Research policy and grant proposal writing

PhD course

Outline

The aim of the course is to introduce PhD students to the research policy and funding landscape in a comparative perspective, in order to provide them with the information and competences needed for academic careers, particularly for what concern the acquisition of funding.

More specifically, the course will deal with the following topics:

- Introducing PhD students to the socio-political and economic dynamics behind the allocation of public funds for research, to allow them understanding the rationale behind funding allocation and to cope with changes in the funding landscape.
- Presenting the research funding landscape in terms of types of allocation mode (project vs. institutional), allocation mechanism (grants vs. formula vs. negotiation) and understanding their implications for funding acquisition.
- Focusing on the main types of project funds available and their allocation procedures and criteria. The issue of supporting academic careers through specific grant scheme will receive due attention.
- Understanding grant proposal writing as a communicative and argumentative process and learning how to manage this process in the most effective way to acquire funds.

Course structure

The course will be organized in face-to-face lectures and presentations of relevant texts on the subject by students. Additionally, the course will include a group work where PhD students will have the opportunity to analyse a set of grant proposals and to share their experience in a final course workshop.

The course will take place in spring 2024-5.

Lecture 1. Introduction to the course and to economics of science.

Lecture 2. Science, politics and society..

Lecture 3. Introduction to the case study and time for groupwork.

Lecture 4. How public money is distributed.

Lecture 5. Interacting with funding agencies and designing good proposals.

Lecture 6. Proposals as argumentative texts (I).

Lecture 7. Proposals as argumentative texts (II).

Lecture 8. Intermediary discussion of case studies and time for groupwork.

Lecture 9. Final workshop: presentation of the case studies.

Literature and readings

Jongbloed, B. & Lepori, B. (2015). The funding of research in higher education: Mixed models and mixed results. In Souto-Otero, M., Huisman, J., Dill, D.D., de Boer, H., Oberai, A.S., Williams, L.(Ed.) Handbook of Higher Education Policy and Governance (pp. 439-461). New York: Palgrave.

Laudel, G. (2006). The art of getting funded: how scientists adapt to their funding conditions. *Science and Public Policy, 33(7)*, 489-504.

Lepori, B. (2011). Coordination modes in public funding systems. Research Policy, 40(3), 355-367.Lepori B., Jongbloed B., Hicks D. (2023), Handbook of Public Funding of Research, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Lepori, B., Dinges, M., Reale, E., Slipersaeter, S., Theves, J. & Van den Besselaar, P. (2007). Comparing the evolution of national research policies: what patterns of change? Science and Public Policy, 34(6), 372-388.

Myers, G. 1990. *Writing Biology. Texts in the Social Construction of Knowledge.* Madison: The University of Winsconsin Press, chapter 2 "Social Construction in two Biologists' Proposals".

Viner N. Powell, Ph., Green R. (2004), Institutionalized bias in the award of research grants: a preliminary analysis revisiting the principle of cumulative advantage, Research Policy, 33, 443-454.