PURSUING A CS PHD IN EUROPE AND GERMANY
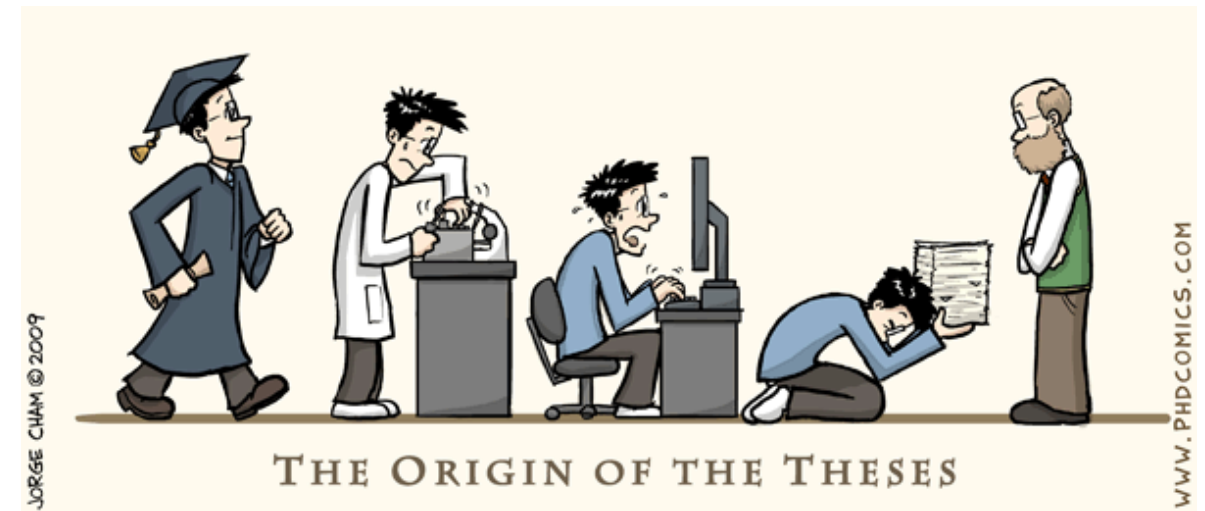
Talk 2: PhD Life and Beyond

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OVERVIEW OF TALK 2

- Funding and Financial Planning

- Starting Your PhD and Research Life

- Publishing and Conferences

- Challenges and Professional Development

- Completing Your PhD

- Career Prospects Post-PhD

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

Types of Funding

- University contract (wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter):
  - TV-L E13 100%: gross 4600€, net 2800€
  - TV-L E13 50%: gross 2300€, net 1500€
- Scholarships (e.g., CSC, DAAD, DFG)
- Industry-sponsored PhDs

Living Costs (per month)

- Vary by city (e.g., Munich vs. Leipzig)
- Rent: 400–500€ single room, 600–800€ apartment
- Food (200–300€), insurance (30€), transportation (50€), mobile contract (30€), registration fee (400€ per semester) etc.

Scholarship vs. Contract

- Scholarship: Tax-free, no social insurance
- Contract: Taxed, includes benefits

Budgeting Tips

- Use student discounts
- Plan for conference travel

STARTING YOUR PHD

Arrival and Settlement

- Finding accommodation (university housing, WGs)
- Administrative tasks (Anmeldung, bank account, resident permit)
- Health insurance (public vs. private)

Integration into Research Group

- Attend orientation programs
- Meet colleagues and supervisors
- Understand lab protocols and resources

Developing Your Research Plan

- Conduct thorough literature review
- Define clear research questions
- Select appropriate methodologies
- Set realistic milestones

PHD LIFE AND RESEARCH

Structuring Your Research

- Set milestones and deadlines
- Regular supervisor meetings
- Balance research and other duties

Collaboration Opportunities

- Within your research group
- Interdisciplinary projects
- International collaborations

Teaching and Supervision

- Teaching assistant duties
- Supervise bachelor's/master's theses
- Develop pedagogical skills

Work-Life Balance

- Manage time effectively
- Engage in non-academic activities
- Utilize university sports/language center

PUBLISHING AND CONFERENCES

Importance of Publications in CS

- Conference papers often valued over journals
- Build your research profile

Writing and Submission Process

- Use collaborative writing tools (git)
- Understand peer review process
- Handle revisions and rejections constructively

Choosing the Right Venues

- Top conferences (acceptance rate < 15%, ACM, USENIX, IEEE)
- Relevant workshops for early-stage research

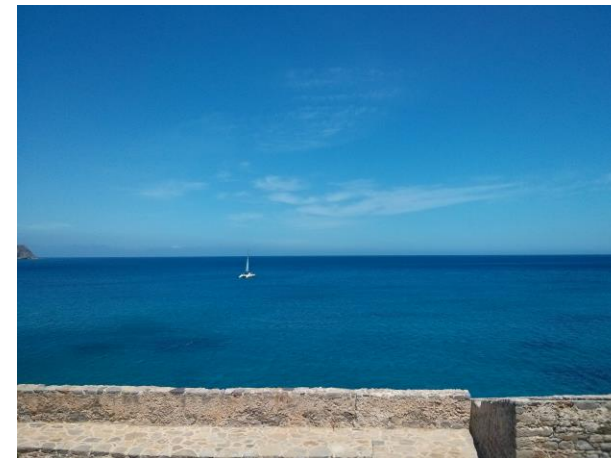# PUBLISHING AND CONFERENCES

Presenting at Conferences

- Prepare effective presentations
- Network with other researchers
- Gain visibility in your field

DSN'18,
Luxemburg

Enjoy conference travel

- Local food and conference banquet
- Conference event
- Additional stay at own cost

DAIS'16,
Crete, Greece

CHALLENGES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Common Challenges

- Research setbacks
- Work-life balance
- Cultural adaptation

Overcoming Challenges

- Seek support (supervisor, peers)
- Practice self-care and mindfulness

Professional Development

- Enhance technical skills
- Develop soft skills (communication, leadership)
- Explore internship opportunities

Networking

- Attend workshops on research skills
- Join professional associations
- Utilize online platforms (LinkedIn, ResearchGate)

COMPLETING YOUR PHD

Timelines

- Average duration: 3-5 years
- Extensions possible if needed

Thesis Writing Process

- Start early, write continuously
- Follow university guidelines
- Seek feedback regularly

Publication Requirements

- Vary by university and department
- Often 3-4 conference papers or 1-2 journal articles

Submission and Defense

- Understand submission requirements
- Prepare for oral defense (disputation)
- Typical duration: 60-90 minutes

CAREER PROSPECTS POST-PHD

Academic Paths

- Postdoctoral positions
- Junior professorships
- Research group leaders

Research Positions

- Government research institutes
- Industrial research labs
- Think tanks and consultancies

Industry Opportunities

- R&D roles in tech companies
- Data science positions
- AI/ML specialists

Entrepreneurship

- Tech startups
- University spin-offs
- Consulting services

CONCLUSION

Key Takeaways

- Plan finances carefully

- Embrace the research journey

- Publish and present your work

- Develop a strong professional network

- Prepare for diverse career paths

Final Advice

- Stay curious and passionate about your research

- Be open to interdisciplinary collaborations

- Embrace challenges as growth opportunities

- Maintain a healthy work-life balance

Q&A SESSION

Time for Your Questions!

Don't hesitate to ask about any aspect of applying for a CS PhD in Germany.

Your questions help everyone learn!