

MUNI  
ECON



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



STUDY PHD AT ECON MUNI

Information about PhD studies

# INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES AT ECON MUNI AND FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAMMES AT ECON MUNI

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# 1. BASIC INFORMATION

## WHY STUDY AT ECON MUNI?

The Faculty of Economics and Administration of Masaryk University (ECON MUNI) provides quality higher education in the field of economics, management, finance and public administration to almost three thousand students not only in Czech but also in English.

ECON MUNI has long been among the important research-focused faculties of economics in the Czech economic environment, and it covers the whole range of theoretical or practical issues related to the economy, based on the long-term research focus of five specialised departments and the scientific--research profiles of ten research teams. The main research topics within the development of the fields currently include the transport economics, health economics, financial markets, public economics, corporate management, regional development, behavioral, and experimental economics. The faculty participates in tackling scientific research projects and develops long-term cooperation with research institutes and other state administration and self-government institutions financed from domestic as well as foreign funds.

In addition to basic research, ECON MUNI has developed cooperation with the application field on a long-term basis. Users from practice come from state administration and self-government institutions, state institutions, enterprises and other organisations connected with the relevant research fields covering the focus of ECON MUNI. An integral part of the cooperation is also contract research based on demands from practice, funded especially from sources with an out-of-university application/corporate sphere.

## WORD OF THE VICE-DEAN FOR SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND DOCTORAL STUDIES



Dear Colleagues,

By enrolling in doctoral studies, you become members of the academic community – the narrower one at the Faculty of Economics and Administration, and the broader economic scientific community. Much of your education does not take place within scheduled hours, but in daily interactions with this scientific community. You will learn the most in discussions with older colleagues in research seminars, where you will see and hear excellent scientists thinking about their research. The academic community is generally very helpful and open. The one at ESF MU is no exception and will be happy to welcome you.

**Rostislav Staněk**

Vice-Dean for Science, Research and Doctoral Studies

## WHAT IS A DOCTORAL STUDY?

The doctoral study is focused on scientific research and independent research activities. It is not just a continuation of a master's degree; it differs significantly from it. Because it is not just a matter of further acquisition of professional knowledge, its main purpose is not classical lessons. The study is significantly individualised, it is based on intensive cooperation with the supervisor, who leads the doctoral student methodically and professionally. Although doctoral students have the status of students in the Czech Republic by law, they are researchers - beginners. They are expected to have a degree of scientific autonomy. Their task is not only further education, but above all the performance of their own research work.

Therefore, your most important duty is to carry out quality research, which will result in the compilation of its results in a quality PhD thesis. Independently and in cooperation with the supervisor, or with other colleagues, you focus on the research focus throughout your study, which you have chosen after careful consideration and consultation with the future supervisor. Due to the decisive role of the PhD thesis, it is essential for the success of the study to pay attention to the choice of the research topic and the choice of the supervisor.

Part of the doctoral study is also the development of pedagogical competencies of students and their involvement in the academic environment. Therefore, you can (depending on your individual study plan) participate in teaching in bachelor's and master's degree programs.

The doctoral study is not an easy way to get another degree. It requires personal commitment, a lot of energy and a lot of time. During your doctoral study you will read a lot and write a lot. You will go to conferences and present results of your work to an international audience. You will spend a certain part of your studies on an internship at another university or college abroad. Therefore, carefully consider whether you are willing to devote yourself fully to your study. It does not make sense without it. However, if you devote yourself fully to your doctoral study, you will gain excellent colleagues and great friends, visit many interesting places abroad and after successful completion you will have an open door to a career both in academic, and in the commercial sphere.

“Doctoral studies are demanding – stamina, commitment, and often even self-denial will be necessary, but if you overcome all that, your reward will be many wonderful experiences, widened horizons and improved abilities. And, as a bonus, you will prolong your youth!”

**Zlatica Konôpková**

[econ.muni.cz](http://econ.muni.cz)





A **video** with a doctoral study graduate awarded the Dean's Award 2020 for an excellent PhD thesis **Hana Fitzová**



A **video** with a doctoral study graduate awarded the Dean's Award 2020 for young academic workers under the age of 35 **Dominika Tóthová**

## 2. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

### BEFORE SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Think about whether the doctoral study is for you – ask yourself why you want to enrol for a doctoral study. What do you see your professional career? Do you want to stay in the academic sphere after completing your doctoral study? Find out what the doctoral studies at ECON MUNI are about, what the requirements for admission and completion of the study are, what obligations you will have during your study, what scholarship you are entitled to. Ask those who have already been involved in their doctoral study, or those who have already graduated, what it gave them and if they would do it again

**Choose a topic and a supervisor** – When choosing a research focus and your supervisor, you should consider especially their professional focus and your expectations.

1. Look at the web of your supervisor, where you can find out in which field they publish, what topics they address in their scientific projects and what their professional focus is. Consider whether this is an area that you want to pursue at least during your doctoral study, but probably also in your future career.
2. Think about what leads you to file an application for admission to the doctoral study. Intellectual curiosity and the effort to get things together are a necessary condition for successful study, but they may not be enough on their own. The doctoral study should open the door to your future career:
  - a) The doctoral study is a necessary condition for a future academic career. However, obtaining an academic position after study is not easy and the decisive criterion is the quality of doctoral research. If you are looking for a job at the academic sphere, you should choose a supervisor who is a recognized and established scientific figure. Therefore, pay your attention primarily on the publishing activities of the supervisor.
  - b) As part of your doctoral study, you can learn specific skills that will allow you to build a career in research or consulting positions in the private and public sectors. Employers will appreciate that you understand in depth the areas you focus on, that you can work critically with new knowledge, and that you can offer professional and reasoned individual solutions. In such a case, when choosing a supervisor, emphasize the topic of work and assertion of previous graduates.
  - c) Of course, studying purely because of your intellectual curiosity is not excluded. But consider whether it is strong enough to keep you in the study for 4 years.

**Contact the supervisor** – Contact your future supervisor. Let them know that you are interested in the topic listed by them and ask them for a consultation. You can also suggest your own topic, if it corresponds to the research focus of the supervisor but take into account that the supervisor may not accept it. You should consult your planned research proposal with the supervisor. In addition, you will need a consent from the supervisor to your leadership. As part of these consultations, you should clarify with your supervisor your ambitions and mutual expectations regarding your study. Expect this communication to take some time and do not delay it unnecessarily.

**Prepare a research proposal** – A research proposal is specific to each PhD topic. In general, however, it should include the following:

- A research question or problem that you will solve in your PhD thesis
- Literature search (i.e. a description of previous approaches to solving the problem)
- Proposal of the research procedure (i.e. how you want to solve the given problem)

With your research proposal, you should show how well you are oriented in the given issue and whether you have a basic idea of how to approach the solution of the PhD research. Do not be afraid to contact the intended supervisor when preparing the proposal.

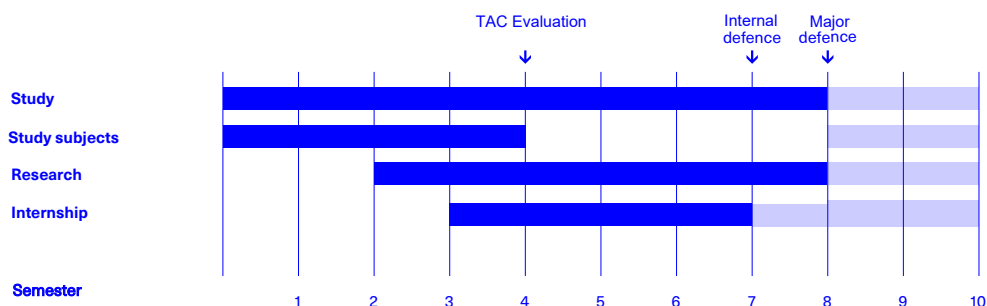
## ADMISSION PROCEDURE

The [admission procedure](#) takes place in June (start of the study from the autumn semester, i.e. from September). An entrance exam is held in person, when you present your research plan and motivation for studying to the admissions committee, your professional knowledge and knowledge of the English language are also tested.

## COURSE OF THE STUDY

The study is started by [enrolment in the study](#). You will receive a specific enrolment date and time together with the information about admission to the study. Enrolment usually takes place in person at the faculty in early September.

You can see a typical course of the study in the following diagram, which shows the main activities and several milestones that need to be followed:



Your study is highly individualised, yet it has firm rules and several milestones that need to be followed. During the PhD study, it is necessary to obtain at least 240 credits and at the same time 20 credits in each semester. In the first year, you focus mainly on the study of subjects, which you will then use in your research. During the second year, a presentation at a research workshop or conference awaits you, and you will devote more time to your PhD thesis. The next two years you will devote the main effort to completing the PhD thesis. During your studies, you can participate in teaching and conducting seminars in the subjects of bachelor's and master's degree programs. As part of the research team, you solve your own research. The most important and externally most visible part of your study consists in publishing your results in professional journals and in your PhD thesis at the end of the study. Throughout your study, you will be able to attend various summer schools, research seminars, workshops, and conferences both abroad and in the Czech Republic. As part of your study, you will also complete a compulsory internship abroad.

### Compulsory subjects

The doctoral study is of a highly individual character. As PhD students, you will continuously educate yourself in your specialisation, i.e., the topic of your PhD thesis, throughout your study. Nevertheless, especially during the initial phase of your study, you will complete some [subjects](#) that will give you the necessary foundations for your own research. You enrol in most compulsory subjects ending with an exam in the first year, and in the following years you will be more intensively involved in the PhD thesis. Compulsory subjects ending with an exam have full-time teaching, i.e. especially lectures connected with a discussion. As part of the university-wide support for young scientists, you can take [FRESHERS](#) courses: Skills for Research Career.

### Publications and research

The main content of the doctoral study is research work that you perform under the supervision of your supervisor. Upon agreement, you can also participate in external projects led not only by your supervisor, but also by other scientists. The nature of your research work depends on the topic and method of your PhD thesis. The goal of your research efforts is to publish your results in a quality professional journal and to defend your PhD thesis. As a doctoral student at ECON MUNI, you are required to prepare at least three articles during your study, thematically corresponding to the focus of your PhD thesis. At least one article of them must be published during the study in a journal that is indexed in the [Web of Science](#) or [Scopus](#) databases.

### Research support

To support your research, participation in conferences or internships abroad, an internal [Student grant system](#) is prepared for you or you can apply for support from some of the ECON MUNI scholarship programmes. Within this student grant system, you can apply for the support for the research which is the content of your PhD thesis each year. For you, this means preparing a research project, including a budget for planned activities each year (data collection, conference participation costs, etc.). If the project is approved, you will receive funding for these activities.

### Internship abroad

An internship abroad in the recommended length of one semester (a minimum length is one month) is a mandatory part of the doctoral study, but above all a great opportunity to establish contacts and gain experience. You can complete an internship at a prestigious foreign university or research institute, but also at various institutions at the supranational level (except for Slovakia).

You choose a foreign institution in cooperation with your supervisor according to the focus of your research. It is ideal to get an internship at the university where there is a research team dedicated to the topic of your PhD thesis. Such internship can move your research significantly forward. Most academic workplaces are very open to doctoral internships when you have funding secured. The internship can be supported from your specific research project, from the faculty [scholarship programme](#) or within mobility programs (e.g. Erasmus +), or you can combine these resources to cover all costs. An ideal time to complete the internship is the time during semesters 3–7, i.e., at the moment when you have completed all subjects. The length of your stay and the quality of the workplace where you complete your internship can have a major impact on what kind of work you will be able to get after completing your doctoral study.

### Annual TAC evaluation

The annual TAC evaluation of the student's progress and quality of their research is an important milestone and control point for feedback on how the doctoral research has progressed over the past two terms. The annual TAC evaluation is conducted in the form of a discussion on the submitted documents, which are submitted no later than two weeks before the TAC meeting. This document mainly contains the definition of the doctoral research, its goals and investigation procedure, proposed methods and research questions. In the subsequent presentation you, in addition to the status of their research, also inform the TAC about the progress of your studies and the plan of activities for the next period. The annual TAC evaluation is always organized in the spring term.

### PhD thesis defence

Once you have obtained at least 240 credits during your study and fulfilled all other obligations, you can apply to defend your PhD thesis. The defence of the PhD thesis is carried out in two rounds – a minor defence and dissertation defence.

- **Internal defence** – this is the defence of the first version of your dissertation before the department. For the internal defence, the review of the internal reviewer is prepared, which evaluates the quality of the dissertation and the degree of fulfilment of the requirements set for dissertations in the given scientific field. In addition, a review may be prepared by an external person who will oppose your thesis in the context of a dissertation defence. The purpose of the internal defence is both to assess the quality of the dissertation by the academic community of the department and to give you the opportunity to incorporate any criticisms from the opposing review into the dissertation before the dissertation defence.
- **Major defence** – Represents the full stop behind the entire doctoral study. It consists in the presentation of your research and its results and in the subsequent professional discussion. It takes place in front of a committee of at least five members, and usually the opponents of the PhD thesis also take part in it.

### Participation in teaching

Being a doctoral student does not necessarily mean just hard study, research, and publication of research results. You can also try out what it is like to teach someone and be in the position of a university teacher. As a doctoral student, you can participate in the teaching of subjects, which means, for example, that you lead seminars where you will practice the material covered in lectures with students in bachelor's and master's studies on practical examples. You can also correct seminar papers, assist in examinations, prepare opinions on final theses, and you can also try teaching in English. You will either receive credits or be paid for your work.

## ISP AND SEMESTER CONTENT

To prevent all does not make head or tail, you will create an Individual study plan at the beginning of the entire study in cooperation with your supervisor. Before the beginning of each semester, you will specify the specific content for the semester, in which you state in detail individual activities of your study and research.

In the [individual study plan](#) for the whole study, you will state the study and research plan for the whole period of four years of study, the focus of your research and its expected course, the publishing activity plan (what and where you plan to publish), a plan for participation in professional conferences, internships or summer schools.

Before the beginning of each semester, you will indicate specific steps of the next semester content upon agreement with the supervisor. For example, you shall specify which subjects you will study, at which conference you will prepare a paper and then leave, what specifically you will do in your research (whether you will read literature, collect data, analyse data, write the theoretical part of the PhD thesis or describe results of an experiment). At the end of the semester, you will fill in feedback on what you did or what you did not manage and why. The supervisor will then evaluate the fulfilment of the goals and agree on your progress to the next semester. Then, the fulfilment of the individual study plan is evaluated by the Doctoral Board, which comments on your continuing study.

## SCHOLARSHIP

For the entire standard period of study, i.e. for four years, you are entitled to a [scholarship](#). The basic amount guaranteed by the faculty is based on the currently valid measures of the Rector and of the ECON MUNI. During the standard course of study when you participate in the solution of projects, the scholarship is approximately CZK 20,000 net per month. The amount may be higher with your active involvement in teaching and external scientific projects.

## 3 . SUPERVISOR

The relationship between the doctoral student and the supervisor is absolutely crucial for your study. The doctoral study is the first stage of your academic and scientific career, and it is the supervisor who accompanies you through this stage.

### So what can you expect from a supervisor?

- **Regular communication** – Together, you have agreed regular meetings with a frequency of at least twice a month.
- **Consultations in the selection of subjects, external courses or summer schools and the guidance for your self-study** – Together, you define the knowledge necessary for the elaboration of the PhD thesis; consult which subjects to enrol in, and the supervisor recommends the direction of self-study.
- **Professional and methodical management of scientific research activities** – The student regularly presents the progress of their research. The supervisor provides feedback, advises on the further direction of research and solving research problems, but is not obliged to provide ready-made solutions to research problems.
- **Feedback and cooperation in publishing activities** – The supervisor reads the draft versions of your articles and gives comments on them; they can participate as a co-author and pass on their know-how to you especially in the first article.
- **Consultation on the selection of a magazine, conferences and internships** – The supervisor will recommend a suitable journal or conference for your research; consult with you on the choice of the internship place and provide you with their contacts, but it is not the task of the supervisor to arrange the internship for you.
- **Feedback on presentations at conferences and research seminars** – The supervisor is especially present at your conference presentations at the beginning of the study and provides feedback on them.
- **Prevention of mutual misunderstandings** – At the beginning of the study, the student and the supervisor will clarify the ambitions and mutual expectations regarding the study and, if necessary, write them down in a non-binding [memorandum](#).

### What can a supervisor expect from you?

- Conscientious and timely fulfilment of duties and adherence to the study schedule,
- Active communication, informing about progress and possible obstacles or problems,
- Interest in the research topic, desire to acquire new knowledge and skills,
- Critical thinking, creativity and originality,
- Respecting good practice in research, publication and citation,
- Ability to work independently and in a team,
- Openness in receiving feedback.

If any problem occurs during your study, your first steps should be lead to your supervisor. It is likely that together you will find solutions to the above problems.

## 4 . PUBLICATIONS

Your own scientific research is the most important thing you focus on during your study. Be ambitious when planning your research. More average publications cannot match one good and more good ones cannot match one excellent. So try to publish in a quality journal recognised by the scientific community in your field. If you are unsure about the quality of a given journal, [lists of quality journals](#) based on peer-review ratings or journal citations rankings will help you. By targeting your research at quality journals, you will also avoid so-called dubious journals.

Before you submit your article to a journal, you should try to get feedback on your research. You will get this primarily from the supervisor, but also from other colleagues during the presentation at research seminars and conferences. Participation in these events is an integral part of the research process, and thus of the doctoral study. You will get advice and hear objections you will face during the review process in the journal. At ECON MUNI, you can use departmental seminars or [MUES seminars](#) to obtain feedback. Do not be afraid to sign up for a presentation. Achieving the publication of a paper in a quality magazine is a long and demanding process, often accompanied by a number of partial failures and steps back. But do not be discouraged, draw on your experience from older colleagues and do not give up.

When choosing a conference, pay attention to who organises it (ideally a professional company) and its history. Beware of low-quality conferences focused only on the collection of fees. The supervisor can always help you choose the conference. Some conferences publish so-called conference collections, where they publish individual papers. Remember that the publication in the conference collection is not essential; it is only an intermediate step towards your goal, i.e. a publication in a quality journal. The value of the conference lies in the feedback you receive during the presentation of your research and in the contacts you establish at the conference.

## RESEARCH ETHICS

Masaryk University has created a system of ethical rules and principles which are binding for all members of the academic community, professionals and researchers, as well as other employees of the university. The basic ethical requirements are summarized in the [Code of Ethics for Academic and Professional Staff of Masaryk University](#). The basic rules of research ethics at MU are defined by the MU directive [Research Ethics at MU](#).

Doctoral students, as well as other researchers at ECON MUNI, are responsible for the objectivity of the research, they shall respect the principles of authorship and co-authorship, do not commit plagiarism and respect the principles of good citation practice.



# 5. SUPPORT AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

## Study interruption

In case you get into an unexpected life situation, you have an opportunity to interrupt your study. It is possible to interrupt the study if you have met the conditions for enrolment in the following semester and at the earliest after the successful completion of the first semester. Typical reasons for interruption of the study are medical or personal reasons, such as parenthood (maternity or parental leave), or it is possible to interrupt the study until the corrective date of the state doctoral examination or the defence of the PhD thesis. The study is interrupted for the period of whole semesters, while the total period of interruption must not exceed the standard study period. You must re-enrol before you can return to study.

## Support available

ECON MUNI doctoral students have an opportunity to use a wide range of services of all faculty and university services.

### IT services

Access to MS Office 365 is automatically established for all students and employees at MU. You can use various repositories to store data, as well as to back up and archive them.

### Language Learning Centre (CJV)

Do you need to strengthen your language skills, help correct the translation of a professional article or translate a grant application into a foreign language?

### Centre for the Development of Pedagogical Competences (CERPEK)

Are you unsure of your pedagogical competencies and would you like to strengthen and further develop them?. An elaborate mentoring concept is available to you.

### Technology Transfer Centre (CTT)

The MU Technology Transfer Centre helps with the transfer of research results into practice (software, methodologies, results of applied research). CTT also provides advice on intellectual property and ensuring its protection.

### Centre for Assistance to Students with Special Needs Teiresiás

The Teiresiás University Centre is available to students with special needs.

### Counselling Centre / Psychological Support

A psychological counselling service in the form of personal or on-line consultations is available free of charge for MU students. It is intended for students in difficult life situations that complicate their studies.

# ECON MUNI PARTNERS

ECON MUNI is supported by a number of partner companies mainly from the financial, banking and HR management sectors. Partners choose to engage in faculty activities or collaborate on research topics. Detailed information can be found at [www.econ.muni.cz/en/cooperation/contact-us/faculty-partners](http://www.econ.muni.cz/en/cooperation/contact-us/faculty-partners)



# CONTACTS

## **Rector's Office**

Žerotínovo nám. 617/9, 601 77 Brno, tel.: +420 549 491 011

## **Faculty of Economics and Administration**

Lipová 41a, 602 00 Brno-Pisárky, GPS: 49.1935806N, 16.5774303E

## **Dean**

prof. Mgr. Jiří Špalek, Ph.D.

## **Vice-dean for Research and Doctoral Studies**

doc. Ing. Rostislav Staněk, Ph.D.

## **Contact for PhD studies**

tel.: + 420 549 496 693, e-mail: [phd@econ.muni.cz](mailto:phd@econ.muni.cz)

## **Web**

[www.econ.muni.cz/en](http://www.econ.muni.cz/en)

[WWW.ECON.MUNI.CZ/EN](http://WWW.ECON.MUNI.CZ/EN)

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND OTHER STRATEGIC AREAS TO SUPPORT  
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admission@econ.muni.cz  
www.muni.cz/en  
www.econ.muni.cz/en