

Amsterdam Business Research Institute

How to Build an Academic Career

Course Manual

Academic year 2025 – 2026



Course title	How to build an academic career
Coordinator(s)	Dr. Mohammad Rezazade Mehrizi
Lecturer(s)	Dr. Mohammad Rezazade Mehrizi
Study period	September 2025 – July 2026
ECTS	2 ECTS
Tuition	€ 500 20% discount on early bird registration: €400
Target Groups	The course “How to build an academic career” is open to ABRI PhD candidates as well as PhD candidates from the VU and other Dutch and international universities engaged in research projects broadly related to business and management or organization studies.
Course goals	After the successful completion of this course, participants will be able to: • Structure and manage their PhD project in a timely way • Engage in academic networking • Understand the publication process and contribute to it • Prepare for the (academic) job market
Course content	This course is organized as a series of workshops designed to equip PhD candidates with the important knowledge and skills required to build an academic career. Each workshop targets various aspects that become relevant at a different phase of the PhD trajectory. The first workshop focuses on managing the PhD research project. Workshop 2 attends to academic networking and Workshop 3 focuses on the publication process. Workshop 4 prepares the PhD candidate for the job market.
Course design	The course consists of 4 workshop sessions (3-4 hours each) distributed throughout the academic year (September – July). Each workshop will entail an interactive panel with experienced faculty members from different ABRI tracks. Before each workshop module, course participants will complete preparation assignments. Each module will be concluded by a brief reflection report. Course participants are not expected to complete all course modules within one year. PhD candidates can join the various workshop modules at different stages of their trajectory, i.e., when the offered content will be most relevant.

Study load	The estimated time participants spend on study activities is:		
	Attending workshop sessions	12 hours	
	Reading or other preparations	12 hours	
	Work on assignments	32 hours	
	Total	<u>56 hours</u>	(2 ECTS)

Assessment The course grade will be “pass” or “fail”. Course participants will be assessed based on:

- Workshop participation
- Completion of 4 preparation assignments
- Completion of 4 reflection reports

Course structure	Workshop	Date	Time	Room
	Workshop 1	14-11-2025	10:00 – 13:30	NU-4A67
	Workshop 2	23-01-2025	10:00 – 13:30	HG-06A37
	Workshop 3	08-05-2026	10:00 – 13:00	NU-04A45
	Workshop 4	19-06-2026	10:00 – 13:00	NU-06A345

Literature A list of articles and exercises will be announced via the course website on Canvas.

Workshop 1: How to manage your PhD project

Date and time: 14 November 2025, 10:00-13:30

Location: 12A37

Although the PhD trajectory centers around your research project, most of the PhD students are likely to encounter other responsibilities, such as teaching, supervising theses, visiting conferences and/or organizing conference symposia, attending departmental meetings, and so on. All these activities need to be managed in such a way that the PhD research will stay on track. But how can you manage this?

In this workshop, the focus is on how to manage your time and project in a structured manner, the research proposal, and how to manage the student-supervisor relationship.

The workshop format is interactive: there will be exercises to participate in, an expert panel of SBE ABRI professors who share their insights and to whom questions can be asked, followed by a group discussion.

How to prepare for the workshop (obligatory) – See Canvas module for up-to-date preparations

What to deliver after the workshop (obligatory)

A reflection report (max. 3 pages, Times New Roman 12, line-spacing 1.5), in which you discuss the following points:

1. Your main take-away(s) of the workshop
2. How you plan to apply and embed the learnings to your research project
3. A concrete application of the learned to your research project
4. Reflection on your time management skills

Send the reflection report *no later than two weeks after the workshop* to Prof. dr. Maria Tims (m.tims@vu.nl).

Workshop 2: Academic networking: Finding your way in the academic community

Date: 23 January 2026; 10:00-13:30

Location:

In this workshop, the focus is on your academic audience: to which community are you connected? Establishing a good academic network allows you to be aware of what other researchers in the same area are working on. At the same time, a good network allows you to promote your own research and inform others about it. The more people you know and the more interested they are in your work, the greater the likelihood that they engage with your research. Moreover, developing a network offers opportunities for collaboration and support. But how do you establish such a network?

In this workshop, you will learn how to build and grow an academic network. The discussion focuses on conferences, being able to pitch your research, how to keep a conversation going or how to politely let yourself off the hook, and social media presence.

The workshop format is interactive: there will be exercises to participate in, an expert panel of SBE ABRI professors who share their insights and to whom questions can be asked, followed by a group discussion.

How to prepare for the workshop (obligatory) - See Canvas module for up-to-date preparations

What to deliver after the workshop (obligatory)

A reflection report (max. 3 pages, Times New Roman 12, line-spacing 1.5), in which you discuss the following points:

1. Your main take-away(s) of the workshop
2. An overview of the most relevant conferences or other networking opportunities for you, including an explanation why they are most relevant
3. How you plan to apply and embed the learnings once you encounter a networking opportunity
4. Reflection on your networking skills

Send the reflection report *no later than two weeks after the workshop* to Prof. dr. Maria Tims (m.tims@vu.nl).

Workshop 3: The publication and review process

Date: 08 May 2026, 10:00 – 13:00

Location: NU-04A45

Publishing your research allows you to communicate your findings to a broader audience. Your research can only have an impact on society if people know about it. However, publishing your research is not that easy and you will benefit from knowing the ins and outs of the publication process well in time.

In this workshop, the focus is on the complete publication process starting from a finished paper, friendly review, submission to a journal, potential outcomes, and ways to move forward until the paper is published.

The workshop format is interactive: there will be exercises to participate in, an expert panel of SBE ABRI professors who share their insights and to whom questions can be asked, followed by a group discussion.

How to prepare for the workshop (obligatory) - See Canvas module for up-to-date preparations

What to deliver after the workshop (obligatory)

A reflection report (max. 3 pages, Times New Roman 12, line-spacing 1.5), in which you discuss the following points:

1. Your main take-away(s) of the workshop
2. How you plan to apply and embed the learnings to your research project
3. A reflection on your approach to get your work published

Send the reflection report *no later than two weeks after the workshop* to Prof. dr. Maria Tims (m.tims@vu.nl).

Workshop 4: What's next? Preparing for the (academic) job market

Date: 19 June 2026, 10:00 – 13:00

Location: NU-06A45

With your eyes on the target of finishing your PhD project, you have to decide what your next step will be. Would you like to stay in academia or would you like to explore your options outside of academia? It is time to look at the future and prepare as best as possible for your next career stage.

In this workshop, the focus is on exploring career options and how to prepare for each of the options. Insights into how an academic career might look like but also options for a professional career are discussed.

The workshop format is interactive: there will be exercises to participate in, a presentation by VU Career Services, and an expert panel of SBE ABRI professors who share their insights and to whom questions can be asked, followed by a group discussion.

How to prepare for the workshop (obligatory) - See Canvas module for up-to-date preparations

What to deliver after the workshop (obligatory)

A reflection report (max. 3 pages, Times New Roman 12, line-spacing 1.5), in which you discuss the following points:

1. Your main take-away(s) of the workshop
2. A reflection on how you envision your career
3. A reflection on how the workshops have prepared you for your future career

Send the reflection report *no later than two weeks after the workshop* to Prof. dr. Maria Tims (m.tims@vu.nl).