



## IMISCOE PhD NETWORK

# MEMBERSHIP POLICY AND RULES

28.08.2019

The IMISCOE PhD Network represents an invaluable resource for PhD students in the field of migration studies – both for those who join and play an active role within it, and for those who simply benefit of its activities.

The present “Membership Policy” document has been created following the gradual expansion and structuration of the PhD Network. As membership in the Network is bound to the status of being a PhD researcher, and therefore is limited in time by definition, the 2018-2019 members felt the need to create a set of “guidelines” to guarantee the stability and solidity of the PhD Network, and to ensure that it will continue to thrive as it has been since its inception.

This document is meant to provide guidance for future members, who can obviously feel free to modify the structure of the PhD Network as well as the contents of the present Membership Policy anytime.

## CONTENTS

1. IMISCOE PhD Network structure and functioning	2
2. Working Groups 1/4 – The Workshop Group	3
3. Working Groups 2/4 – The Blog Group	3
4. Working Groups 3/4 – The Networking Group	4
5. Working Groups 4/4 – The Teaching Group	5
6. How to become a member of a Working Group	6
7. How to become a Working Group Coordinator	6
8. The role of the PhD Representative	7
9. How to become the PhD Representative	8
10. Annual Conference fee waivers	9

## 1. IMISCOE PhD Network structure and functioning

The IMISCOE PhD Network aims to strengthen research and network opportunities for doctoral researchers in the field of migration. The PhD Network has several (four) dedicated Working Groups, each with active members who plan and carry out activities relevant for PhD migration scholars. The PhD Network is represented by the PhD Representative and steered by the PhD Network Board. The time and pace of the activities of the PhD Network follow the time of the academic year (September-September).

**WORKING GROUPS** - The PhD Network is composed by four Working Groups: the Workshop Group, the Networking group, the Blog Group and the Teaching Group (see points 2 to 5 for a description of each of them). Nothing impedes the creation of further Working Groups or the erasure of current Working Groups. Each Working Group has a Coordinator (see point 7 for a description of this position).

**PHD REPRESENTATIVE** – The PhD Network is led by the PhD Representative, who is elected by the members of the PhD Network. The PhD Representative coordinates the work of the Working Groups, acts as the contact point between the PhD Network and IMISCOE governing bodies (Director, Board of Directors, Executive board) and manages the budget allocated to the PhD Network (2000 euros). This is a remunerated position (2500 euros per year).

**PHD NETWORK BOARD** – The PhD Network Board is formed by the PhD Representative and the Coordinators of Working Groups, who meet via Skype calls at least three times during the year in order to set the agenda, update each other about the advancement of each Working Group’s activities, to discuss possible issues and to take relevant decisions. This “vertical structure” has been conceived of in this way just to make communication and decision-making easier and faster, considering that members of the PhD Network, with the exception of the IMISCOE Annual Conference, can hardly meet in person during the year due to time and budget constraints. Past experience has taught that always organising Skype calls with all members of the PhD Network can be quite impractical and ineffective. However, this should never occur at the detriment of a friendly, easy-going, informal and collaborative climate that has always characterized the IMISCOE PhD Network. Therefore, the PhD Representative should always be available and easy-to-reach for single members of Working Groups who should always be able to communicate with the PhD Representative via the institutional email address of the PhD Representative ([phdnetwork@imiscoe.org](mailto:phdnetwork@imiscoe.org)) channels at any time, for any issue. Moreover, once the day and time of Skype calls of the board are decided, the PhD Network Board can decide to announce them to the rest of the PhD Network members, for those who are willing to join the Calls to be able to do so.

**COMMUNICATION** – The PhD Network communicates about its activities and developments via its official newsletter sent out by the IMISCOE Network Office (the Secretariat of the entire organization), its official Twitter account (@IMISCOE\_PhD), its Facebook group (IMISCOE PhD Network) as well as through its Blog when relevant. The Facebook group is open and works as a very useful platform for sharing info or for asking advice and recommendations.

## 2. Working Groups 1/4 – The Workshop Group

DESCRIPTION - The aim of the Workshop Group is to organize workshops on relevant topics for PhD students. Usually, the workshops take place during the IMISCOE Annual Conference where two or three workshop sessions are offered. However, this does not mean that the workshops may not occur in other IMISCOE events. Topics are proposed and chosen by the members of the group; they may also choose the topics with the help of a survey, launched among all the members of the PhDs registered in the IMISCOE database, as was already successfully experimented (the Group needs to ask the PhD Representative to ask the IMISCOE Office to send a PhD Network newsletter with the link to the survey, if it wishes to use this tool). The PhD Network Board and the PhD Representative can also participate in the process by suggesting possible topics.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS, TASKS AND DEGREE OF ENGAGEMENT – The number of members of this working group is 4-5 people: 1 Coordinator and 3-4 regular members. Tasks for a regular member include: participating in the discussion of topics for the workshops and its organization, suggesting relevant scholars according to the topics chosen for each workshop, invite these scholars and keep in touch with them, discuss with them the form of the workshop, and the like. A regular member is highly advised to participate in all the skype calls set by the Coordinator. The absence should be justified. Usual absences without justification and non-participation are reasons to invite the member to step out of the group by the Coordinator or by the PhD Representative.

The Coordinator guarantees that the group has the appropriate number of members involved, that the workshops are organized and that all the members contribute and are involved on that. For that, he/she needs to carry out tasks at point 7. The Coordinator is also an active member suggesting topics and speakers; he/she might be called to made final decisions on that, when needed. During the Annual Conference, the Coordinator ensures that the workshops unfold as expected, together with other members (for instance, by welcoming attendees and speakers, by being available for Q&A during the workshop sessions and about the Workshop Group and the PhD Network, by distributing and collecting the evaluation forms and informative flyers, etc.). As the other Coordinators, s/he has a place in the Board, which decides on matters concerning the whole PhD Network. In practice, this means attending Skype meetings of the Board (around three a year) and taking up a variety of small tasks.

## 3. Working Groups 2/4 – The Blog Group

DESCRIPTION – The IMISCOE PhD Blog represents an opportunity for PhDs to showcase research results and share insights from their research project, by “training” academic blogging competencies – with academic blogs becoming a significant trend in academia for engaging with the wider public. It serves also as a platform for sharing experiences and advice on academic and PhD life. The content includes short and easily readable theoretical and empirical contributions, suggestions from seniors on how important steps in academia, interviews with scholars, reports of conferences.... The Blog is currently hosted on Wordpress: <https://imiscoephdblog.wordpress.com/>. Members (Coordinator + editors) of the Blog Group curate and edit the blog posts, write Blog posts, suggest topics, overall ensuring that a good pace in the publication of posts is maintained – the rule is at least one post for month, be it written by a member of the group or by an external person (e.g. a senior scholar or other researchers).

## ROLES, TASKS, NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND DEGREES OF ENGAGEMENT –

*Coordinator*- The Blog Group Coordinator is responsible for securing content for the blog, every month, in close collaboration with the editors and writers. This means the Coordinator doesn't (have to) write so much him/herself, but make sure others do – although s/he can write Blog posts if s/he likes. However, the Coordinator fills gaps as they arise, meaning s/he acts as “instant editor” when needed or secure other content when planned content is not realized. Most important is to keep oversight and think ahead of potential future blogs. Setting deadlines, reminders and organizing Skype meetings are part of the “job”. As the other Coordinators, s/he has a place in the Board, which decides on matters concerning the whole PhD Network. In practice, this means attending Skype meetings of the Board (around three a year) and taking up a variety of small tasks. Not evenly divided over all weeks, on average, being Coordinator of the Blog group takes one or two hours a week.

*Editor* - In consultation with the Blog group Coordinator and writers, an editor agrees on specific deadlines for Blog content, which s/he edits and posts on the blog. Ideally, s/he is a good writer (though the Blog is first and foremost a “learning space” for both writers and editors), with a good command of English, and a good communicator, as his/her comments on drafts should be easy to understand for writers. S/he is able to quickly send drafts back and forth, on set times (agreed upon well in advance). On average, s/he will be responsible for the editing of two or three blog posts a year. An editor may also write Blog posts if s/he wants to.

*Writer* – A member of the Blog group writes a minimum of two blog posts a year, but preferably more. A writer stays in touch closely with the editor, as to safeguard the keeping of deadlines. Besides, any PhD “external” to the PhD Network who is simply willing to write a blog post of 800 words, without being involved any further, can do so - as long as the topics s/he proposes appeal to PhD's in the field of migration. S/he can propose her/his post by contacting the Blog group, via the email address [imiscoephdblog@gmail.com](mailto:imiscoephdblog@gmail.com). The Coordinator is then responsible to accommodate the writer with an editor; whoever wants to do it/has time for it should do it - though the Coordinator may also act as editor. It is the duty of the editor who volunteers or of the Coordinator to be in touch as soon as possible with “external authors” who propose their blog posts.

The amount of time that these tasks take entirely depends on the size of the group. Ideally, the Blog group should be formed by 1 Coordinator, 3 editors and 5 writers – although writers/editors can overlap. This is meant to ensure that curating the blog does not translate to too much work for each member. At the end of one's experience as a member of the Group (see point n.6), one may still occasionally contribute to the Blog – but this should not be at the detriment of providing enough room to younger and less experienced researchers to train their academic blogging skills within the “safe space” provided by the IMISCOE PhD Blog.

## 4. Working Groups 3/4 – The Networking Group

DESCRIPTION – The Networking group organizes the ‘Intergenerational Feedback’ (IF) session at each Annual Conference, with the aim of bridging PhD students with experienced scholars for constructive feedback and mentoring on their own research projects in an interdisciplinary and international context. Besides the sessions

organised during the conference, we encourage long term collaborations between seniors and juniors that can continue beyond the IMISCOE events. More generally, the Networking group intends to give the possibility to all PhDs (inside and outside the member institutes of IMISCOE) to network around specific topics and/or within their regions by facilitating connections and exchanges among them.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS, TASKS AND DEGREE OF ENGAGEMENT – The Networking group consists of one coordinator and maximum 8 members (including the Coordinator). The Coordinator has an overarching role to make sure all tasks are fulfilled and that the group keeps the timeline ahead of the Annual Conference where the IF session takes place. The Coordinator is also the contact point between the Networking group and the PhD Representative: As the other Coordinators, s/he has a place in the Board, which decides on matters concerning the whole PhD Network. In practice, this means attending Skype meetings of the Board (around three a year) and taking up a variety of small tasks. The Coordinator should make sure meetings take place regularly. The group always meets over skype and normally members take turns in creating doodles for organising the meetings. During the meeting practical things in relation to plan the IF sessions are discussed, e.g. prepare the related Call for participation, invite senior scholars, invite speakers, prepare flyers etc. We usually meet once a month for max. 1h. Active members are expected to attend all meetings and fulfil some of the practical tasks related to preparing the IF session. Members are always welcome to propose new ideas and organise further activities to encourage and facilitate networking among young scholars (organise seminars, webinars...).

## 5. Working Groups 4/4 – The Teaching Group

DESCRIPTION – The aim of this group is to provide a platform for discussing and reflecting about ways PhDs can exchange, learn, inspire and motivate each other to improve their teaching and mentoring skills – numerous PhDs are or will be engaged in teaching activities, although they have little opportunity to reflect on this part of their academic lives. The group focuses in particular on teaching that deals with migration and integration, although it is not restricted to teaching in these thematic fields.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS, TASKS AND DEGREE OF ENGAGEMENT – Ideally, there should be at least 3 and maximum 5 members (including the Coordinator). The Coordinator is responsible for performing various coordinating tasks as well as for carrying out the tasks mentioned below. As the other Coordinators, s/he has a place in the Board, which decides on matters concerning the whole PhD Network. In practice, this means attending Skype meetings of the Board (around three a year) and taking up a variety of small tasks.

Members in the Group have to respect the following rules in order to be considered as members:

1. *Attend Skype meetings*: In case you cannot attend, you have to give notice in time and justify non-presence. You have to be present at least 3 times per year.
2. *Complete tasks*: Please note that tasks are subject to constant change, but they may include: organizing workshops on teaching issues, writing emails, conducting surveys among network members, creating a platform open to all interested participants, generating ideas for future research/articles on teaching issues.

## 6. How to become a member of a Working Group

CONDITIONS - Any PhD student interested in the IMISCOE PhD Network is welcome to become a member of the IMISCOE PhD Network, regardless of the University or Institute where he/she is based (i.e. it does not matter whether his/her university of institute is or not an IMISCOE Member Institute). Members can stay in a Working Group for a period up to two years, so as to ensure turnover and openness. Members in Working Groups do not receive forms of financial compensation/remuneration, and take part in the performance/organization of activities and tasks on a voluntary basis. However, there are *minima* terms of engagement to respect once one becomes a member of a Working Group. These rules are specific to each Working Group (see above); if a person who joined a Working Group fails to respect them, by not being active, not taking part in decisions and not performing any task, then s/he cannot be considered a member anymore and the Coordinator may decide whether to replace her/him and post an announcement about a vacancy.

RECRUITMENT AND APPLICATION - Becoming a member of the IMISCOE PhD Network means joining one of the four Working Groups, when vacancies in these groups are available. Vacancies are generally announced on a yearly basis, at the PhD Assembly taking place every year at the IMISCOE Annual Conference (June/July) – although, when needed, they can be announced throughout the year in moments different than the PhD Assembly via the IMISCOE PhD Network communication channels (Facebook group, Twitter account, Newsletter, IMISCOE PhD Blog). In order to apply, the candidate must send a short motivation statement (max. 250 words) to the PhD Network's official email address – [phdnetwork@imiscoe.org](mailto:phdnetwork@imiscoe.org). Regular members (editors/regular in the case of the Blog Group) are selected by the Working Group Coordinator, soon after s/he is appointed (generally in September), with the advice of the former Coordinator if needed.

Limiting the number of members in each Working Group is motivated by the need to ensure that the Working Group members are all active (i.e. no sleepy members) and that the Working Group is effectively manageable: groups with too many members are hard to manage, as past experience taught us. This, in turn, motivates the need to limit the membership to a duration of two years: given the relatively small size of each Working Groups, this time-limit ensures enough turnover and openness.

## 7. How to become a Working Group Coordinator

ROLE - The Coordinator is responsible for connecting all the members of the group and sets the working agenda for that year, with the agreement of the group's members. The working agenda includes the number of expected skype calls, the activities to be realized, the organization and division of labour (see details at point 2 to 5 concerning each Working Group). The Coordinator is a member of the PhD Network Board and, therefore, takes part in the Skype calls of the Board (around three a year) and takes up a variety of small tasks. (see point 1). At the beginning of each year, the Coordinator appoints new members based on the applications received (see point 6).

DURATION - The position of Coordinator has a one-year duration (September – September). After stepping down from his/her position, the Coordinator can become a regular member of the workshop group for one more year

(except if the position of Coordinator was assumed on his/her second year in the working group). If s/he joined the Working Group directly as the Coordinator during his/her first year of membership, s/he can act as Coordinator also for his/her second year of membership if s/he wishes to and if the other members agree and there are no other candidacies (see below). It would be highly valued if the previous Coordinator functions as a “mentor” during the turnover of the group to the next year, so as to ensure continuation of tasks, as well as helping the new Coordinator to have a good start.

RECRUITMENT AND APPLICATION – After the Coordinator steps down, s/he can be replaced by another member of the Working Group who has already been a member during the previous year, if the other members agree. If more than one member would like to act as Coordinator, then an application process is put in place: each of the candidates writes a motivation statement (400 words max.), specifying possible plans and novel ideas for the Working group, together with a short bio (200 words max.). If the Coordinator had joined the Working Group directly as Coordinator during his/her first year of membership, s/he can act as Coordinator also for his/her second year of membership if s/he wishes to and if the other members agree and there are no other candidacies (see above). In the case there are other members of the Working Group interested in becoming Coordinator during their second year of membership, then the above-described application process is put in place. If none of the Working Group’s members would like to act as Coordinator, then the vacancy concerning the role of Coordinator is announced at the PhD Assembly taking place every year at the IMISCOE Annual Conference (June/July). External candidates must apply by sending a motivation statement (400 words max.), specifying possible plans and ideas for the Working group, together with a short bio (200 words max.) to the PhD Network’s official email address – [phdnetwork@imiscoe.org](mailto:phdnetwork@imiscoe.org). Candidates applying for the Coordinator position, additionally, present themselves in a Skype call with the other candidates, the former Coordinator (i.e. the one who is about to step down) and the PhD Representative. The former Coordinator (i.e. the one who is about to step down) is in charge for the selection process of the new Coordinator, with the advice of the PhD Representative. This should guarantee a smooth transition as well stability and continuity.

## 8. The role of the PhD Representative

The position of PhD Representative has a duration of one year (September – September). Throughout the year, the PhD Representative must:

1. Attend the two meetings of the IMISCOE Board of Directors - i.e. IMISCOE’s most important decision-making body gathering representatives from all IMISCOE member institutes. The first meeting takes place at the IMISCOE Spring conference, the second at the IMISCOE Annual Conference. Travel costs are reimbursed on both occasions.
2. Write the Mid-term Report concerning the PhD Network’s activities (by January) and the Annual Report concerning the PhD Network’s activities (by May), and submit it to the IMISCOE Network Office.
3. Be in constant contact with the IMISCOE Network Office and communicate with the IMISCOE Director concerning decisions concerning the PhD Network that require the approval of the Governing Bodies (e.g. budget issues, special requests...).

4. Brief the PhD Network Board and members about relevant developments concerning PhDs in IMISCOE and implement a strategy in order to preserve/enhance (if need be) the role and presence of PhDs in IMISCOE.
5. Supervise the advancement of Working Group's activities by organising skype calls with the PhD Network Board and by regularly keeping in touch with Working Group's Coordinators. The PhD representative is responsible for setting the calls, communicating the agenda to be discussed and writing the minutes of these calls.
6. Be in touch with, exchange with, advance requests to the IMISCOE Training Committee (which is in charge of organizing the PhD Summer School).
7. Manage and take decisions regarding the use of the budget of the IMISCOE PhD Network (2000 euros): it can be used for the organization of PhD Workshops (e.g. reimbursing a taxi ride or an extra night for a speaker), or the PhD Network's dinner on the first evening of the Annual Conference). This budget also serves to reimburse the travel costs involved in attending the IMISCOE Board of Directors.
8. Supervise the organizational and logistical aspects of the PhD Network's activities (PhD Assembly, workshops, IF session) at the IMISCOE Annual Conference, by ensuring regular communication with both the Conference organisers and the IMISCOE Network Office.
9. Chair the PhD Assembly organized every year at the Annual Conference: explain the activities and functioning of the PhD Networking and advertise vacant positions in Working Groups (see points 6 and 7).
10. Supervise the overall recruitment process (see points 6 and 7) and ensure a smooth transition to the following year.
11. Be available and easy-to-reach for all members of the PhD Network who may have issues/needs, and be ready to respond to the enquiries arriving by email at the PhD Network's email address ([phdnetwork@imiscoe.org](mailto:phdnetwork@imiscoe.org)).
12. Contribute to spread news and contents about the PhD Network's activities: write the Newsletter (by putting together contributions from Working Group's Coordinators on the activities of their respective Groups and adding further news if needed), post info on Twitter and on the Facebook group about new Blog posts or the activities organized at the Annual Conference, write in conjunction with the Coordinators when applicable) the texts concerning the PhD Network's for the IMISCOE website and the Annual Conference website.
13. Manage, together with the PhD Network Board, the decision-making process regarding the allocation of fee waivers for the Annual Conference (see point 10) and, if there is the possibility, negotiate with the IMISCOE Director the number of fee waivers to be allocated to the PhD Network each year.

## 9. How to become the PhD Representative

The PhD Representative is elected each September by all members of all Working Groups (i.e. regular members + Coordinators). Anyone can apply – either a PhD who has already been a member of the PhD Network, at the end of his/her first of year of membership, or a PhD who has not been previously involved in the PhD Network and wishes to join the PhD Network by directly becoming the PhD Representative.



Candidates must apply by sending a short bio (250 words) and a motivation statement (600 words) explaining 1) why the person is suitable for the job; 2) what is her/his interest; 3) concrete proposals and ideas for the further enhancement of the PhD Network, or for improving the implementation of the PhD Network' activities.... Each candidate presents' him/her self during a Skype call taking place in September with all the members of all Working Groups (not just the Coordinators, but the entire PhD Network), who can then anonymously express their vote via a doodle form. The two former PhD Representatives (i.e. the one who is about to step down and the person who acted as PhD Representative two years before) will count the votes, ensure the transparency of the procedure and announce the result.

If an "internal" candidate (i.e. a PhD who has already been a member of the PhD Network and applies as PhD Representative at the end of his/her first of year of membership) is not elected, s/he can obviously remain a member of the Working Group s/he was a member of during his/her first of year of membership, if s/he wishes to. If an "external" candidate (i.e. a PhD who has not been previously involved in the PhD Network and directly applies as PhD Representative) is not elected, s/he can become a member of one of the Working Groups if s/he wishes to – even if this may entail exceeding the max. size of a Group: the Coordinators and the concerned person will discuss and take a decision on how to best solve the issue on a case-by-case basis.

After the new Representative is appointed, the former Representative prepares the transition by passing to the new PhD Representative all the materials, explaining all rules and procedures that the PhD Representative has to respect within IMISCOE, as well the tasks involved in the role. Additionally, the former Representative will guarantee that s/he will be there for the first months, so as to ensure that the new Representative can count on her/his presence and advice, should there be issues which the new Representative does not know how to handle yet.

## 10. Annual Conference fee waivers

IMISCOE sets a specific number of fee waivers for the PhD Network members, to attend the Annual Conference. The number may vary, depending on the IMISCOE Director's decision. The orientation of the Director, though, is to keep their number quite low, as this represents quite a significant expense for the IMISCOE Office. One of these fee waivers is reserved t the PhD Representative; the others are to be distributed among Working Groups' members. Priority is given to the Coordinator to compensate him/her for his role, followed by the regular members depending on personal situations – when a person cannot be reimbursed by his/her university, but has devoted many energies to the activities of his/her Working group, then he/she is entitled to the fee waiver. The Coordinator of each Working Group, together with the Group members and with the PhD Representative will decide how to allocate the fee waivers.