

How do I participate?

If you have started doing your doctorate after 1 December 2018 and your HEI is a Nacaps partner, you will receive a link via email in February 2021 that grants you access to take part in our online survey.

You can find an overview of our partner HEIs on our website (www.nacaps.de). Is your HEI on the list? If not, you could suggest it to your doctorate office or the management of your HEI!

How much time and effort is required to participate?

Depending on your personal situation, it will take you between 20 and 30 minutes to complete the online questionnaire. The questions will focus mainly on the current status of your doctoral studies, your career targets and life goals.

We would be very grateful if you would also take part in the annual follow-up surveys, since it is these that will provide us the longitudinal perspective on doctoral candidates' careers and life paths.

What happens to your data?

The contact data passed on to us will be used to send invitations to follow-up surveys as part of the Nacaps project. We always save your personal contact information separately from the survey data in a protected area on DZHW's in-house server, and never pass it on to third parties.

Nacaps does not pursue any commercial interests whatsoever. Your contact data can be deleted at any time if you so wish.

Who is behind Nacaps?

Nacaps is a research project of the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) that is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Nacaps is collaborating with a large number of HEIs throughout Germany that are authorised to award doctorates, and we will carry out the survey jointly with them.

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Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



National Academics
Panel Study

The Longitudinal Study of Doctoral Candidates
and Doctorate Holders in Germany

Information for Doctoral Candidates

The Study

Nacaps, the *National Academics Panel Study*, is a new longitudinal study of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders in Germany. Doctoral candidates and doctorate holders throughout the country are surveyed at regular intervals on the study conditions for their doctorates, career aims and professional development, as well as on their general life situation.

The Topics

The aim of Nacaps is to collect comprehensive information on doctoral study conditions and doctorate success, career aims, career paths and general life situations of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders. In this way, the importance of early career researchers for the higher education and science system, and for Germany as a location for innovation, can be examined in a systematic, scientific manner.


Nacaps provides the first-ever detailed depiction of the doctorate landscape in Germany. An overview of the first survey's results (2019) can be found as interactive diagrams in our data portal: nacaps-datenportal.de

Scientific research, HEIs and educational policy are the beneficiaries of this information – and so will you be as a doctoral candidate.


Support us with your participation !

Why you should take part in the Nacaps survey:


You'll be actively supporting a research project.

 As a doctoral candidate, you yourself are carrying out research. Nacaps is a project in the context of higher education research and science studies, directed above all at the scientific community. Support us with your participation – as a colleague!


Your experience will influence future decisions.

 Apart from the scientific community, HEIs and politicians will also use the findings to make evidence-based decisions. They can appraise the effectiveness of services or programmes and thus improve doctorate conditions and support early career researchers more effectively.


You'll help to underpin arguments with facts.

 Working conditions and career paths of early career researchers are the subject of lively public discussion. We will evaluate your answers to our questions in an open-ended way, so we can contribute hard evidence to the debates.


Your personal path counts.

 Whether you're a musicologist or chemist, a scholarship holder or research assistant: studying for a doctorate in Germany takes many forms. Collecting the experiences of each individual doctoral candidate is important in order to reflect this diversity.


You can reflect on your own career.

 You can use the survey as an opportunity to reflect on your own career. The survey findings will be made available in a publicly accessible data portal, giving you an interesting external perspective.

You'll be part of a unique study.

 Our study is the only representative scientific examination of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders in Germany. You can be part of it!

Our thanks.

 As a thank-you to our respondents, we are holding a prize draw for all participants, with attractive prizes.

