralistic career insight, which considers a multitude of academic and non-academic career paths as being of equal value. In addition to offering qualifications for becoming a tenured professor, the concept includes a program for obtaining (additional) qualifications for alternative academic career paths such as in academic management, teaching, research, information or infrastructure, as well as for non-academic career paths such as in business (also in research roles), the industrial sector, within scientific organizations, the public sector, or in the media and publishing industry. As part of its concept for early career researcher support, Goethe University defines three objectives to pursue, as follows:

(i) Promoting independence and personal responsibility in research

(ii) Strengthening the transparency and quality of qualification and support structures

(iii) A needs-based design for career transitions.

Goethe University is actively involved in the advancement of early career researchers on two levels. On an individual level, support mechanisms for academic work and for the career process are being improved and expanded. On the institutional level, existing structures are being further developed in order to establish a culture of coherence, transparency and support.

1.1 Promoting Independence and Personal Responsibility in Research

Goethe University prides itself in "integrating early career researchers into disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of research and strengthening their independence […] in disciplinary contexts"[2]. The academic quality of research projects, a gradual integration into teaching and processes of self-management and the strengthening of personal responsibility are essential in enabling early career researchers to develop their potentials, refine their profiles and hone their skills. The first objective of this concept is to promote early career researchers' independence and personal responsibility in research.

1.2 Developing Structures of Qualification and Support

The transparency of procedures and reliable working conditions are central concerns of Goethe University. This gives researchers and their supervisors the chance to work in a collaborative, constructive and successful manner. Goethe University will provide all researchers who are in the early stages of their careers and supervisors access to various centralized and decentralized structures and institutions. In doing so, the measures will "be designed to establish more transparency concerning possible career paths, as well as to develop a targeted, disciplinary advancement program"[3]. The goal is to pursue objectives both specific to the target group as well as those that are relevant to the entire qualification process. Examples of these mechanisms include supervisory agreements, development talks or tenure track procedures. Consequently, the second objective in supporting researchers at various phases of academic qualification is the strengthening of the transparency and quality of qualification conditions, as well as of the culture of academic supervision.

1.3 A Needs-Based Design for Transitions between Qualification Phases

The adverse trend in the job situation at German universities (for example the steadily rising number of temporary, third-party funded positions versus the stagnant number of permanent positions and professorships[4]) makes it difficult for early career researchers to envision a career in the academic system. This results in the need to focus more on various opportunities for qualification and flexible career developments. Early career researchers should (be able to) precisely assess three career opportunities when planning their careers:
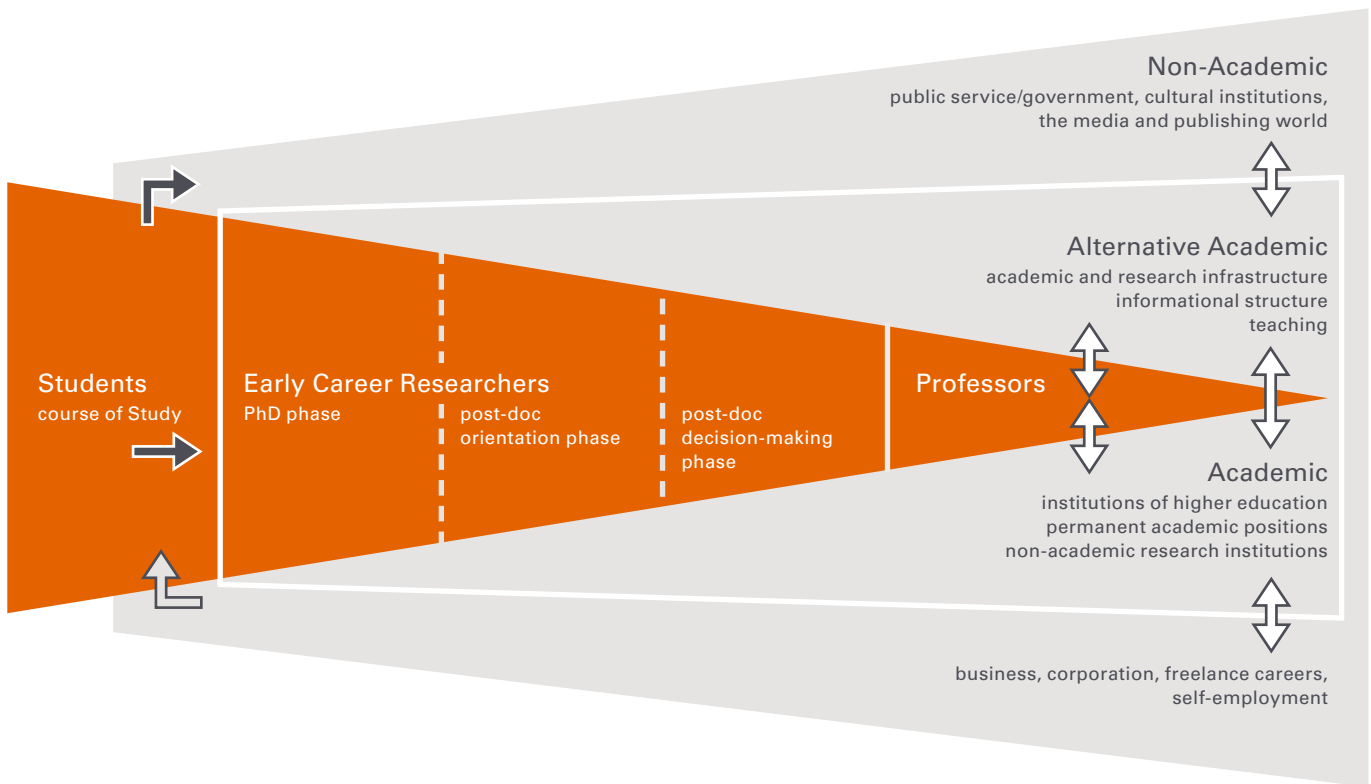
Figure 1: Career Opportunities
The various stages of the academic career path allow for the admission (indicated by the transition from bachelor to master, light grey arrow) continuation (dark grey arrow) and entry into career opportunities outside of the academic path (dark grey, angled arrow). To provide flexibility, it is envisaged that these transitions remain possible up until the final stages of the career (white arrows).

(1) "academic career opportunities", achieved with a permanent position at a university (for example a professorship) or at a research institute

(2) "alternative academic career opportunities" with jobs in the direct vicinity of academia, such as academic or research infrastructure management

(3) "non-academic career opportunities", for example in business or in the public sector. These include research opportunities, along with a multitude of other attractive career opportunities.

Early career researchers are thus presented with an abundance of opportunities, the selection of which is decisive for their career development and the plans they have for their own personal life. Goethe University sees it as its responsibility to support early career researchers as they make such important decisions, and it is committed to supporting them in their academic development, as well as in the training and strengthening of key competencies such as leadership quality and management skills. These are important for all career opportunities and thus crucial when taking steps towards the next qualification phase. Therefore, the third objective in advancing young researchers is the needs-based design for career transitions.

4 HRK [Rev.: 08.30.2016]: http://www.hwr- berlin.de/fileadmin/downloads_internet/Forschung/konzept_wiss_nachwuchs_hwr.pdf

2.

AN ESTABLISHED RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

Goethe University responds to the challenges and opportunities that early career researchers face with a variety of programs at different levels (Table 1). The implementation of research projects at the highest of levels, as well as excellent supervisory support and a distinct mentoring approach for early career researchers, are pivotal for the design of career opportunities. Scientific supervisors have special responsibility in order to personalize the support provided. Structured PhD programs, partially funded by third parties, are crucial for the academic advancement of early career researchers. Ample support is also offered at the departmental level. The departments also bear responsibility for implementing the transparency of academic career paths, for example through the adoption of permanent position concepts in the strategy agreements with the President's Office, or through the implementation of university-wide standards, for example formulated in the supervisory guidelines.

Centrally organized programs support early career researchers as they pursue professional development training on their own initiative. An example of this is illustrated by the Goethe Research Academy for Early Career Researchers (GRADE). Founded as a university-wide graduate academy, GRADE offers professional interdisciplinary development training and supports the establishment of self-organized working and research groups as well as their projects.

In addition to the support programs offered by GRADE, there are numerous points of contact open to early career researchers. These include, for instance, the Research Strategy Department (FuN), the Department of Staff and Organizational Development (PE/OE), the Research Service Center (RSC), the International Office (IO) with the Goethe Welcome Center (GWC), the Interdisciplinary College of Didactics in Higher Education (IKH), Unibator or also the Equal Opportunities Office (GB), which is coordinated with the help of the Ruth Moufang

TABLE 1
ESTABLISHED STRUCTURES OF SUPPORT FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

STRUCTURAL ENTITY	IMPORTANT TASKS
Supervisors and mentors	Support during the implementation of research projects; Advice regarding academic career planning; Support for strengthening analyzing competencies
Each university department	Definition of standards for job concepts, mentoring practices, and PhD as well as habilitation procedures
GRADE	Structured support for early career researchers and established researchers
Research Strategy Department (FuN)	Strategic advice for professional researchers
Department of Staff and Organizational Development (PE/OE)	General continuing education programs
Research Service Center (RSC)	Advice and support regarding external fundraising
Equal Opportunities Office (GB)	Coaching and training for female researchers; Access to the Ruth Moufang Fund, as well as to Mentoring Hessen
International Office (IO)	Advice regarding funding and organization of stays abroad
Goethe Welcome Centre (GWC)	Point of contact that offers advice to international researchers regarding non-academic matters
Interdisciplinary College of Didactics in Higher Education (IKH)	Support during the development of teaching concepts
Writing Center for the Humanities	Advice and support during the writing process
Studium Digitale (SD)	Support during the implementation of digitalization projects
Department of PR and Communication (PuK)	Support when presenting research findings to the general public
Department of Private University Funding (PHF)	Support regarding fundraising from private donors
The Goethe University Friends and Patrons Association (VFF)	Financial support for conferences and research projects; Recognition of achievements by awarding prizes
Alumni Associations (AF)	Networks; Advice regarding non-academic careers, and financial support through research funding and awards
Frauen mit Format (Women with Stature)	Networks for early career female researchers with an interest in non-academic career paths
Unibator	Support during the implementation of business ideas

Fund and the statewide advancement initiative for early career female researchers called "Mentoring Hessen". Furthermore, other organizational units and organizations, such as the Friends and Patrons of Goethe University, the Alumni Club of Goethe University and the departments, Studium Digitale, or the Writing Center for the Humanities, offer support to early career researchers.

The examples provided here make clear that Goethe University offers a wide range of opportunities to support early career researchers. The goal is to further develop the advancement of early career researchers by providing them with access to advancement programs using a "One face to the customer" approach. By restructuring and expanding the support programs, the objectives outlined above shall be achieved both effectively and permanently.

THE NEW STRUCTURE OF SUPPORT FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

3.

Goethe University is committed to the needs-based development of advancement opportunities for early career researchers, including continuous reviews of the quality and necessity of the established structures. This development considers existing structures and measures, as well as the defined objectives (see Table 2 and Figure 1, Objectives i-iii). The Goethe Research Academy for Early Career Researchers (GRADE) will be expanded to become the main point of contact for PhD candidates and post-docs during the career process. In doing so, the programs depart from the member-based system and embrace an open-access system for all researchers in the early stages of their career. The purpose of GRADE is to provide researchers with high-quality professional development training in the early stages of their career in cooperation with the university's departments, senate, PhD candidates and post-docs[5]. At the same time, quality standards, for example in the supervision and support of PhD candidates, are developed in this context and thus contribute to the sustainable academic profile of the university. With such individually tailored support for early career researchers, GRADE will be extremely important in three different

respects depending on their character, potential, and their career goals. (1) GRADE coordinates and organizes support for PhD candidates and post-docs and offers disciplinary and interdisciplinary research groups an infrastructure which is specifically tailored to their needs. In addition to that, support mechanisms, which provide early career researchers with the freedom to work on independent research projects, will be improved and expanded. (2) GRADE offers early career researchers a wide-range of supporting programs and services to help them prepare for the many diverse career paths, and these will be continuously developed. (3) GRADE takes on a "guiding" role for the individual concerns of PhD candidates, post-docs, and supervisors by referring the researchers to the appropriate points of contact at Goethe University that can provide the best form of support. In accordance with the guiding principle of "One face to the customer", GRADE listens to the concrete needs of early career researchers and their supervisors and connects them with the proper entities at Goethe University. GRADE has been organized into GRADE-Support and GRADE-Research Units (GRADE-RUs) in order to implement these tasks.

[5] On the basis of the established regulations on doctoral degrees and habilitation.

TABLE 2
MEASURES TO SUPPORT EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

ESTABLISHED STANDARDS	AIM	CONTENT
Tenure Track Statute	(i)	Enables researchers to become independent early on in the professorship
KHU guideline: The design of the post-doc phase	(ii)	Transparent rules for designing the conditions that apply to post-doctoral early career researchers
PhD regulations; KHU guideline: Quality standards for doctoral examination procedures	(ii)	Transparent rules for doctoral examination procedures
Scholarship guidelines	(i)	Transparency directive for handling funding options
Guidelines for supporting PhD candidates at Goethe University	(i, ii)	Transparent rules for the supervisory relationships and the supervisory agreement during the PhD
Guidelines for meetings with supervisors	(ii)	Transparent design of processes
Survey for PhD candidates and supervisors	(i, ii)	Knowledge base for the further development of the conditions for early career researchers
Concept for permanent positions	(ii, iii)	Transparent representation of career opportunities at Goethe University

ESTABLISHED STRUCTURES	AIM	CONTENT
Participation structures	(i, ii)	The senate commission dealing with the interests of early career researchers; Membership on GRADE's Board of Directors
GRADE^{Support}	(i-iii)	Core structure for the advancement of early career researchers
GRADE^{Centers}	(i, iii)	Professional support for early career researchers
GRADE^{Initiatives}	(i)	Design of networks and research groups on their own initiative (formerly known as DocAG)
Focus program	(i, iii)	Supporting the practice of early independence through the acquisition of own project funds
Mentoring programs for female researchers	(iii)	Support with career planning for early career female researchers
Award for best PhD supervisor	(ii)	Acknowledgement of colleagues with a special PhD supervisory commitment
Ombudsperson system	(ii)	Quality assured conflict management

| PLANNED STRUCTURES AND PROGRAMS	AIM	CONTENT
PhD Council	(i)	The establishment of a participation structure for all PhD candidats at Goethe University, regardless of status group membership
Certified qualification for management positions	(iii)	Advanced academic training opportunities for the career planning of graduate early career researchers
Individual coaching	(i, iii)	Strengthening the decision-making process of early career researchers regarding their next career steps
Professional development training opportunities for supervisors	(ii)	Increases and standardizes the quality of supervision to early career researchers
GRADE^{Academy}	(i, iii)	Strengthening graduate early career researchers as they establish independent research groups
Broadening the range of informational programs	(iii)	Strengthening the transparency of transition opportunities
University-wide survey	(i)	Establishes a baseline a foundation for the development of conditions for PhD early career researchers
PhD and post-doc documentation	(i-iii)	Transparency regarding the staffing structure of early career researchers
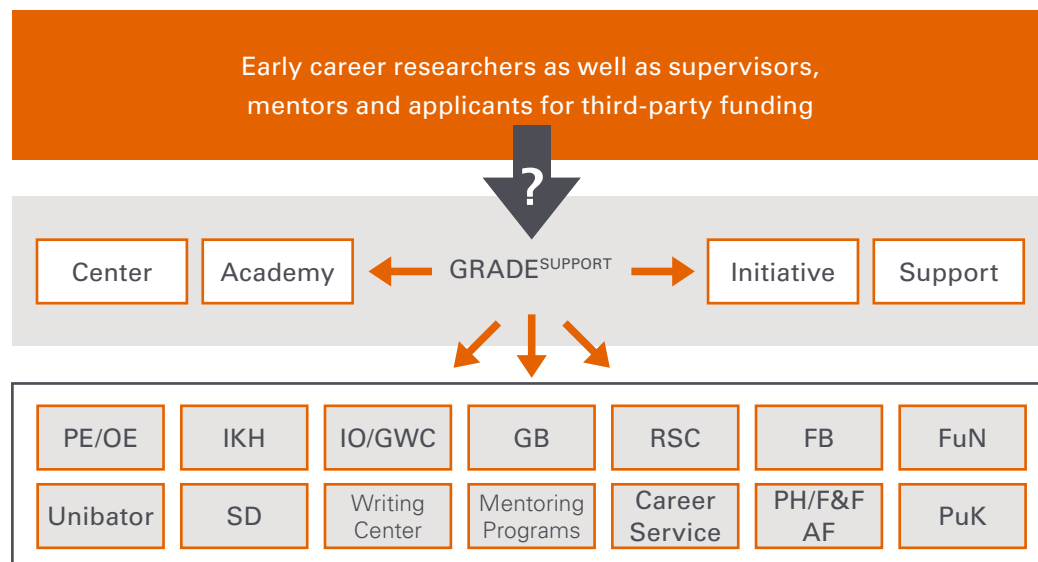
Figure 2: GRADE's "One face to the customer" approach
It is envisaged that all early career researchers, supervisors, mentors and applicants for third-party funded projects, who have questions regarding early career researchers, first contact GRADE in order to receive an initial consultation. They will then be referred to the appropriate contact at Goethe University.

3.1 GRADE^Support

All researchers at Goethe University in the early stages of their careers can use the services offered by GRADE^Support.[6] This especially applies to all those with an indicated or accepted PhD position or a temporary post-doc position. An additional group of GRADE users includes researchers who supervise PhD students or who raise joint research funding for the advancement of early career researchers.

GRADE^Support is responsible for matters relating to coordination, organization and content. It is a core component when implementing a modern, dynamic and constantly evolving structure aimed at qualifying, advancing and supervising early career researchers. GRADE^Support serves as a guide to help the early career researchers and their supervisors with any concerns that they may have. As such, when specific concerns

arise, it refers PhD candidates, post-docs and supervisors to the appropriate department at Goethe University and coordinates the advancement programs for these target groups. In addition to that, GRADE^Support assists the GRADE^RUs organizationally.

Furthermore, GRADE^Support offers interdisciplinary qualification programs such as trainings, workshops, etc. in order to convey professional skills, as well as consultations or events focusing on academic and non-academic career development.

3.2 GRADE^Research Units

The goal of GRADE^RUs is to promote research independence and personal responsibility. Their content-related tasks include the subject-specific and interdisciplinary qualification and advancement of early career researchers. Depending on their structure and orientation, and in accordance with es-

[6] The use of GRADE's programs by early career researchers from other universities or non-academic institutions is regulated through the use of partnership agreements. The latter also regulate the possibility of becoming a member of this target audience with GRADE.

tablished quality criteria, the GRADE[RUs] will award funding to early career researchers. The following three forms of Research Units thus enable early career researchers to work in an independent and personally responsible manner.

GRADE[Centers] link up research and the advancement of early career researchers in subject-related research areas and preferably do so by using an interdisciplinary approach. Established scholars at Goethe University submit proposals for GRADE[Centers] that offer PhD candidates and post-docs the opportunity to conduct interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research within the university's main areas of research. It also offers them the chance for personal development.

Early career researchers can propose a GRADE[Initiative], in which they jointly carry out a project built on interconnected networks. The goal is to support the researcher's own personal initiative and, by means of a self-organized working and/or research group, to strengthen their skills in areas such as research, publications, scientific management and conference management.

The GRADE[Academies] offer various formats of discussion and communication between academics, business and the general public. Moreover, they should serve as inspiration for academically and socially meaningful challenges. GRADE[Academies] are meant to act as think-tanks for particularly innovative researchers who are in the early stages of their careers. In this context, the Johanna Quandt Young Academy at Goethe will initially develop a program specifically targeted at post-docs. It is intended to support distinguished young researchers in the period between successfully completing their dissertation and before being offered a permanent position in academia.

4. SUMMARY

Goethe University's concept for the advancement of early career researchers builds upon the already successful work of GRADE and develops it further. Together with the reorganization of GRADE, additional programs will be developed that relate to the formation of academic and non-academic career paths. As two directly interrelated areas, GRADE[RUs] and GRADE[Support] offer early career researchers a substantial amount of support and services. The GRADE[RUs] create formats for researchers to further develop themselves academically and refine their own profiles. GRADE[Support] supplements professional development training opportunities for the academic and non-academic area with interdisciplinary programs. Furthermore, the "One face to the customer" structure provides everyone with a transparent and visibly accessible opportunity to all of Goethe University's advancement programs. This provides early career researchers with support according to their individual needs, while avoiding structural repetitions as they move along the process.

Goethe University designed this concept to accompany early career researchers as they begin to develop their careers. It offers them a broad range of support to strengthen their areas of academic focus, their individual characteristics, their potential and their preferences and, thus, to foster them according to the understanding and conviction of Goethe University: as the researchers of today and the inspiration of tomorrow.

[6] The use of GRADE's programs by early career researchers from other universities or non-academic institutions is regulated through the use of partnership agreements. The latter also regulate the possibility of becoming a member of this target audience with GRADE.

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