

Supervisor guidelines for accepting a potential PhD candidate

The DPInvest PhD programme accepts new students only if they have obtained a prior commitment from a primary supervisor. The commitment means that a supervisor, (together with a secondary supervisor) commits oneself to sufficient supervision for the period of time it takes a student to complete the doctoral thesis (approximately 4 years). In addition to the formal requirements, this also requires regular meetings with the student and co-authorship of the articles that will eventually be part of the final thesis. **This commitment is a crucial element in deciding to accept a student to the programme.** For this, the programme relies heavily on your subjective evaluation of the potential supervisee, your time commitments and the matching of your research interests, therefore a conditional acceptance is not recommended.

Following steps for making a decision of commitment are recommended:

1. Ask for a topic outline of a couple bullet points and a CV. If the topic is not matching your research interests, the best option for both you and the applicant is to find an appropriate supervisor. If you have someone suitable in mind, you are free to recommend that person, but this is not required. If you make a recommendation, please make sure to communicate clearly that this recommendation is not a commitment on this person's behalf.
2. Make sure that the candidate meets the formal criteria (<https://www.utu.fi/sites/default/files/media/DPSoc/2021/Call%20for%20applications%20Spring%202021.pdf>). If you are unsure, ask PhD programme coordinator socpostgraduate@utu.fi
3. If the initial outline is of interest to you, ask for a draft of a proposal of 1-2 pages. At this stage it is often already a good idea to make recommendations to adjust the topic and other important parts (e.g. data, methods) according to your research interests.
4. Make your own subjective evaluation of the skill levels of the candidate. For instance, consider whether the person can reach adequate methodological skills to start working on the empirical parts of their thesis after completing completing the first year of the taught programme (<https://opas.peppi.utu.fi/en/programme/22984>). At this stage, it can be a good idea to arrange a face to face meeting (in person or online) to get to know the candidate better.
5. If the draft is still going in the right direction, ask for a full proposal using the guidelines for your department (e.g. <https://www.utu.fi/sites/default/files/media/DPInvest/Research%20plan%20guidelines.pdf>). Ask for revisions to the extent you are satisfied. Make your commitment only after you have received a final proposal.
6. Sometimes you can be interested in being a secondary supervisor. In this case it is good to already have an idea (or to approach) a primary co-supervisor who is interested in this topic (can evaluate the proposal) and can make a commitment.