

## Talented Researchers for the Knowledge Society

Traditionally, a doctorate was seen as an entrance ticket to an academic career. More recently, it has evolved into a high level qualification that trains people to think rigorously and to use the knowledge and skills derived from that training to the benefit of society. The knowledge society in particular needs a constant stream of highly trained critical thinkers to tackle today's complex problems with rigour and research skills. The role of research-intensive universities is to train doctoral candidates to the highest level to help increase the quality and quantity of research output wherever it is needed and to deliver talented and creative people to the knowledge society. PhD graduates now find employment in many different sectors: in academia, in research in the public, charitable or private sectors, and in a range of non-research jobs where they must analyse large amounts of evidence for complex decision making. But not only are doctorate holders' career destinations increasingly varied, also the recruitment and the training itself have undergone important innovations. Research-intensive universities attract applicants from all over the world, and international mobility is a common feature for many during and after the PhD. Besides the focus on advanced research skills, the training addresses the development of a wide range of other skills such as high level problem-solving, effectiveness, management, leadership, team-work attitude, communication and engagement. The development of doctoral school structures is itself an innovation that has enabled these transformations in doctoral training. Such structures are often linked up to masters programmes to make sure that students are brought into the research environment at an early stage. Importantly, they have a crucial role to play in making links to the non-academic world during the training and in preparing graduates for their first jobs whatever and wherever these may be. The focus of doctoral training should therefore be on intrinsic quality rather than on demand-driven quantity.