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**How to increase the number of Indo-European PhD programmes?  
results of the Workshop “Connecting young researchers: best practices of EU-India PhD programmes”**

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FINAL SHOWCASING EVENT

# BREAKING GROUNDS IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION THROUGH INDO-EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS

GHENT, BELGIUM

CULTURE AND CONVENTION CENTRE "HET PAND", GHENT UNIVERSITY



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# Workshop “Connecting young researchers: best practices of EU-India PhD programmes”

The workshop convened 21 Indian and European:

- PhD Programme Coordinators/Supervisors;
- PhD programme funders/Mangers
- PhD students and alumni

Lisbon, 20-21 march 2017

Participants nationality: India, Germany, Portugal, Finland, Italy, Spain, France, Norway, USA

Partners: FCT, DLR, AKA, APRE, ZSI



# Who should read these Findings and Recommendations?

- **Inter-regional context:** e.g. Euro-India Group of Senior Officials (GSO); EU-India Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility.
- **Sub-regional context:** e.g. EU: ERASMUS+ programme, and for teaching and research through Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Jean Monnet actions. India: Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) programme
- **National/local context:** e.g. Officials in the EU Member States; funders; Institutions of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, students

# Findings & Recommendations:

The findings of the Workshop are clustered around three major levels:

- 1 • Policy Level
- 2 • Orientation level
- 3 • Institutional level



# Findings & Recommendations: policy level

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulties getting a VISA and burden procedures during a PhD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VISA for the overall duration of the PhD</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equipment/samples customs barrier</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common set of rules for shipment/exchange of samples and equipment, simplify customs barriers for research and innovation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In Europe Indian PhD students could experience problems with their equivalence and had to do extra courses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure common standards and recognition on a PhD degree</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid conflicts, stop migration, Science Diplomacy</li></ul>

# Findings & Recommendations: orientation level

## Findings

### Personal experiences

- Often PhD students face different scientific and institutional culture which are a main source of burden when starting a PhD
- PhD students face different cultures, environment, standards and protocols
- In general Indian PhD students have less problems in adapt in Europe (e.g. huge differences in accommodation India and Europe)
- Often PhD students face difficulties accessing to the hierarchy in order to solve problems

## Recommendations

- To provide to the potential PhD students a training programme prior to the enrolment in PhD
- To implement site visits before moving to country
- To Implement a forum/blog fed by students with practical information and how to survive in the city and lab
- International office from welcome University should have a temporary tutor (person assigned) to each PhD student (guiding angel)
- To have field supervisor/coordinator

# Findings & Recommendations: orientation level

## Findings

### Funding experience

- Often a joint PhD programme between EU MS and India is not co-funded by EU MS and India which drives to a lack of co-ownership and co-responsibility and communion from which students are victims
- For some Universities PhD grants to in a certain research topic are not flexible
- Weakness of PhD students been funded just for one year or two which is insufficient to finish their PhD, short period for research labs to invest in a PhD student

## Recommendations

- Very clearly definition on administrative, financial, ethical procedures for all the stakeholders since the start
- PhD grants should be flexible in terms of research topic
- PhD grants should be funded for 3 +2 years and evaluated each 1,5 year
- Larger periods of fund turn the possibility of using larger research infrastructures and investing in PhD students



# Findings & Recommendations: orientation level

## Findings

### Ethical Issues

- Often in PhD programs and works plan do not attend to ethical issues which drive to a uncessfull thesis

### Insurance

- Often PhD students abroad do not have health assurance which also could covers problems associated with Lab experiences
- In India from state to state there is a different criteria and different regulations e.g. some Universities only allow students from a geographical influence

## Recommendations

- Ethical checks and preparation of common standards procedures in advance.
- In PhD programmes the insurance should covers health and research procedures



# Findings & Recommendations: orientation level

## Findings

## Recommendations

### Institutional experiences

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often when a joint EU MS-India PhD programme there are a lack of communication between both institutions</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define clearly the Institutional Contact Point from each institution</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulties on the negotiation of a PhD programme procedures</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All the PhD procedures (standards documents) must be clear to all the institutions involved before the negotiation phase and also accountability issues</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often PhD supervisors are not involved from the start</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PhD supervisors in each institution should be define prior to the PhD programme been launched</li></ul>   |

# Recommendations: Institutional level

- To ensure Standard Operating Procedures and harmonization of process at institutional level that can lead to accountability from both sides
- To consider if PhD should be granted through a three to four years fellowship or work contract
- To assure monitoring and evaluation PhD programmes and students at early stage
- To provide level-up courses if necessary
- To implement a feasibility study (e.g. Shipment of samples)
- To analyze framework conditions and plan research according to different regulations (animal testing)
- To prepare guidelines for issues such as insurance, taxes etc.
- To have an honest exchange about requirements (e.g. housing) and problems (e.g. funding)



**Thank you!**

