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# Project Management for PhDs

A planning template brought to you by Hertz Training for Scientists and Hakuna Matata, Science & Media

Open outline for easy zooming

Magnify element by hovering and press X

Double click to place a comment post-it

Drag the cards from the card stacks onto the appropriate month in the planboard. They will snap to the grid automatically.

When the pile of cards is empty, you can always copy paste the cards which are already on the plan board.

Use the post-its to make notes!  
Double click to edit the text!

**Welcome**

You can use this Mural board to plan and organise your PhD trajectory.

**Quick start**

- 1 Edit the year headings of the plan board and give 'm real year numbers.
- 2 Start by reading the card descriptions in the card repository below.
- 3 Decide what activities you need to do in which month(s) of your project.
- 4 Drag the cards from the Cards Stacks on the right onto your plan board.

**Help**

**Using this template**

You can make a global planning for your whole graduation, so you have a complete overview. Use the legend on the right of the board to get to know the different parts of your study which you have to plan. You can read about them and you can pick an icon from there to drag it onto the planboard. Every month can hold 4 different items.

**Using Mural**

This template is made with Mural. If you don't know the Mural, don't worry it's really easy and intuitive. On top of this page are some reminders of important topics. And throughout this page there are [links to help](#).

Of course you also can go all the way and learn the specifics about Mural by reading these support pages or viewing their instruction videos. Press the question mark in the top right corner.

**Sharing**

You can share this mural with other people with the red share button on top. There are 2 options:

**Visitor link**

This is probably the easiest way, while it will not require to have or create a Mural account. When you send a visitor link, the other person directly has access. You can even make it possible for the other person to make changes if you want. In that case, it's advised to protect it with a password.

**Member invite**

When inviting people to your mural, an account is needed.

**Export to pdf**

Exporting to pdf can be convenient to send someone a snapshot or to create periodical backups.

Fill in the real year numbers:

- month
- change
- add again

## Plan board

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1st year												
2nd year												
3rd year												
4th year												
extra year												

## Tips

- 1 Plan from back to front. You usually know when things need to be ready.
- 2 Start writing ASAP; don't wait until the final results.
- 3 Keep some space in your time schedule; you can use it for opportunities and things that might go wrong.
- 4 Adjust your plan frequently.

Do you want to read more about projectmanagement for PhDs? [Click to see below!](#)

## Card descriptions

NB: page numbers refer to the book 'Projectmanagement for PhD's' (2017)

**Writing (p. 58)**

Writing is a learning process and the sooner you begin the better. The first time is the hardest. The next times you need to write it will be easier. It is best to start writing early in the process, for example by writing a chapter of the thesis which can serve later on as the basis for the theoretical chapter of your book. Also, you could start on describing the set up of your first experiment already, even without having the results yet.

**Teaching (p. 61)**

Teaching is one of the 20 activities for most PhD students. What the teaching entails depends on where you work. Teaching can consist of providing lectures or seminars, drafting and reviewing notes or supervising thesis students and trainees.

**Reading (p. 65)**

Every research project begins with studying information from the professional field. Sometimes this is done in a field and it is even more time to read up on it. It is also necessary for you to explore the research methods.

**Stops (p. 58)**

When getting information through reading or doing experiments, it is very tempting to keep finding new aspects in your research. And although this could provide potentially interesting and beautiful data for your thesis, you need to decide in advance when to stop incorporating new information in your research.

**Courses (p. 60)**

As a PhD student you are obliged to follow a certain number of courses by your graduate school or the faculty or department. But there is also space left to choose some courses for yourself. Furthermore, don't forget about the summer schools and the possibility of foreign work experience.

**Case study or experiment (p.56)**

A key activity of a PhD project is to collect and process research data. This can take different forms in different disciplines. In one discipline it may be called a test, in other disciplines an experiment or a case study.

**Symposia and conferences (p. 61)**

As a rule, you only go to a conference if you are making a presentation. You must therefore ensure that you have a paper or make a poster presentation about your research results or the design of your research.

**Appointments with supervisors (p. 61)**

All thesis writing in this chapter was researched by discussing your planning with your supervisor. He or she can usually help you make a correct estimate of the time that certain activities will take. Keep your schedule in reaching your agreements. It is a big pitfall for both supervisor and PhD student to wait for just too much into the four years that are available.

**Final stage (p. 64)**

For the last stage of your thesis it is wise to plan four to five months. The procedure is slightly different at each university, but it roughly follows. Your thesis will have to pass the reading committee, the doctoral committee, the thesis and the publisher.

**Space (p. 66)**

Usually you then go back to work with renewed energy and often with fresh ideas. Also on another level it is good to build space for doing the planning on a regular basis. This does not mean you have to take this time 'off', but you have to keep it free.

**Vacation (p. 66)**

Do not forget about planning a vacation while you are planning your work. This usually is a rather painful but logical area.

**Risk analysis (p. 63)**

Firstly, perform a risk analysis. Here you make an estimate using the diagram in chapter 2. For risks that have a high chance of occurring and/or for risks with high impact, you must take immediate action.

**Submitting and rewriting a paper (p. 59)**

Once your supervisor/has approved your draft paper you may submit it to a journal. Do not forget to celebrate this success! Unfortunately your submitted paper will not always be accepted by the journal. In the case that it will be accepted, acceptance depends on your writings, which you will need to make in a limited time span.

**Applications for grants (p. 63)**

If you are aiming for an academic career it makes it a reserve time to write a grant proposal at the end of your contract. But be aware of the fact that the different programs have their own dates for submission, only once per year.

**Defense (p. 55)**

Good project management starts with the first result in mind. Even though much is not done yet when you finish it, you know when to finish for a PhD! This will be a manuscript consisting of a couple of chapters with an introduction and a conclusion.

**Abroad (p. 66)**

It could be interesting to spend a couple of months at a foreign institute. Part of your research could be executed in the environment where you might learn new techniques as well as get acquainted with another academic culture than your own.

Select red box on top, 'New Mural from Template' and make your own planning. Don't forget to save.

