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## The future of co-supervision - Challenges and opportunities

Abstract for round table discussion

### The future of co-supervision - Challenges and opportunities

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We welcome researchers, PhD supervisors, and educational developers to this round table discussion where we will address challenges and opportunities with co-supervision. This role has received little attention in research and PhD supervisor education.

Team supervision is a global trend, but the co-supervisors' expectations and how the team should collaborate are often unclear (Wilkin et al. 2022). Consequently, the co-supervisor's role is also often ambiguous to the PhD student.

Research has shown that there are several challenges for the co-supervisors. They often get poor introductions and are expected to know their role even as novices (Almlöv and Grubbström, 2024). Interviews also give evidence that despite co-supervisors' intention to contribute to the supervision of the doctoral project, they often end up with an emotional responsibility. An effect of the

power relations within the team, where it seems to be easier for the Ph.D. student to approach the co-supervisor instead of the main supervisor. In addition, the co-supervisors are often in a stage when they need to balance their careers with engagement for the doctoral students.

With this as a backdrop, several questions could be highlighted: How can the supervisor team work with expectations and roles? How can the Ph.D. supervision courses better prepare co-supervisors? What should be the focus of future research about co-supervisors? Welcome to discuss these and other questions about co-supervision!

*Introduction:* Some of the research on co-supervision conducted at SLU. How we address co-supervision in the PhD supervision courses.

*Discussion in smaller groups:* We will provide some discussion themes for the groups to choose from.

*Summary in the larger group:* To provide concrete ideas on how to move forward.

### References:

- Almlöv, C., & Grubbström, A. (2024). 'Challenging from the start': novice doctoral co-supervisors' experiences of supervision culture and practice. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 43(1), 17-31.
- Wilkin, C. L., Khosa, A., & Burch, S. (2023). Identity in doctoral supervision: perspectives on agency and structure. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 94(2), 139-173.