



Transport and Telecommunication Institute

**Guiding Principles for International Joint Supervision of  
Doctoral Dissertations in Transport and  
Telecommunication Institute**

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## 1. Introduction

Strategic objective of Transport and Telecommunication Institute (TTI) is to increase its level of internationalisation. Establishing International Joint Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations will lead to more binding cooperation, and will promote TTI international ambitions.

Joint supervision of doctoral thesis is a mechanism that promotes mobility among doctoral candidates while encouraging scientific cooperation between TTI and foreign research teams. Candidates conduct their research under the oversight of, and with guidance from, a dissertation from local and foreign advisers involved in the program. Working jointly, both advisers provide a full measure of supervision for the candidate.

By providing this policy for the supervision of doctoral dissertations, the Transport and Telecommunication Institute (TTI) and participating departments aim to improve the quality of supervision during doctoral training and provide helpful suggestions to both supervisors and doctoral candidates.

These guiding principles help in the supervision process by offering suggestions on how to establish commitments and responsibilities and how to prevent conflicts and problems in the supervision process through timely clarification of each party's expectations. The guidelines support newly appointed academic staff by helping them to build constructive and positive working relationships with doctoral candidates, which in turn plays an important role in advancing students' academic and career development. Though academic staff who have already served many years as supervisors at the university are familiar with the supervision process, they may find new helpful suggestions in these guidelines.

For doctoral candidates, the document serves as an orientation as they actively shape the student-supervisor relationship and supervision process. They are intended to encourage doctoral candidates to learn how to realistically assess and communicate their own expectations of and needs from the supervision. At the same time, the guidelines provide information on the rights and obligations of both the doctoral candidates and the supervisors.

The Guiding Principles for International Joint Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations:

- were adopted on May 28, 2017 by the Research and Doctoral Council of TTI (RDC TTI), and are deemed voluntary guidelines for initiating, arranging and developing the supervisory relationship.
- have been developed and approbated in the framework of the project ALLIANCE.

## 2. Objectives

In the context of an increasingly globalised research environment, research strategy of TTI, and with a growing demand from faculty and students, it is recommended that the TTI adopt a *cotutelle* policy. The objectives of such a mode of study and of this policy are to provide:

- An opportunity to enrich the research experience of doctoral candidates, including access to the best foreign researchers and best international research experience;
- An exposure to different cultural and scientific environments and as a result, increased student employability;
- A mechanism to enhance cooperation and collaboration between researchers and institutions engaged in a *cotutelle* agreement;
- An opportunity to attract highly-qualified local and international students to TTI for participation in research and, through that, to enhance TTI international profile and reputation.

### 3. Role of doctoral student supervisors

- The role of the supervisors and their relationships with their students are of critical importance and it is accepted that a wide range of successful student-supervisor relationships will exist.
- The main role of the supervisor is to provide guidance, instruction and encouragement regarding the research activities of the doctoral student. Supervisors are sufficiently familiar with the field of research to provide exemplary guidance and/or have a willingness to gain that familiarity before agreeing to act as supervisor. The supervisor is both a pedagogue (teacher) and a mentor. Supervisors have a responsibility to help doctoral students find a balance between needing help and guidance and taking on more responsibility as they develop independence as a researcher and as an early-career professional.
- Supervisors should be available to help doctoral students at every stage, from discussions of methodologies and research philosophies and the formulation of the research topic and research program (including a theoretical or conceptual framework) through to establishing a suitable and manageable research design, and presenting the results for a successful defence and for publications (during and after the research process). Early in the program, the supervisor should inform doctoral students of the phases through which they must pass towards the achievement of their doctoral degree, the approximate amount of time for each phase, the criteria for its successful completion, and any deadlines relating to these phases. Doctoral-level supervisors also are responsible for ensuring the doctoral students' work meets the academic standards and of the academic discipline.
- Supervisor has the qualities necessary to ensure the correct context and support for each of his/her doctoral students:
- The supervisor is an active researcher and has built up a solid reputation. Depending on the length of the academic career and the research area, this can be deduced from scientific publications, citations, invitations to contribute at conferences and successful bids for research funding, amongst other things.

- The supervisor has built up his/her reputation in a research area that is sufficiently related to the area in which the doctoral student is carrying out his/her research, so as to be able to give the necessary supervision.
- The supervisor is responsible for the quality of the research plan of the doctoral student.
- The supervisor ensures close supervision. The supervision includes ample opportunity for the doctoral student to discuss planning, implementation and results of the research with qualified researchers. Research units and supervisors examine how the doctoral student can be offered efficient and high- quality supervision. Regular formal and informal contact moments between the doctoral student, the supervisor and/or the supervisory team are at the heart of good supervision. The contact moments between the doctoral student and the supervisor are laid down in the work agreements made during the annual performance reviews. The concrete tasks of the supervisor and/or the supervisory team are:
  - to help the doctoral student plan, implement and if necessary adjust the research,
  - to help the doctoral student place the research in a broader context,
  - to help the doctoral student interpret and analyse the research results obtained,
  - to encourage the doctoral student to present his/her work, to be present on these occasions on a regular basis and to give the doctoral student feedback on his/her performance,
  - to challenge the doctoral student to think critically about his/her own research work,
  - to introduce the doctoral student to the world of research by (1) involving him/her in research that is being carried out in the research group and (2) by bringing him/her into contact with other researchers within the research area and international network, by for example encouraging him/her to take an active part in conferences and to work at another research institution.
  - to encourage the doctoral student to publish his/her work, to point out publication opportunities and to help him/her prepare for publication. The supervisor and the supervisory team bear a considerable part of the responsibility for the doctoral process and for the publications that arise from the doctoral research. They give the doctoral student as many opportunities as possible to be first (co)author on publications that valorise the work he or she has carried out.
- As a team leader the supervisor ensures that the doctoral student is monitored and coached as a member of the team. This includes, amongst other things, regular performance and career reviews. The supervisor creates a research environment in which fair and honest scientific conduct (e.g. good data management, responsible authorship, avoiding conflict of interest) are the norm. In addition, the supervisor provides clarity concerning the nature of dishonest conduct within the context of the scientific domain. In the event of any problems the (co)supervisor takes suitable action, in consultation with the doctoral student.
- The supervisor together with the doctoral student draws up a plan for the doctoral programme. The supervisor informs the doctoral student about the courses on offer at the TTI and discusses with the doctoral student how to flesh out the doctoral programme. Furthermore, the supervisor makes the doctoral student aware of any

interesting opportunities in the area of additional training or education within and outside the TTI. The supervisor ensures (together with the dean or head of department) that teaching and other duties of the doctoral student are organised so as not to jeopardise the completion of the doctoral degree within the time given and so that, if relevant, these duties remain within the limits of the personnel status of the doctoral student.

- The supervisor is jointly responsible for the efficient progress of the doctoral process. The supervisor encourages the doctoral student to complete his/her thesis within a reasonable timeline.
- The supervisor gives the doctoral student ample notice about any career opportunities after the doctoral degree has been obtained, or refers him/her to the relevant services in this respect.
- The supervisor is jointly responsible for creating a pleasant professional work environment and for the integration of the doctoral student into the research group. This includes taking into account any personal matters that may have an impact on the research.

## 4. Initiation of supervision

Good supervision begins even before the official supervision relationship commences. A potential doctoral candidate should first clarify with the intended supervisor whether it is advisable for him or her to pursue a doctorate, and whether the proposed topic can be managed in a reasonable period. The supervisor's selection of doctoral candidates should be made with great care. Likewise, doctoral candidates should proceed thoughtfully and with due care when initiating a supervision. It is particularly important to consider whether there is a close relationship between one's own research topic and the research fields of the potential supervisor.

Before initiating contact, a potential candidate should carefully consider which member of academic staff would be a suitable supervisor. It is particularly important to give careful thought to whether she or he can give topic-specific feedback on the work and whether the topic falls within the potential supervisor's research interests. One good starting point for finding such information is to visit the TTI website, which provides an overview of supervisors from the research fields.

### *Recommendations for potential doctoral candidates*

Individuals interested in writing a doctoral dissertation should contact the intended supervisor directly and request a preliminary interview. In addition to clarifying the content of the dissertation research during this preliminary meeting, the potential candidate should also discuss mutual expectations about the scope and frequency of the supervision meetings. At this point, it is advisable to ask the supervisor about his or her usual approach to supervision.

### *Recommendations for supervisors*

Before taking up supervision, the supervisor should consider whether there is a close enough relationship between the chosen topic and his or her own research areas, and whether there is sufficient time available to assume additional supervisory responsibilities. It is often difficult to definitively answer the latter question, as even very good supervision does not guarantee a good dissertation. Intensive supervision usually promotes a successful and expeditious dissertation, but a large investment of time in supervising does not always translate into high-quality supervision. Supervisors and doctoral candidates have their own individual expectations with respect to the frequency of meetings, the supervision arrangement and the ideal balance between guidance and independence in academic research. The candidate should discuss these issues before agreeing to become a candidate's supervisor.

When deciding whether to accept a supervisory role, it may be helpful to clarify in advance the potential candidate's academic and research ambitions, as not all doctoral students wish to pursue a career in academia. Consequently, the structure, needs and expectations of the supervisory relationship vary considerably from case to case. Doctoral candidates with career goals directed at professions outside academia will not necessarily expect or require assistance in establishing themselves in the scientific community. On the other hand, doctoral candidates who hope to follow a career path in academia do not usually need contacts in business and political life. In each case, the individual's specific expectations should be clarified at the outset when possible. One helpful approach in this regard is to ask the potential doctoral candidate for a self-assessment of his or her needs with respect to supervision.

#### *The supervisory relationship and admission to a doctoral programme*

After a potential supervisor agrees to supervise a dissertation and the supervisory relationship is established, the doctoral candidate is required to apply for admission to the doctoral programme in accordance of TTI rules on admissions to doctoral programme. All newly admitted graduate students have the opportunity to become a member of the TTI. The prerequisite for membership is a supervision agreement signed by the supervisors, the doctoral candidate and the TTI.

## 5. Supervisors: primary and secondary supervision

The TTI doctoral degree regulations define the supervision framework: the supervision of doctoral candidates is to be carried out by two supervisors.

#### *Principal (main) supervisor*

As a general rule, the principal supervisor is a academic staff of the TTI. As the primary supervisor is mainly responsible for the supervision, he or she must have sufficient time available to carry out the supervision and also work in research areas with enough relevance to the dissertation topic.

The Principal Supervisor takes overall responsibility for the student's research training, the conduct of the student-supervisor relationship and management of the student's research



progress. The Principal Supervisor provides the necessary intellectual and pedagogical advice and support for the student. Supervisors should endeavor to make the student aware of all relevant regulations, policies and codes of practice.

The following are the key responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor:

- Provide guidance and advice in relation to the student's research topic;
- Encourage the student to develop abilities such as initiative, independence and the capacity for critical thinking. These abilities should be developed through the co-operative efforts of the student and supervisor;
- Motivate the student;
- Give advice and guidance whilst respecting the intellectual freedom of the student consistent with the traditions of the university;
- Encourage the student to publish, participate in colloquia, seminars and conferences in accordance with university and disciplinary traditions;
- Offer advice in respect of the selection of taught courses;
- Provide guidelines to the student to support timely completion of the programme;
- Provide prompt feedback, normally in writing, to the student when they submit written work or research results. Such feedback should include a considered and serious reflection on the student's work;
- Maintain a summary record of outcomes agreed at supervisory meetings;
- Advise on thesis preparation;
- Supervise the student's attainment of goals outlined in the Research Plan and provide appropriate feedback;
- Assess and support the facilitation of the student's training needs;
- Maintain regular communication with the student;
- Ensure that the student has reasonable access to their second supervisor;
- In the case of doctoral programmes, provide a written 'Statement of Progress' to the Assessment Panel when the student is being considered for transfer from stage to stage of their doctoral studies and be available for interview by that panel if required;
- Promote the highest ethical and academic standards, making the student aware of all relevant regulations, policies and codes of practice;

- Make every reasonable effort to inform the student of health and safety policies and procedures and the student's obligations to comply with same.

#### *Secondary supervisor (co-supervisor)*

The position of secondary supervisor can be assumed by another professor or a postdoctoral research associate outside TTI. An external secondary supervisor is requested when the dissertation is set squarely in the context of international scientific communities.

The principal and secondary supervisors may have very different roles in the supervision; the boundaries are not always well defined. Doctoral students and supervisors can contact the Doctoral office of the TTI for assistance in resolving any potential conflicts.

Both co-supervisors undertake to carry out the role of supervisor of the training of the doctoral candidate to its full extent and to support each other in the execution of their duties as supervisors. The two co-supervisors will confer regularly (2-3 times a year) with regard to the progress of the doctoral candidate's degree.

Activities of a second or additional supervisor may include, but are not limited to:

- The provision of specialist subject area expertise or methodological advice;
- The provision of academic and/or supervisory support to a Principal Supervisor where the latter is assuming the role for the first time;
- The review of student progress reports and provision of feedback on draft chapters.

#### *Interactions with Supervisors*

- It is best practice for supervisors to have already collaborated before taking on a student.
- Supervisors need to communicate with each other on advice given to the student.
- Agreement on the big goals of the project should be made early in the candidature.
- Supervisors need to spend time discussing the model they have in mind for the research project and who will be responsible for the various parts of the project.
- In the case that the supervisors give conflicting advice or disagree, they must meet to work out their differences and agree on what advice they give the student.
- All supervisors should copy each other when emailing the student.
- It is good practice to have the student send an email to all supervisors summarising the outcomes of each supervisory meeting.

#### *Language of Instruction*

Instruction shall normally be in English. The student must be able to meet both TTI English-language proficiency requirements and the language proficiency requirement of the foreign supervisor.

## 6. The supervisors' responsibilities

The core purpose of supervision is to provide professional and topic-specific support during a student's doctoral studies and research, which requires a minimum willingness to discuss his or her academic and research work and to provide encouragement and advice. This process begins with the formulation of the dissertation topic and continues with the review of project outlines and discussion of methodological and theoretical issues, and ends with the formal promotion (doctoral thesis defense) procedures. Supervisors should build a constructive and positive working relationship with their doctoral students. The intensity of the supervision depends on the given circumstances and cannot be generalised.

While good supervision includes discussion of a student's doctoral work, it also involves a willingness to advise on development of the academic and research career path, support the candidate in gathering teaching experience, discuss the composition of the candidate's doctoral programme studies and cultivate his or her integration into the academic work environment. Supervisor support is particularly helpful in integrating and involving the doctoral researcher within the TTI field of work.

### *Supervising progress on the career path*

Supervisors should counsel doctoral candidates seeking a career in academia on the development of their career perspectives and, together with the student, help cultivate their career perspectives during their conversations. The candidate and supervisor might, for example, discuss publication strategies or other efforts to position the student in a particular academic context. At the same time, doctoral candidates should be encouraged to take part in networks outside the academic context.

### *Advising on the content of the doctoral course of studies*

A doctoral education at the TTI obliges the student to participate in certain courses, which are described in the doctoral degree regulations of the TTI. Because the course of studies can be individually designed, the supervisor should be available to give advice to the student when he or she is determining the obligations to be fulfilled.

### *Integration into academic work contexts*

Supervisors should promote the integration and involvement of doctoral candidates in academic work settings. This aspect of advising includes suggestions to present the dissertation project not only in his or her own colloquia series, but also in other relevant contexts. The supervisor also should point out relevant conferences, while at the same time taking into account the need for a suitable relationship between conference activities and continued progress of the dissertation. Supervisors should encourage doctoral candidates to make

contacts within relevant scientific communities, to identify appropriate places and forums for discussing one's research work and to make some initial, limited forays into publishing work even during the qualification phase. Moreover, supervisors should inform doctoral students of measures and services that promote equal opportunities and equality of treatment in academic life.

## 7. Personal supervision meetings

Before signing the supervision agreement, both parties – the supervisors and the doctoral candidate – need to make entirely clear their mutual expectations with regard to the individual supervision and the supervisor's role in accompanying the dissertation process.

### *Topics for discussion*

Good supervision entails first and foremost discussion of work in progress and the outcomes achieved, as well as a reciprocal understanding of the next stages of work to be completed. Unambiguous and realistic goals addressing what steps can be accomplished by the next meeting help to create clarity about the supervisor's expectations and also facilitate structured and incremental progress in completing the dissertation.

### *Frequency of meetings*

By signing the supervision agreement, the supervisors and the doctoral candidate agree to meet at least twice per semester. The frequency of these discussions can, however, be adapted to suit the individual needs of the supervisory relationship. Where possible, participation of foreign supervisor in the meetings will occur personally, by video-conferencing or similar media.

### *Follow-up to discussions*

It is recommended that both the supervisors and the doctoral candidate keep a brief protocol of the meetings' outcomes and the agreements reached therein. Should an unclear situation arise, these notes may contribute to clarification of the different perspectives.

## 8. Setting a timeframe and schedule for the dissertation

One important responsibility of a supervisor is to help the doctoral candidate design the qualification phase in such a way that the time-to-degree remains manageable and reasonable. A highly advisable strategy in this regard is to structure the entire course of the dissertation project when the doctoral programme commences by agreeing on interim goals. These specified interim goals should be defined in a detailed work plan and schedule.

### *Full-time and part-time*

The structure and duration of the doctoral programme should accommodate the individual's personal circumstances. If the doctoral candidate is working in a profession, is taking care of

children or family members, or is affected by other circumstances which prevent full-time doctoral work, then it is advisable to apply for part-time status with the TTI. The TTI advises doctoral students with full-time status to design their doctoral studies and research so that the dissertation is submitted, reviewed and assessed, and defended within three years. This timeframe enables doctoral candidates to quickly move on to the next step in their professional career, whether it is within or outside the academic setting. If the student has part-time status, the duration of the doctoral studies programme can be extended to four years.

The dissertation supervisors and the TTI support compliance with this schedule according to their possibilities. Any change to this schedule requires the mutual agreement of both supervisors. Time and work schedule should be added to the contract.

### *The work plan and schedule*

All doctoral candidates are required to present a detailed work plan and schedule within six months (at the latest) of admission to the doctoral degree programme. This plan covers the work stages of the entire doctorate programme up to submission of the dissertation. The TTI strongly recommends that doctoral candidates draw up the work plan and schedule as early as possible and check with their supervisors on whether the proposed work stages and timeframes have been realistically planned. It is important to schedule in some 'buffer time', and to regularly update the plan over the course of the doctoral work. The work plan and schedule help the doctoral candidate identify at what point he or she is in the dissertation process.

### *Thesis Evaluation*

Participating students will be required to write a single thesis which will lead to a single oral defense at the home institution. The language of the thesis will be in English. A written evaluation of the thesis must be submitted by all board members prior to the oral defense. All regulations and procedures that will govern the oral defense will be specific to the home institution where the defense is conducted. Where possible, participation of foreign supervisor in thesis defenses will occur personally, by video-conferencing or similar media.

## 9. Principal of supervision

### 9.1. Student-supervisor relationships should be professional

The relationship between supervisors and students, however friendly and supportive it may become, should always be academic and professional. Relationships that are at odds with an arm's length criterion (e.g., romantic, sexual, family ties) are unacceptable between supervisors and students. If a substantial conflict of interest arises (e.g., when supervisors develop emotional, financial and/or business arrangements with the student) mechanisms should be in place to initiate a change of supervisor.

### 9.2. Intellectual debate and challenge should be encouraged and supported

Intellectual debate is a fundamental component of university activity. Every effort should be made by both the student and supervisor to recognize and acknowledge that a robust element

of academic challenge and questioning is a normal, and indeed, healthy aspect of the student-supervisor relationship.

### 9.3. Supervisors should be mentors

Supervisors have responsibilities beyond the academic supervision of research and writing. Although the mentoring role will vary across disciplines, and will depend on the needs of the individual student, supervisors should be responsible for mentoring students in areas such as, but not limited to, the development of appropriate professional skills; applications for funding; networking opportunities with colleagues in academia and beyond; assistance with publications; and career development.

### 9.4. Issues of intellectual property and authorship should be made clear

Supervisors are responsible for informing students about university policies that govern intellectual property, and about any specific intellectual property issues that are likely to arise from their research. Even when issues are not clearly defined, it is important that students and supervisors have a discussion and reach an agreement early in their relationship regarding issues including rights of authorship, the order of authorship on multi-authored publications, and ownership of data. It is inappropriate for thesis supervisors to ask students to sign over their intellectual property rights as a condition of pursuing thesis research under their supervision.

### 9.5. Conflicts should be resolved at the lowest level possible

From time to time, conflicts may emerge between the supervisor and the student. Involving more people and higher levels of authority in a conflict can result in exaggeration of the original problem. This makes it harder to resolve and causes more damage to the participants and those around them. Conflicts should be resolved as close as possible to the source of the problem (i.e., at the lowest level of administration). If the student and supervisor cannot find a solution after discussing the problem, they should then involve the supervisory committee or equivalent. If the problem cannot be resolved at the student-supervisor level, it may be dealt with by the program. The University should ensure that appropriate resources (e.g. ombudsperson, equity office) are available to assist. If no satisfactory resolution can be found at the program level, the problem may be referred to the higher administrative levels.

### 9.6. Alternative supervision should be available

Policies and practices should cover situations in which a supervisory relationship cannot be continued, so that the student can continue in the program. These should cover situations beyond the control of the student (e.g. temporary or permanent absence of supervisor), situations that may arise from conflict of interest, and situations that result from personal relations between supervisor and student. Notwithstanding possible delays in time to completion, policies and practices should ensure that a student is not penalized if a change in supervisor is necessary.

## 9.7. Students have substantial responsibilities for managing their own graduate education

Students share in the responsibility for the goals that they successfully complete their program, and that it be of high quality. They are responsible for knowing and conforming to the various policies and procedures that may concern academic and research conduct, intellectual property, human subjects, animal welfare, health and safety, as well as degree and program requirements and timelines. They may need to be proactive and take responsibility for ensuring good communication with supervisory committee members, in the meeting of timelines and other program requirements, and in seeking effective advice on academic and other matters. If problems arise in the supervisory relationship, it may be the student who needs to take action and seek advice and remedy from the department or the school. The university, graduate department and supervisor are responsible for providing an appropriate environment for high-quality graduate education, but success is ultimately in the hands of the student. It is therefore essential that universities inform students of their responsibilities, and provide them with the information and support that they need to carry out their responsibilities

## 10. The supervision agreement

The supervisory relationship is laid out in a supervision agreement concluded between the doctoral candidate, the supervisors and the TTI. The agreement is designed to ensure the best-possible counsel, supervision and support to graduate students in the doctoral degree programme. By signing the agreement, the student and supervisor promise, among other things, to observe the rules of good scientific practice, to regularly hold supervision meetings and to submit an annual report to the TTI. The supervision agreement obliges all parties involved to observe minimal standards. In the actual elaboration of the supervision arrangement, however, both doctoral students and supervisors should actively shape the supervision process, and not simply observe the stated rights and obligations. Good academic supervision comes only when the doctoral candidate and the supervisors seize the opportunity to actively create a supervision arrangement best suited to the particular situation.

## 11. The role of the Transport and Telecommunication Institute

A central function of the TTI is to provide a doctoral degree programme that has the highest professional standards and exceptional academic supervision. In addition to the professional and topic-specific support provided by the supervisors in the relevant departments, the TTI assists its doctoral students by offering a number of services that help them assume responsibility for their own scholarly work and career. One focus in this respect and a central concern of the TTI is the advancement of equal opportunities and equality of treatment.

### *Support and mediation for resolving conflicts between doctoral researchers and supervisors*

The TTI is committed to helping both doctoral researchers and supervisors resolve any conflicts. Upon request of both parties, TTI offer conflict management support in the form of neutral mediation. Conflict management at the TTI aims at helping the parties involved to reach

consensus without direct interference in the doctoral researcher-supervisor relationship. Upon request of the parties, the academic liaison or an external mediator can facilitate this process. All concerns brought to the TTI office are of course treated with utmost discretion. The contact person at the TTI office is available for consultation by doctoral researchers and supervisors. The office only takes steps towards conflict resolution in agreement with the person who has sought counsel.

#### *Workshop creating a constructive supervisory relationship*

The TTI regularly offers a workshop on creating constructive supervisory relationships. Here doctoral researchers can learn how to form and maintain a positive working relationship aimed at completing their dissertation. The workshop also focuses on identifying and naming expectations for the supervisory relationship.

#### *Conflict mediation*

Upon request, the TTI will provide an external mediator for the constructive resolution of a supervisory conflict. Mediation is possible when both parties wish for a third, neutral person to facilitate a consensual agreement.

#### *The doctoral department*

The doctoral department organise the doctoral programme, monitor the completion rate, and support the activities of the supervisors.

## 12. Responsibilities: Supervisors – RDC – TTI

The responsibilities pertaining to supervision extend over two levels: the supervisor, Research and Doctoral Council of TTI (RDC TTI) and the TTI. At the level of the supervisor, it should be noted that a supervisory relationship is established when a RDC TTI accepts a supervisory role. After a supervisor accepts the supervision of a candidate's doctoral work, the Vice-Rector of Research and Development Affairs of TTI decide on admission to the doctoral degree programme. Upon admission to the doctoral degree programme and the signing of a supervision agreement, doctoral candidates may obtain TTI membership.

**Supervisory relationship:** The student-supervisor relationship is established upon the RDC acceptance of the supervision.

**Admission to the doctoral programme:** The TTI receives the applications; the Vice-Rector of Research Affairs makes decisions about admission to a doctoral programme.

**TTI membership:** By signing the supervision agreement, the student is granted TTI membership.

**Legal information on the acceptance of doctoral candidate supervision:** A potential supervisor is not required to accept the supervision of a doctoral student and may refuse a request on material grounds. This decision may be made, for example, when the applicant does not command the requisite knowledge to undertake a promising treatment of his or her topic, or



when the supervisor's time constraints do not permit him or her to adequately supervise additional doctoral candidates.

Legal information on the termination of the supervisory relationship: Regular completion of the supervisory relationship takes effect upon successful completion of the dissertation. Early termination of the supervisory relationship is not problematic as long as the relationship is ended consensually by the doctoral researcher and the supervisor. Doctoral researchers who wish to terminate the supervisory relationship early are not required to state their reasons. It is however preferable that all parties know why the supervisory relationship is being terminated. Should the supervisor wish to end the supervisory relationship, there must be compelling academic reasons or reasons involving a breach of trust. These reasons must be substantiated by the supervisor. A termination of the supervisory relationship is not automatically a termination of the doctoral project. Whenever possible, the TTI or the RDC shall aid the doctoral researcher in finding a new supervisor.

### 13. Scope of the guidelines

The guidelines for the supervision of doctoral dissertations are intended to inform and provide support to supervisors and doctoral candidates in all supervisory relationships, regardless of whether the dissertation project is completed in the framework of a doctoral programme or as an open dissertation produced outside a doctoral programme.

### 14. Conclusion

This policy of joint supervision of doctoral thesis will allow TTI to collaborate with universities and individual researchers abroad on the co-supervision of a doctoral candidate's thesis. The students who engage in such agreements will receive an enriched international experience. The exposure these students will have to different cultural and scientific environments will increase their employability after graduation. Transport and Telecommunication Institute will benefit from having high profile international linkages with prestigious universities and international recognized researchers abroad, and will enhance its overall international profile and reputation.