

**Project:** **Network for Doctoral Students in Therapy Sciences**

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**Direction:** Dipl.- Med.- Päd. Ina Thierfelder

**Description:**

In Germany, the process of establishing a basis for an academic education in therapeutic health occupations started at the beginning of the new millenium. Numerous bachelor's programs for occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech therapy have been created over the following ten years, followed by specific consecutive or postgraduate master's programs. Starting with the second decade in the process of academization of therapeutic health occupations, new questions concerning the further qualification of young researcher have emerged. More precisely, scientific qualifications in the form of doctoral dissertations are gaining momentum. With few exceptions, however, the process of academization of therapeutic occupations has been thus far restricted to universities of applied sciences, which, as opposed to traditional universities, are not legally entitled to confer doctoral titles. Initiatives for joint doctoral study programs offered in cooperation by universities of applied sciences and traditional universities have only slowly started to come into effect. As a consequence, young scientists coming from therapeutic health occupations are often only presented with the opportunity of earning a doctoral title in disciplines outside their subject area, without being integrated in structured doctoral programs or study groups. In order to remain within their subject area and be able to share their experiences with the challenges posed by their doctoral research, young scientists can resort to self-organization. The network for doctoral students in therapy sciences at the Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin is such an initiative.

The network aims to provide young scientists in therapy sciences with a scientific forum for sharing their experiences. Its goal is to promote the development of participants' research activity through constructive experience exchange and feedback. The main focus therefore lies on the discussion of specific doctoral research projects. The network is available to all interested doctoral students who are licensed physiotherapists, occupational therapists or speech therapists, have a master's degree and have obtained 300 study points based on the European-Credit-Transfer-System. Participants should have formulated first ideas and theoretical considerations on a topic relevant to therapy sciences. However, a concrete supervision agreement with a university professor is not a prerequisite for participation.

**Contact and Information:**

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