



EUA-CDE
EUA Council for Doctoral Education

Fostering a Quality Culture in Doctoral education

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Overview

1. Introducing EUA-CDE
2. Towards a quality culture
3. Quality culture in Doctoral Education
4. Some specific aspects of QA in doctoral education
5. Some final messages



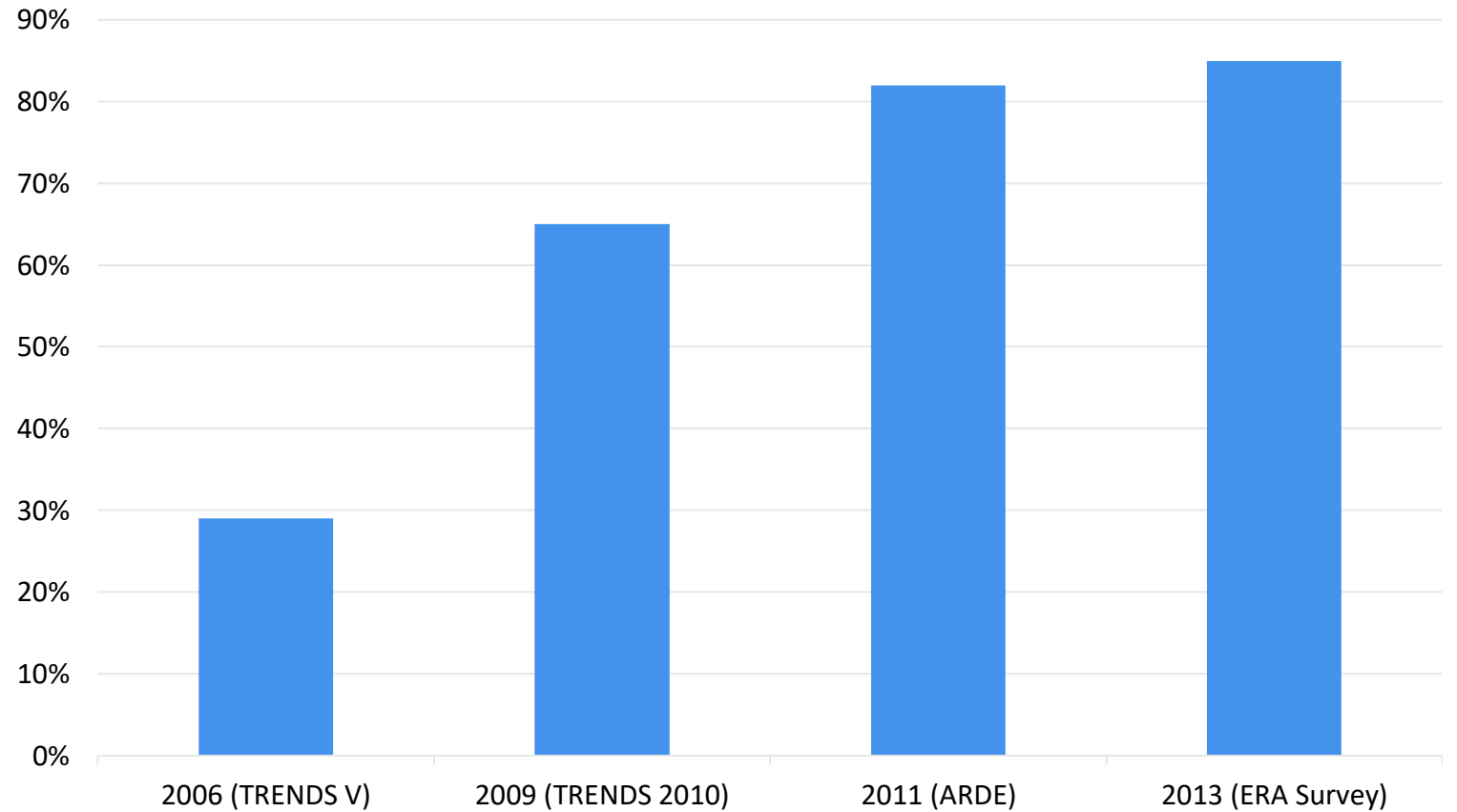
EUA-CDE

The European voice for doctoral education

- ***Launched*** in 2008 by the European University Association, ***celebrating*** our 10th anniversary in 2018
- ***Bringing together*** a community of academic leaders and professionals from more than 230 universities in over 30 countries
- ***Working on*** doctoral education policies and good practices of common interest to our members



The rise of the doctoral school



Sources:

[TRENDS V](#), [TRENDS 2010](#), [ARDE](#) and [ERA Survey](#)



Fundamentals remain the same...

Definition “Doctoral studies are training through independent research under supervision aiming at creating new knowledge, leading to a doctoral degree.”

Principle “core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research” *Salzburg Recommendation*.

1. Doctoral education rests on the practice of research
2. Doctoral candidates must be allowed independence and flexibility
3. Doctoral education must be developed by autonomous and accountable institutions

Source (definition):

Jørgensen, T.: Doctoral Education, in: Encyclopedia of International Higher Education...



... but rising expectations and new challenges

‘Taking Salzburg Forward’ (2016) reflects a consensus on **new challenges and rising expectations for doctoral education:**

1. Developing an ethos of research integrity
2. Harnessing the digital transformation
3. Fostering international collaboration
4. Contributing innovative research to society

Source:

EUA-CDE, 2016, [Taking Salzburg Forward](#)



Why do we need quality assurance in doctoral education

- Dependency between doctoral candidate and supervisor leads to increased institutional responsibility
- The future of the doctoral candidate is related to the quality of doctoral education
 - Career depends of the quality of the research of the PhD candidate
 - Doctoral candidates need the appropriate capacities and experiences for their future career
- Accountability to the society
 - Funds need to be invested wisely

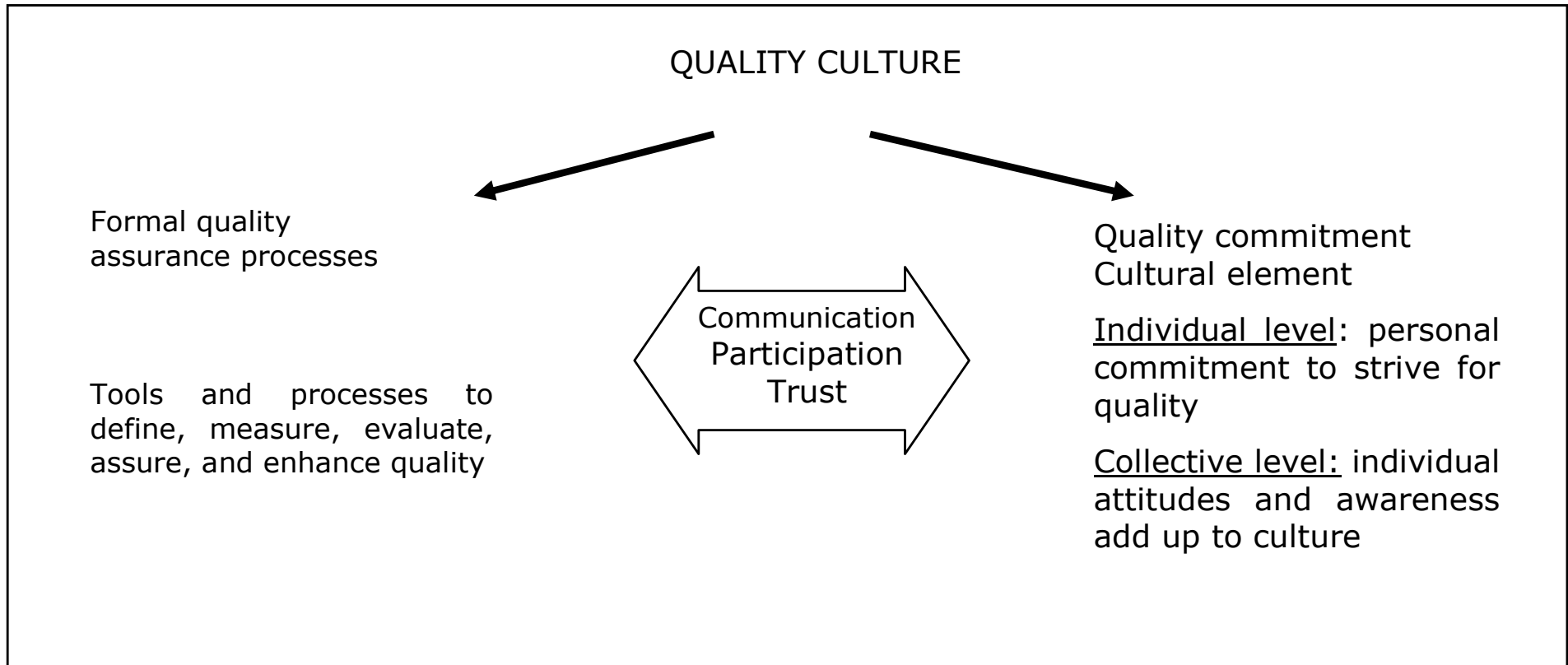


Some principles of Quality Assurance in HE.

- Main responsibility for QA lies with the institutions
- Context sensitive (institutional and disciplinary diversity)
- Fitness for purpose approach
- Enhancement oriented
- Transparency and co-operation

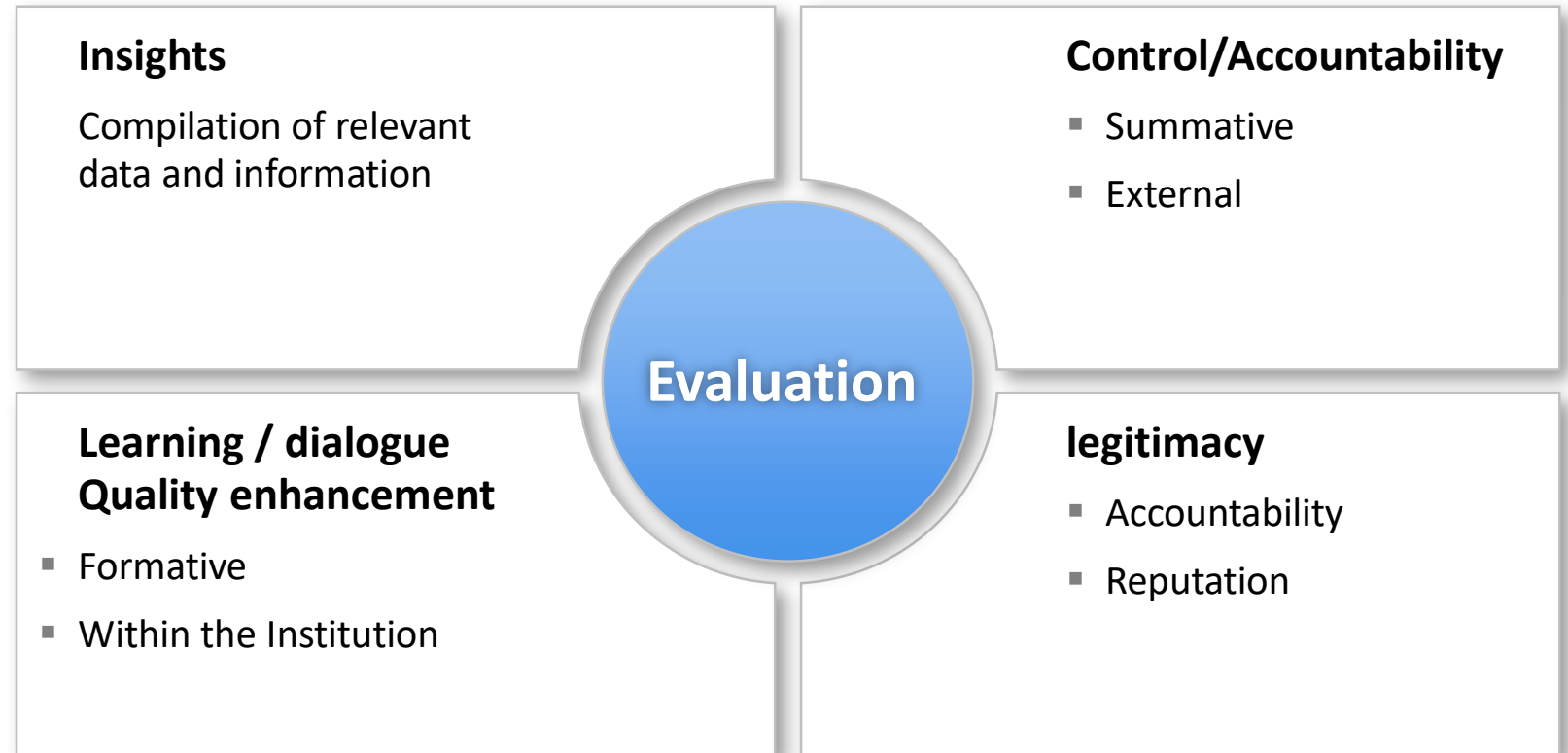


Quality Culture





The two functions of evaluation



Stockmann 2009: «Evaluation, eine Einführung», UTB.



Principles of quality-culture

- Aim for improved quality, not just compliance
- Adapt to context
- Address the procedural and cultural aspects
- Balance formal and informal elements
- Invest in follow-up actions
- Communicate

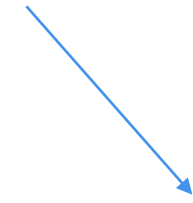


3. Quality culture in Doctoral Education

Doctoral education



Research



Education





„Secret quality- assurance“ in Doctoral education

Wilson, L., & Sursock, A., 2010, p. 29 - 44,
“Reform in European Higher Education with a
focus on quality assurance and the changing
nature of doctoral education”, in RIHE
International Seminar Reports, No. 14,
Hiroshima University. Additions A.H.

How is quality assured in doctoral education?

- **Supervision**
- Professional development for supervisors.
- Agreements between doctoral candidate, supervisor and institution.
- Standards of the process of thesis defence.
- Standards of access, recruitment and selection.
- Research integrity and research ethics.
- Monitoring progress of doctoral candidate.
- Flexible and optional transferable skill training.
- Support for internationalisation and mobility.
- Monitoring indicators like „time to degree“, completion rate or tracking doctoral graduates.



Who assesses doctoral education

1. Doctoral education is targeted by **various assessments due to its nature as both research and education** (Institutional audit and programme accreditation systems)

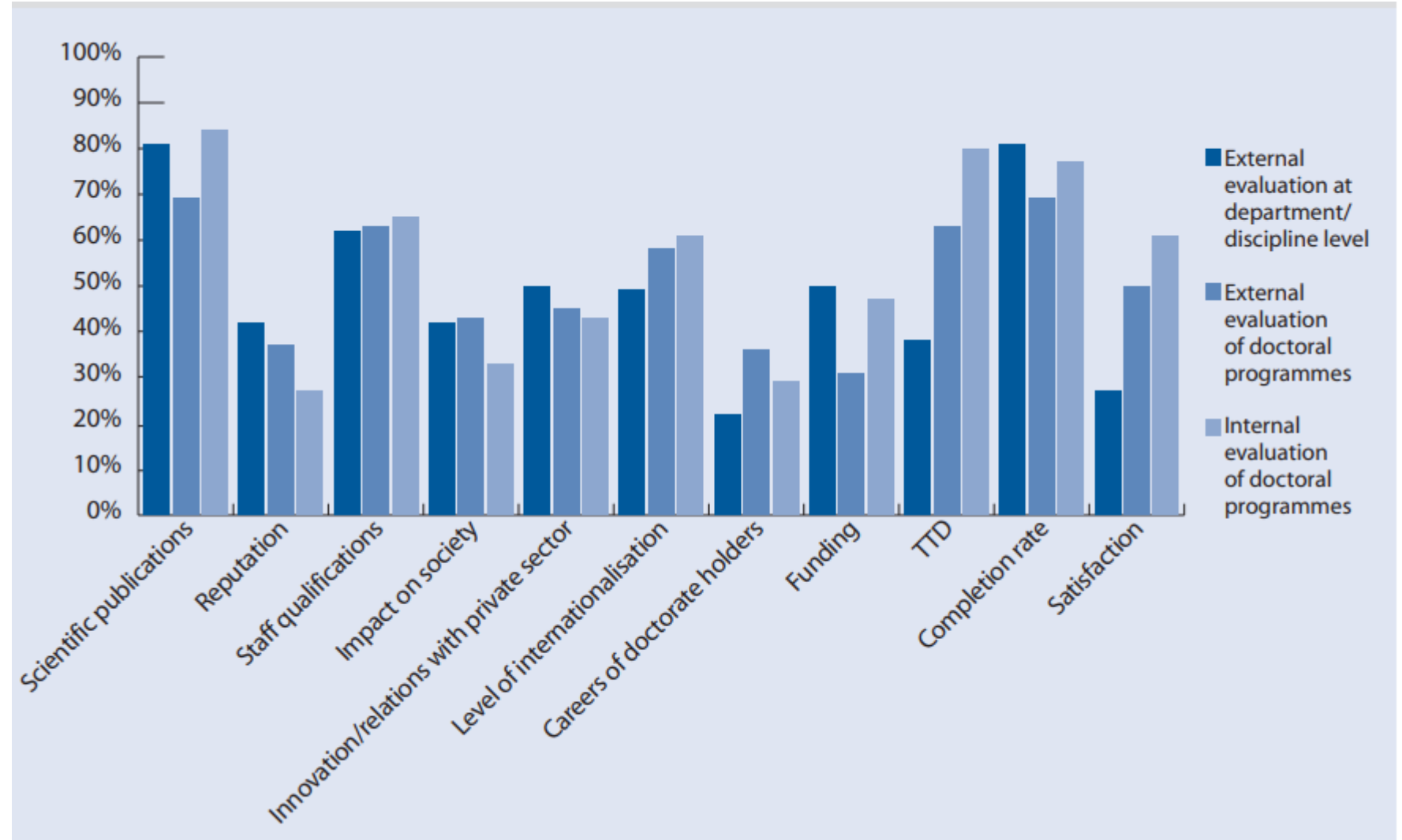
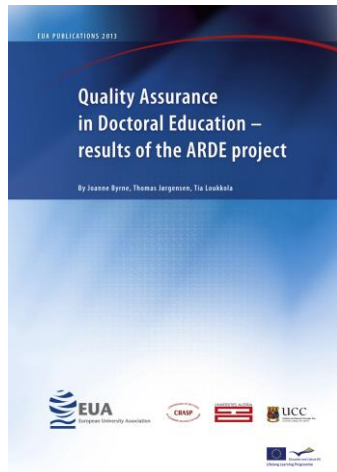
2. **Research assessments** (like the REF in UK) can sometimes include doctoral education

3. **External funding:** Funding agencies assess doctoral education sometimes as well

→ «Overassessment»?



Diversity of Indicators





Supervision

How to engage staff?

Carrots and sticks Formal tests to become supervisor (Sweden)

Disqualification (UK)

Prize for best supervisor

Bonus (the Netherlands)

How to increase Involvement?

Peer learning

Supervision teams

Involvement of staff in drafting guidelines

Supervision record part of promotion procedure

Train the supervisor!



Career development

Career development

- In many European countries, the vast majority of doctorate holders have careers outside academia
- The main outcome of doctoral education is no longer the thesis, but the doctorate holder
- This means that universities have a responsibility to facilitate the transition to the labour market
- The issue of skill training has become more important

→ However: Research remains in the center of the PhD!



Career development

Career Tracking

- Tracking Populations in individual institutions are too small to have significant results in terms of employment
- ... But institutions can get an idea about typical careers and employers
- Surveys at system level can be useful (UK, Flanders) –but populations are still small
- Time: Success after 1 year, 2 years, 5 years?
- What is a successful career?



Skill training

Evaluation of skills courses

Challenge:

- Satisfaction dependent on expectations
 - Do doctoral candidates know what they need?
- Risk of being subjective

Again: Fit for purpose: Quality depends also on context.



Some final messages

- The original research remains in the center of doctoral education.
- Doctoral education is a shared responsibility
- Doctoral education automatically includes many aspects of quality enhancement and –assurance, even when it is not always obvious.
- Diversity of doctoral education and doctoral candidates (disciplines, career perspectives, institutions etc.) is an advantage, not a problem.



EUA-CDE

EUA-Council for Doctoral Education

11th EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

Excellence through diversity:

Doctoral education in a globalised world



University of Ljubljana
Slovenia



6 - 8 June 2018



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Thank you for your attention

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