# ATTR Guide for PhD Fellows

ATTR is a highly interdisciplinary environment. Different academic fields have specific traditions and ways of writing, which implies challenges with regard to giving and receiving feedback. Respondents should be respectful towards other fields, while at the same time trusting that they are able to contribute valuable perspectives from their own fields and expertise. Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research is becoming increasingly important, both in the universities and in the dissemination and use of academic insights in society. Your participation in ATTR will help building important competence.

## 1. PhD Seminars

Central to all ATTR seminars are the PhD fellows’ presentations of papers based on their dissertation work, with prepared responses by fellow PhD researchers. This activity is intended to promote academic quality and expediency to the fellows’ research, and also to prepare for future work-life within and outside of the academia. The seminars aim to develop writing and presentation skills, abilities to identify and critically discuss issues of method and analytical perspectives. They also provide opportunities to build interdisciplinary networks.

 Given the interdisciplinary nature of ATTR, the focus of discussion will be primarily on methodological matters and interdisciplinary insights, which promotes important skills both for the dissertation research and for different future career options. The PhD seminars pursue these learning goals:

Each participant will be assigned two papers to respond to. We aim to distribute the papers along with the list of groups/presenters/respondents approximately three weeks before the seminar. Participants submit their written responses to the ATTR Head of Administration a few days before the seminar.

**Paper presentation sessions**

Each session in the PhD seminar lasts up to 75 minutes. The time is provisionally divided in this way:

* Presentation of PhD paper, 10–15 minutes
* Two prepared responses, 5–10 minutes each
* Open discussion for the remaining time

All PhD fellows are expected to have read all papers in their seminar group and to prepare written responses to two of these. These written responses are submitted to the ATTR administration in advance of the seminar. If, for some reason, the respondent should be prevented from appearing in the seminar, the written response may be read by the group leader as a backup solution. Normally, however, the responses are orally presented by the respondent during the discussion. In addition, the response would preferably be communicated (perhaps in edited form) in writing to the presenter after the seminar.

**Presenting a paper**

Points to consider when preparing your presentation: Make sure that you introduce your project in such a way that the audience understands its main points and challenges, especially with regard to method. Remember that time is limited; the more precise you are, the more time for valuable responses from your interlocutors. It might be a good idea to time your presentation before the seminar, in order to keep the time limits. If you wish to use a power point presentation or handouts, please contact the ATTR administration.

**Offering a response**

Please make sure to respond respectfully, providing affirmative as well as critical comments as you see reasonable. If possible, be specific in your praise as well as in your challenges. Try to approach your interlocutor on her or his own terms, but also to establish an outside view of the presented paper. You are expected to focus on method and analytical approaches.

## 2. Plenary sessions

PhD members are encouraged to take actively part also in discussion in plenary sessions, and to involve academically in the topics presented during the lectures and presentations. Two requirements are designed to promote this interaction.

**Mandatory reading**

The lecturers and presenters during the seminar will provide short lists of mandatory reading for each theme. PhD fellows are obliged to read these texts and to reflect on how the research, and especially the methods and analytical frameworks presented there, might be relevant for their own thesis work.

**Short written reflection**

Each PhD fellow is obliged to select one or two items from the list of mandatory reading, and to write a short text reflecting on how the research, and especially the methods and analytical frameworks presented there, might be relevant for their own thesis work. The document should be 1, maximum 2 pages long. It shall be submitted to the ATTR office along with the written responses (above), a few days before the seminar starts. These reflections will be distributed to the presenters in the plenary sessions, who may choose to relate to them during their presentations.

**Optional: Questions. Designated observer**

If, during mandatory reading, a PhD fellow wishes to pose questions or make remarks to the read text, it is possible to formulate a sheet of questions and remarks and send it to the ATTR administration ahead of the seminar. These points will be distributed to the relevant presenter.

A PhD fellow producing the short, written reflection (above) may develop a particular interest for the theme of a plenary presentation. If so, one may serve as “designated observer” and occupy an early slot for response during the plenary. Members that wish to do so, should write an email directly to the scientific director directly and announce their wish to serve as “designated observer”.