

PHD BOOT CAMP VIỆT NAM

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

To further improve their career prospects, doctoral candidates require valuable professional work experience. The international PhD boot camp, facilitated by the Ghent University Doctoral Schools, is geared towards enabling doctoral candidates to offer their strongest set of skills and expertise to non-academic partners coming from an array of sectors including **public policy, private and not-for-profit businesses, industry**, etc. To efficiently and purposefully deploy the PhD boot camp for the purposes of, for example, **international consulting, business prospecting, market research and business development**, non-academic partners will be able to commission doctoral candidates to carry out **short-term** (2 to 3 weeks) **intensive international assignments** that have a **well-defined scope** with **clearly formulated objectives** and **expectations**.

The PhD boot camp enhances the potential and thus also the employability of Ghent University's high potentials and ensures the greatest possible **benefits for all parties** involved.

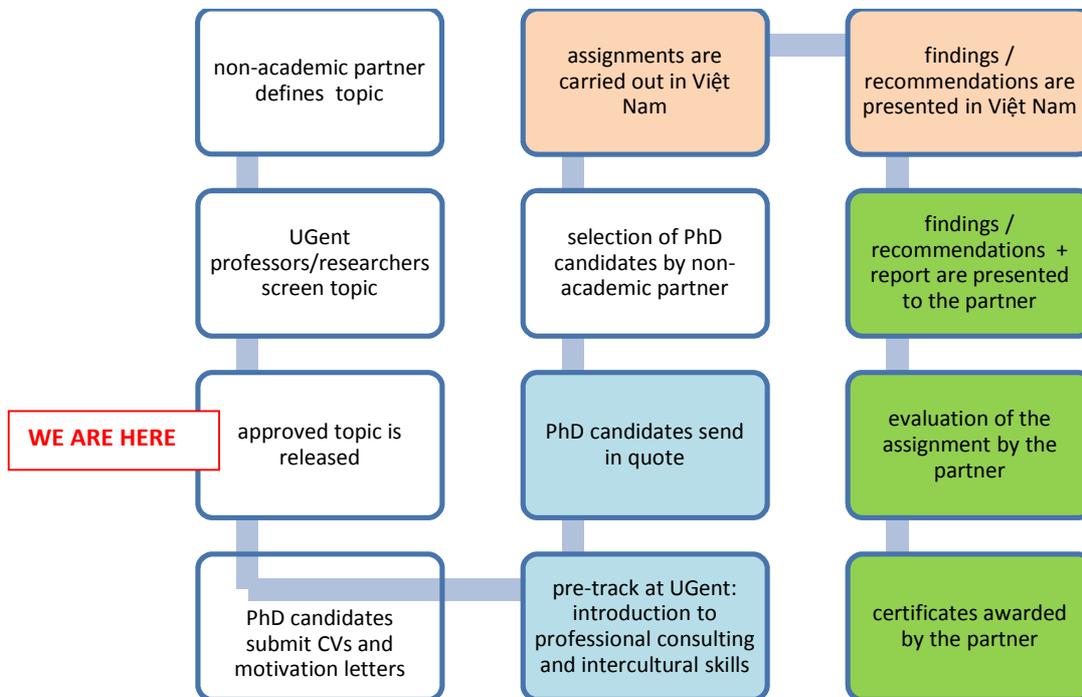
The 4th edition of the PhD boot camp again targets **Việt Nam**. Việt Nam is a **strategic partner** of Ghent University.

The PhD boot camp is developed to deliver tailored solutions to clearly defined problems or needs of non-academic stakeholders. The **feasibility** of the assignments is assessed in close consultation with Ghent University professors, whose area of expertise is closely related to the core of the assignment. The projects are **exclusive** in so far (1) that the partners themselves **select** the candidates from a diverse pool of highly talented applicants and (2) that these assignments are carried out **abroad – in casu Việt Nam**. The Việt Nam experience not only increases the **international mobility** of the candidates but also encourages them to step **out of their comfort zone** and learn to cope with environmental variables. To overcome the Vietnamese language barrier, the candidates will team up with either local Vietnamese PhD candidates coming from the Vietnamese partner universities or with government employees. An additional benefit for the partner is the fast and warranted return on investment: the **funding** of the boot camps is **limited** to travel and accommodation costs, to be paid by the partner. No extra remuneration has to be paid for the work performed by the doctoral student (consulting, prospecting, ...).The boot camps are **fully facilitated** by the Ghent University Doctoral Schools, who also offer the candidates a **pre-assignment training** including **an introduction to professional consultancy skills** and **cross-cultural communication skills**.

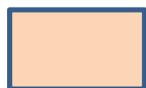
The PhD boot camp Việt Nam is **beneficial to all parties involved**. It is especially useful for conducting non-academic irregular specialized tasks that need to be performed by knowledge experts. Apart from the increased cost effectiveness, these short-term assignments also require less bureaucratic effort and can be executed in a more flexible and timely manner. Not in the least, the boot camp will also allow doctoral candidates to put the skills and competencies they acquired through their research as well as the transferable skills training offered as part of the Ghent University doctoral training programme, into **real-**

world practice. Participation in the boot camps will give them a confidence boost and a means of getting their CV noticed.

PROCEDURE



1/2 week: integrated introduction to professional consultancy skills and cross-cultural communication skills (1 day) and further preparatory work in order to be able to put together a formalised bid **equals 1 seminar in transferable skills in the cluster career management**. This is open to all doctoral candidates expressing an interest the boot camp.



2 weeks: **equals 1 seminar in transferable skills in the cluster leadership and personal efficiency**



1/2 week: finalising report to be presented to the partner and elaborate on the findings / recommendations in a seminar **equals 1 seminar in transferable skills in the cluster communication skills**

PhD candidates participating in the boot camp from start to finish (equalling **3 seminars in transferable skills**) are exempt from further transferable skills training.

ASSIGNMENTS

The provincial authorities of East Flanders will act as patron of the 4th **PhD boot camp** which will focus on the potato production in the province of Lâm Đồng, Việt Nam. The objectives of this boot camp are 1) to gather potato growing, harvesting and storing information in the Đà Lạt region; 2) to formulate real-time solutions to problems faced by potato farmers; and 3) to search for market opportunities for (East) Flemish companies (amongst whom fertilizer producers, suppliers of seed potatoes, and in vitro laboratories).

The PhD boot camp includes assignments for **2 PhD candidates**.

1. The 1st assignment focuses on different aspects of the potato production and management in the province of Lâm Đồng. The PhD candidate is expected to visit approximately 30 potato farms preselected on the basis of their size, different exploitation methods and cultivation techniques. Using a targeted survey, put together by the PhD candidate in close cooperation with Ghent University professors and the Vietnamese partners, insight will be gained into the potato production, with particular attention to the relation between cultivation practices, disease control and end quality. In addition, the potential of the local potato production (actual production vs. prospective production) will be looked into and innovative methods of cultivation (sheltered farming schemes, organic cultivation, etc.) sought for. The information gathered from the survey will allow for a remediation road map to be developed for the benefit of the local growers and partners. The second deliverable is a report aimed at (East) Flemish companies outlining market opportunities (e.g. seed potatoes, fertilizers, crop protection, bio-control, ...).
2. The 2nd assignment focuses on issues of quality. The results of a survey to be conducted among local growers, traders and local consumers will provide insight into the factors influencing the (poor) quality of the locally produced potatoes (preservation techniques, relation with cultivation techniques, etc.), as well as unveil customer expectations with regard to quality requirements. The extent to which companies are familiar with new developments and are open to the introduction of new technologies and products (including storage facilities, processing facilities, ...) will also have to be looked into.

In the short term, the boot camp aims at formulating specific recommendations to individual growers, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, test centers and the People's Committee of the province of Lâm Đồng as well as to the academic staff of Đà Lạt University. These different target groups will be reached through seminars organised by the PhD candidates in close cooperation with the local



authorities. In addition, the findings and recommendations of both PhD candidates will be combined in a report to be delivered to the Province of East Flanders.

In the long term, the results of this boot camp will feed into policy recommendations for sustainable agriculture in Lâm Đồng that can implement innovative knowledge and techniques from Flanders.

This boot camp will furthermore help to develop the existing collaboration between the province of Lâm Đồng and the Province of East Flanders in the field of agriculture.

BUDGET

The provincial authorities of East Flanders will pay all travel and accommodation costs of the PhD candidates as well as the expenses of the Vietnamese buddy accompanying the PhD candidates in Lâm Đồng.

General support in Lâm Đồng will be offered by Đà Lạt University or the local authorities.

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