



MISSION STATEMENT

CODE OF CONDUCT



**The Max Planck
Schools aim at
having the best
PhD candidates
in the world and
the best scientists
in Germany to
contribute to a
worthwhile future.**

OUR MISSION

The Max Planck Schools believe in creating an environment where PhD candidates, faculty, and staff may live and work productively together, making use of the rich resources of the Max Planck Schools and their diverse network of partners, in the individual and collective pursuit of academic excellence and personal development.

The best Fellows and PhD candidates have been selected to accomplish ambitious goals:

- **To personally contribute** to the Max Planck Schools both within and beyond research to create a unique and empowering environment for the entire Schools' community in a spirit of mutual respect, trust, and responsibility;
- **To provide and receive** a broad and deep training through exceptional dedication and commitment to the program;
- **To risk** more than others, leverage one's excellence, and build on the training performed under continuously optimized research conditions with regard to supervision, labs, and IT support.

The Fellows are expected to venture into new territory and to develop new ways to train PhD candidates while guiding them through demanding research projects and thereby shaping a generation of future scientific leaders.

The PhD candidates will learn and adopt the skills, knowledge, and resilience necessary to master extraordinary challenges in their future roles to make a true difference to society.



**Fellows, PhD
candidates, and
the entire Schools
community agree
that all our actions
are based on mutual
respect, fairness,
inclusiveness, and
consistency.**

CODE OF CONDUCT

We ...understand the diversity of our abilities and experiences as an opportunity;
...encourage and respect different views;
...see that our success is a reflection of our work;
...recognize good and transparent communication as fundamental for fruitful collaboration;
...perceive mistakes as opportunities and necessary components for professional, individual, and institutional growth.



COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

- We** ... communicate our expectations, needs, and any challenges transparently, appropriately, and regularly, in order to learn and to improve procedures and processes;
- ... provide prompt and complete information;
- ... value and nurture factual and solution-oriented exchange;
- ... address all important issues openly;
- ... regularly request and provide constructive feedback, and we take the necessary time and space to receive and reflect on this feedback.

COLLABORATION

- We** ... collaborate constructively, honestly, efficiently, and pragmatically to achieve the best possible results;
- ... act with integrity and deal transparently with conflicts of interest;
- ... always clarify our tasks and the associated responsibilities in advance;
- ... see changes and new tasks as opportunities and approach them openly and constructively;
- ... accept each other's boundaries and contribute to a respectful working relationship.

RESPONSIBILITY

- We** ...assume responsibility for the goals and tasks of the Max Planck Schools and for the funds entrusted to us;
- ...aim to make decisions informed by our current knowledge, in which all relevant decision-makers are involved, and we take responsibility for the outcomes;
- ...respect each other's rights and support each other in exercising these rights.

DEALING WITH CONFLICTS

- We** ...address conflicts openly and encourage each other to do so;
- ...take conflicts seriously, deal with them objectively, and work towards timely and fair solutions;
- ...involve third parties in mediation when appropriate.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- We** ...take advantage of training opportunities and continuing education to ensure that our professional and social competencies correspond to our tasks;
- ...view the distinctive mentor-mentee relationship as a mutual opportunity for personal growth.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

1

The Steering Committee is the highest decision-making body of the Max Planck Schools. The Committee ...

- ... sets the joint framework of the program and supports the Schools in their development in a constructive and critical manner;
- ... is responsible for all School-wide processes and decisions of strategic importance.

2

The Deans are the interface between the Steering Committee of the Max Planck Schools and the operational program management. Together with the Central Coordination Office and the Schools' leadership, they ...

- ... implement the decisions of the Steering Committee, provide stimuli for the further development of the program, and offer solutions to operational problems;
- ... ensure the program's progress by, amongst other tasks, nominating scientists as Fellows of the Max Planck Schools in coordination with the Schools' leadership, organizing the annual Max Planck Schools Day, and by being the point of contact for the Central Coordination Team;
- ... facilitate a greater understanding of the Max Planck Schools by providing information related to the program to Fellows, PhD candidates, and external partners;
- ... support objective discussions;
- ... ensure that in stressful or potentially harmful situations, appropriate clarification processes and solutions are initiated in a timely manner, and they play an active role in this context;
- ... make time for their management tasks, regularly reflect on their leadership conduct, and continuously develop their own and others' leadership skills.

3

The Speakers lead their respective School. They ...

- ... ensure their School's progress by, amongst others tasks, managing the business of the School, taking care of the communication with Fellows, the Deans and the coordination teams;
- ... continuously pursue a vision that is aligned with the overall goals of the Max Planck Schools;
- ... support objective discussions;
- ... ensure that in stressful or potentially harmful situations, appropriate clarification processes and solutions are initiated in a timely manner, and they play an active role in this context;
- ... make time for their management tasks, regularly reflect on their leadership conduct, and continuously develop their and others' leadership skills.

4

The Central Coordination Team manages the program's operations and supports the Steering Committee as well as the Deans in their tasks. The team ...

- ... is responsible for the overall coordination of the program, prepares program-wide committee meetings, processes and decisions, is the central point of contact for all Schools-wide issues, and participates in the conceptual development of the program;
- ... ensures that in stressful or potentially harmful situations, appropriate clarification processes and solutions are initiated in a timely manner, and it plays an active role in this context;
- ... resolves fundamental issues and involves their superiors at the next level if necessary. The team cultivates a collaborative environment and promotes networked thinking and action;
- ... regularly reflects on its leadership conduct and continuously develops its and others' leadership skills.

5

The Schools' Coordination Teams operationally manage their respective School. They ...

- ... coordinate the respective School's educational program, public relations, and call for applications, and are responsible for communicating within their School with Fellows and PhD candidates. The head of the respective School's Coordination Team is the contact person for the Central Coordination Team in organizational and administrative matters and participates in the regular working meetings of the Central Coordination Team;
- ... ensure that in stressful or potentially harmful situations, appropriate clarification processes and solutions are initiated in a timely manner, and they play an active role in this context;
- ... resolve fundamental issues and involve superiors at the next level if necessary;
- ... cultivate a collaborative environment and promote networked thinking and action.

6

The Fellows of the Max Planck Schools are appointed by the Steering Committee. They ...

- ... provide outstanding supervision of the PhD candidates and support them in their scientific and personal development while reflecting on their success in doing so;
- ... ensure that PhD candidates' responsibilities, skills and knowledge are aligned and are developed in a targeted manner. They support the PhD candidates through appropriate and performance-enhancing working conditions, encourage them to assume responsibility, and provide them with the support they need;
- ... personally support their School by contributing research topics and teaching, as well as by actively participating in the selection process of the applicants;
- ... closely coordinate with the School's committees and responsible coordination team to implement the curriculum, e.g. by holding courses or workshops and participating in the development and implementation of the e-learning concept;
- ... support the evaluation process of their School and the program's overall evaluation;
- ... contribute to further developing their School by actively contributing their unique skills and experience to the everyday life of the School;
- ... ensure that in stressful or potentially harmful situations, appropriate clarification processes and solutions are initiated in a timely manner, and they play an active role in this context.

The tasks assigned to the Fellows may not be delegated to other people.

7

The PhD Candidates of the Max Planck Schools are selected through a highly competitive, international recruiting process. They ...

- ... can expect excellent education, training, supervision, and personal development;
- ... are eager to learn and develop personally, supported by the Fellows and the Coordination Teams;
- ... articulate challenges, including in potentially stressful or harmful situations, and they support appropriate clarification processes;
- ... should raise concerns about any aspects of the program and will be listened to as members of the community;
- ... cultivate a collaborative environment and promote synergistic thinking and action;
- ... are expected to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Schools and to maximize their own development.

8

The Representatives and Cohort Representatives are elected by their peers to be the voice of the PhD candidates according to internal rules. The Representatives (two per School) ...

- ... gather feedback from their peers on important issues within the program and provide the PhD candidates' perspective to their School's management and the wider program coordination;
- ... can be approached by their peers for issues that need to be discreetly brought to the program's attention;
- ... try to provide support for their peers in the event that there is an unresolved issue between the student(s) and other members of the Schools;
- ... coordinate with the Cohort Representatives to ensure efficient communication between the student body and the School's management;
- ... regularly meet their School's coordination team to ensure all parties are kept abreast of any issues, and to ensure resolutions from previous meetings have been implemented.

9

Ombudspersons

To support a climate of respect, accountability, honesty and integrity, the Deans of the Max Planck Schools appoint two ombudspersons for all three pilot Schools. These confidants provide informal, impartial, confidential and independent assistance to all members of the Max Planck Schools community in managing and resolving issues affecting their work or studies. These ombudspersons support a culture that is ethical and civil, and in which a mutual understanding can be reached and differences resolved through respectful dialogue and fair processes.

CENTRAL COORDINATION

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