



UNIVERSITY OF
BUCHAREST
— VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA

Implementing interdisciplinarity in doctoral studies in Romania - the case of the Interdisciplinary School at University of Bucharest

Prof. Mihai Dima

University of Bucharest, Faculty of Physics
Interdisciplinary School of Doctoral Studies

Design of European degrees – Building flexible pathways beyond academic cycles

Bucharest, May 26, 2022



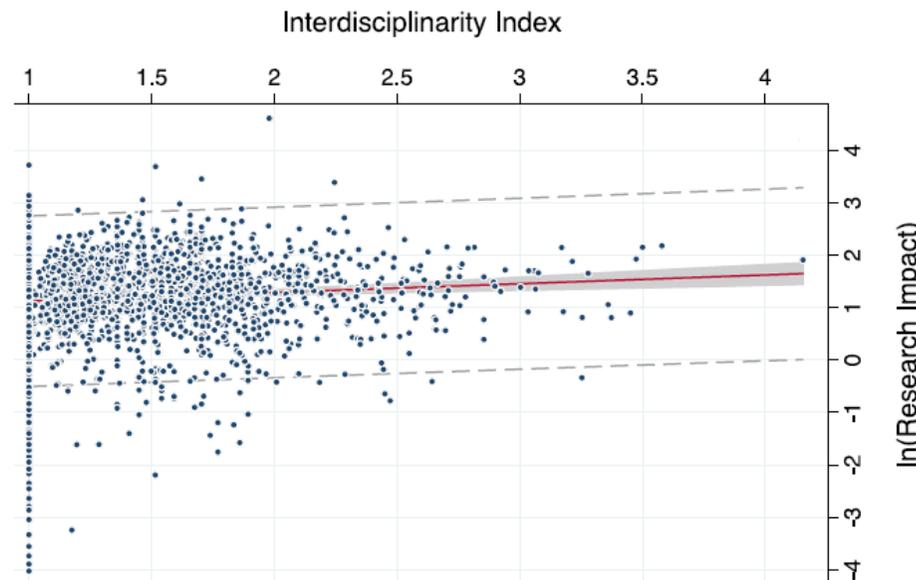
General arguments in favor of interdisciplinarity in higher education:

- 1) complex modern societal challenges, such as pandemic and climate change, require expertise across disciplines;
- 2) discoveries may be more likely on the boundaries between fields;
- 3) extends the horizons.

Specific arguments in favor of interdisciplinary research:

1) A multiyear assessment of UK universities' research strengths (2008–13) found that **80%** of research cases that had significant impact outside academia, were interdisciplinary.

(Rylance 2015)



Okamura (2019)

2) An increase by **1** in the effective number of disciplines related to a scientific article was associated with an approximately **20%** increase in their research impact.



- Interdisciplinarity = one of the major challenges facing 21st century academia
- European University Association – promoting interdisciplinarity is one of its priorities of action



Doctoral Studies at the University of Bucharest

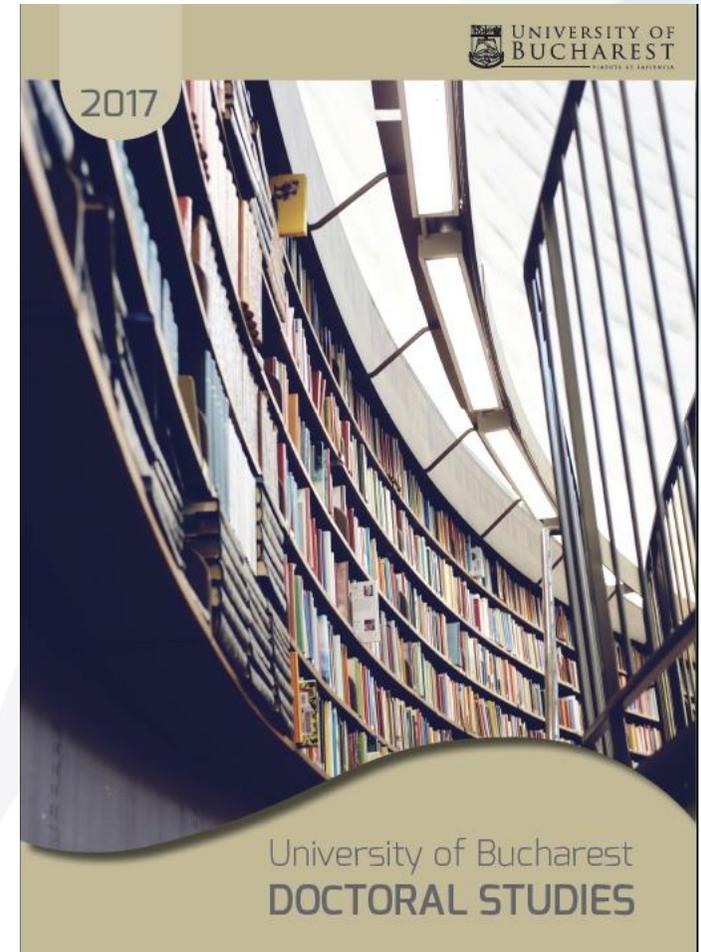
Brief Historical Background

- 1905 - first doctoral title awarded by the University of Bucharest
Ion Petrovici (Philosophy)
- 2005 – shift from individual doctoral studies to structured doctoral schools
- 2012 - Council for Doctoral Studies at University level

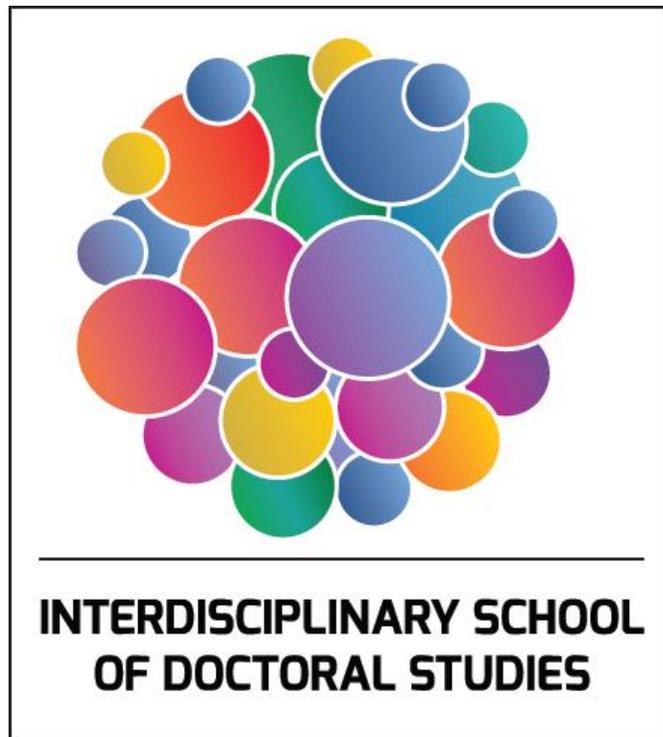
Doctoral Studies at the University of Bucharest

19 fields of study

- ✓ **Biology**
- ✓ **Chemistry**
- ✓ **Communication sciences**
- ✓ **Cultural studies**
- ✓ **Education sciences**
- ✓ **Environmental sciences**
- ✓ **Geography**
- ✓ **Geology**
- ✓ **History**
- ✓ **Informatics (computer science)**
- ✓ **Law**
- ✓ **Mathematics**
- ✓ **Philology**
- ✓ **Philosophy**
- ✓ **Physics**
- ✓ **Political sciences**
- ✓ **Psychology**
- ✓ **Sociology**
- ✓ **Theology**



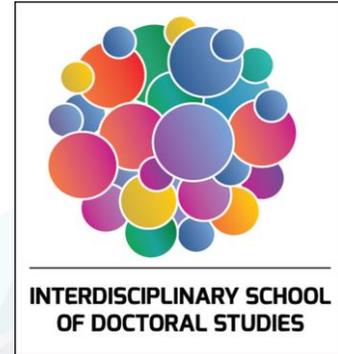
In 2018 was founded the **Interdisciplinary School of Doctoral Studies** at University of Bucharest (ISDS-UB)



The screenshot displays the website for the Interdisciplinary School of Doctoral Studies. At the top, it features the University of Bucharest logo and the school's name. Navigation tabs include 'Why ISDS?', 'Study and Research', 'Admission Process', 'For Students', 'About ISDS', and 'Contact us'. A main announcement for the 'UNICA EduLAB European Conference' is visible, dated 26-27 May 2022, with a 'Blended format' (in Bucharest & online). The conference title is 'Design of European degrees - Building flexible pathways beyond academic cycles'. Logos for UNICA, CIVIS, and the University of Bucharest are also present.

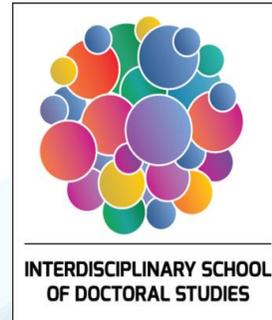
<https://isds.unibuc.ro>

ISDS-UB – Mission



- To stimulate and promote excellence in interdisciplinary research
- To promote the internationalization of the doctoral studies at University of Bucharest

ISDS-UB



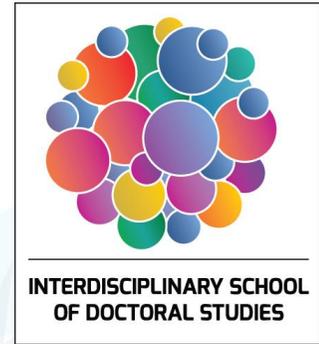
- The advance studies program is organized in English
- Thesis are written in English or other internationally widespread languages
- Doctoral students obtain the diploma in the field of their supervisor, but also a recognition that they were trained in an interdisciplinary environment

In the 2021-2022 academic year in ISDS-UB activate:

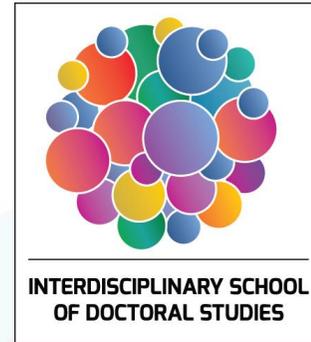
- 37 Ph.D. students
- 46 Supervisors

Studies are organized in:

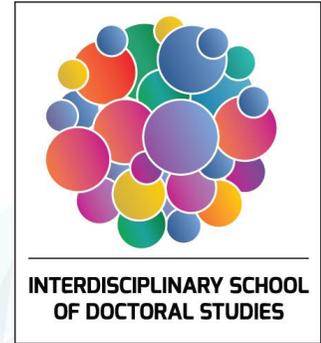
- Modules (broad interdisciplinarity):
 - Exact and Natural Sciences
 - Social Sciences and Humanities
- Interdisciplinary Research Training Groups (IRTGs) (focused interdisciplinarity):
 - Mind, Language and Cognition
 - Complex Systems
 - Natural Resources & Socio-Ecological Systems
 - Higher Education Studies



Internationalization

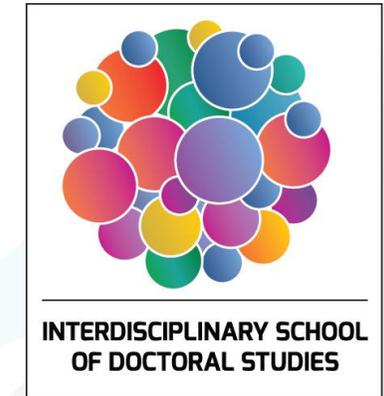


- The ISDS-UB Council includes distinguished professors from University of Auckland (Cristian Calude) and University of Florida (Michael Flaherty)
- Every year we have new students from abroad
- Students mobility and research stages abroad are encouraged and supported also through the Erasmus and the Doctor Europeus programs (e.g. our students are currently in research stage at The Norwegian University of Science and Technology – Department of Modern History and Society)



Goals for the near future

- Create an international and attractive interdisciplinary environment for our Ph.D. students
- To be proactive in collaborations in the frames of UNICA and CIVIS networks of universities



Conclusion

- Interdisciplinarity is a catalyst for intra- and inter-university collaborations



Thank you!