

## ICO National Fall School 2015 November 5 & 6, Utrecht University Evaluation Report

This evaluation report presents and discusses the outcomes of the evaluation of the ICO National Fall School 2015 at Utrecht University.

### Background

ICO's National Fall School is an initiative of ICO and is organized in co-operation with the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research ([NWO/PROO](#)) and the Dutch Educational Research Association ([VOR](#)). This event is meant for PhD students, postdocs, and staff members of ICO. During the Fall School, second and third-year PhD students give a presentation on their thesis project. Senior ICO members who are engaged in the same, or a related field of expertise perform as discussant. This interaction with senior experts makes the Fall School an interesting meeting with lively discussions that often provide PhD students with fruitful ideas and new inspiration for their research. PhD candidates can act as peer discussants, to develop their skills as a reviewer. All presentations and discussions are in English.

ICO PhD students are formally required to give a presentation on the Fall School during the second and third year of their appointment, either in a Junior Presentation (for 2nd year students) or in a Senior Presentation (3rd year students). The Junior Presentation can be either a Poster Presentation, or a Round Table Presentation. The Senior Presentation is a Paper Presentation.

Presentations are grouped into sessions by ICO theme as much as possible, and there is ample opportunity for discussion. It is these discussions that make the Fall School an interesting and informative happening for the presenters as well as their audience.

**Location:** Utrecht University, Marinus Ruppertgebouw, Leuvenlaan 21, 3584 CE Utrecht

### Programme

The National Fall School was organized by the National Fall School committee, consisting of

- Diana Dolmans, educational director ICO
- Jos Beishuizen, scientific director of ICO
- Caroline Vonk, executive secretary ICO
- Marit Wijnen, PhD Erasmus University Rotterdam, chair of the ICO educational committee
- Steven Raaijmakers, PhD Utrecht University, member the ICO educational committee

Besides the PhD presentations, the programme included three workshops, a keynote lecture and two networking lunch-sessions.

The Keynote lecture on Self-regulated learning in multimedia environments was provided by Prof.dr. Liesbeth Kester (Utrecht University)

Thursday, November 5 the workshops "*Supervising (PhD and master) research: how to make the most of it*", with dr. Anique de Bruin (Maastricht University), and "*Professionalism and Integrity in Research*" with the dilemma game, hosted by dr. Peter Verkoeijen (Erasmus University). On Friday, November 6, prof. dr. Tamara van Gog (Utrecht University) organised a workshop on how to write a successful grant proposal.

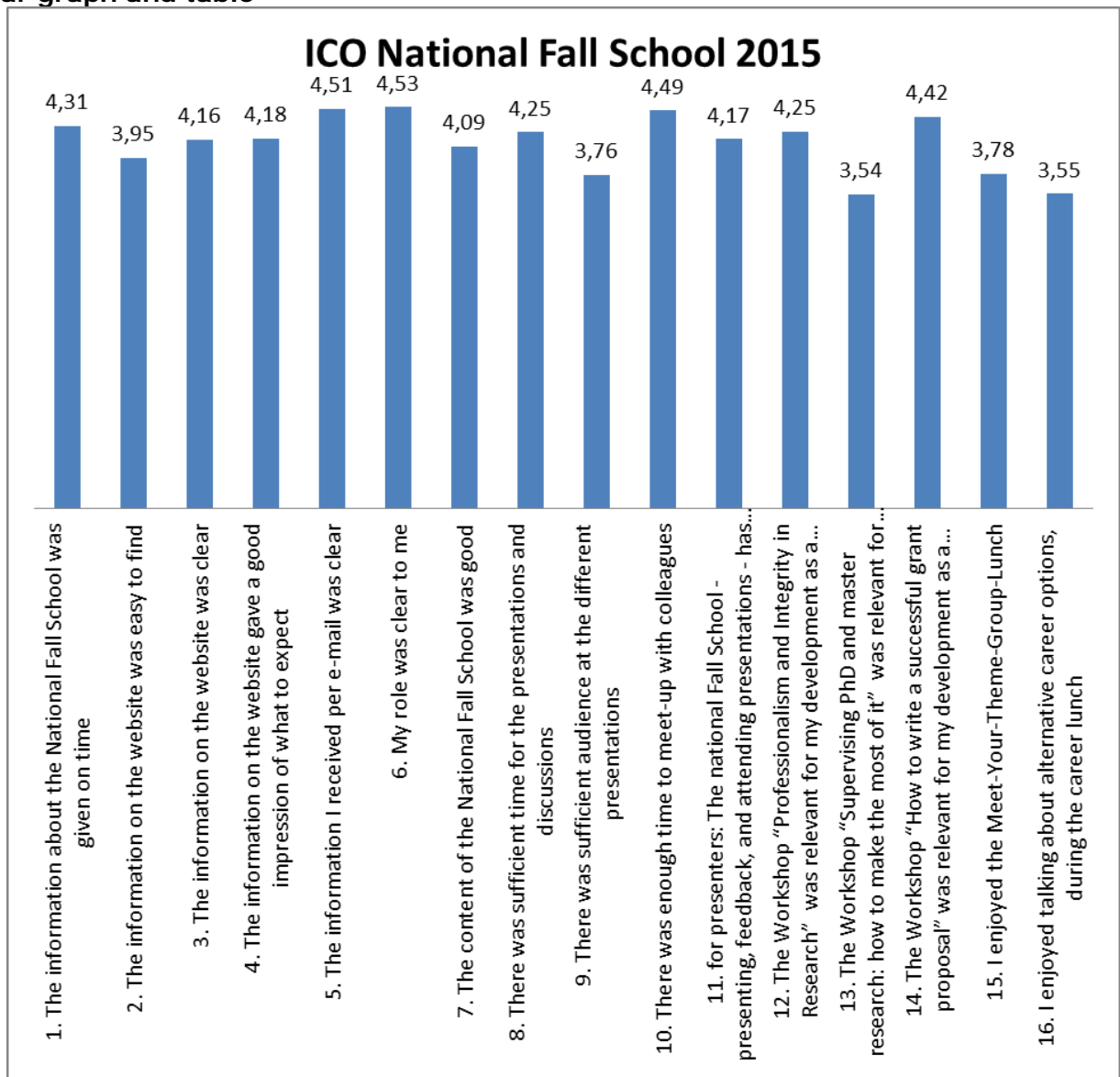
*The Meet Your Theme-Group-Lunch* on November 5, aimed the meeting of PhDs and staff members within their own research interest. On *Friday November 6*, the attendants could informally meet with various professionals who talked with the ICO PhDs about their careers outside of the university research groups.

## Figures

### Attendants

- In total 113 people registered (in 2013: 120 and in 2011: 105), of which
  - 103 attended on Thursday November 5, and
  - 88 attended on Friday November 6
- PhD candidates: 72 (2013: 69; 2011: 63) of which 62 gave a presentation (2013: 44; 2011: 34)
- Staff and Post Doc members: 39 (2013: 48 2011: 38)
- 65 attendants came to the conference dinner at Broers café and restaurant in Utrecht city centre
- 2 attendants had to cancel due to health or transportation problems.
- 67 attendants (44 PhD presenters, 19 staff members and 4 auditors) filled out the evaluation form, which represents 59% return rate.

### Bar graph and table



	1	2	3	4	5			
	--	-	+/-	+	++	n	gem	st.dev.
1. The information about the National Fall School was given on time	0	5	4	23	35	67	4,31	0,89
2. The information on the website was easy to find	1	2	16	27	20	66	3,95	0,90
3. The information on the website was clear	0	2	6	38	21	67	4,16	0,71
4. The information on the website gave a good impression of what to expect	0	2	5	39	21	67	4,18	0,69
5. The information I received per e-mail was clear	0	1	1	28	37	67	4,51	0,61
6. My role was clear to me	0	0	2	27	37	66	4,53	0,56
7. The content of the National Fall School was good	0	0	13	35	19	67	4,09	0,69
8. There was sufficient time for the presentations and discussions	0	2	10	23	30	65	4,25	0,83
9. There was sufficient audience at the different presentations	2	11	8	26	20	67	3,76	1,14
10. There was enough time to meet-up with colleagues	0	0	4	25	36	65	4,49	0,62
11. for presenters: The national Fall School - presenting, feedback, and attending presentations - has contributed to my research	0	1	4	28	14	47	4,17	0,67
12. The Workshop "Professionalism and Integrity in Research" was relevant for my development as a researcher	0	1	2	8	9	20	4,25	0,85
13. The Workshop "Supervising PhD and master research: how to make the most of it" was relevant for my development as a researcher	0	3	8	10	3	24	3,54	0,88
14. The Workshop "How to write a successful grant proposal" was relevant for my development as a researcher	0	0	2	11	13	26	4,42	0,64
15. I enjoyed the Meet-Your-Theme-Group-Lunch	1	3	15	24	12	55	3,78	0,92
16. I enjoyed talking about alternative career options, during the career lunch	1	4	8	10	6	29	3,55	1,09
N =						67		

*Analysis and suggestions for improvement based on the scores and the comments of the attendants*

Although most attendants highly appreciated the ICO National Fall School, the following tips are given for improvement of future National Fall Schools:

- Shorten the coffee and lunch breaks on the first day.
- Start later on the second day; 08:30 hours is too early to be on time from different parts of the country
- Do not plan the workshops parallel to the presentation sessions, to avoid too little audience during the presentations.
- Paper presentations: plan more time for discussion with the audience
- Poster sessions: plan shorter time slots, as standing for two hours is too long
- Poster sessions: also give the audience the opportunity to walk around, and discuss the poster with the presenter. In its current form, the poster sessions are too much like a paper session.
- Bring more structure to the networking lunch sessions

## Appendix: Comments

- Ik vond de ruimte tussen de presentaties op donderdag groot, ook de lunch had wat mij betreft korter gekund. Verder leuke dingen gezien en gehoord en ik was blij met de constructieve sfeer tijdens de sessies! Dank voor de organisatie!
- De start op vrijdagochtend was erg vroeg. Had op vrijdag nog wel een ronde langer mogen duren wat mij betreft. De lunch op donderdag iets korter.
- In most paper sessions, there was no time left for general discussion with the whole audience. The two discussants took most of the time.  
The workshops were planned parallel with the sessions. We didn't know that when we signed up for the workshops...  
The start of the second day was too early!
- Ik vond de Fall School weer een groot succes! Het was erg goed georganiseerd! Ik vond de sessies met vier paper presentaties wat aan de lange kant.
- Although it is (of course) the participant's own responsibility, it wasn't entirely clear to me at the time that following the workshops meant missing presentation sessions. Perhaps this could be communicated in a more salient fashion, and/or be (partly) prevented by tweaking the schedule (e.g. longer second day, although no one was complaining about an early weekend!)
- The time for discussants (5 min) was quite limited
- I like to hear one or two more plenary talk like in ICO NFS 2013.
- Ik vond het een erg leuke conferentie, complimenten voor de organisatie. Ik heb nog een aantal punten voor feedback: De workshop werd telkens tegelijk met de presentaties aangeboden. Zo zijn er minder mensen bij de presentaties. Ik zou de workshops op eenzelfde tijdstip houden en niet tegelijk met de presentaties. De career lunch zou ik een volgende keer anders organiseren: bijv. alle sprekers in één zaal na elkaar een pitch van 5 minuten laten vertellen over zijn/haar carrière (ondertussen kunnen de genodigden een broodje eten en luisteren) en dan daarna 30 minuten de tijd om informeel bij ze langs te lopen en vragen te stellen. Wat betreft de posterpresentaties op vrijdag: elke spreker mocht max. 10 minuten vertellen en daarna was er 10 min. ruimte voor vragen en discussie. Er was tijdens deze 2 uur daardoor geen tijd om langs de posters te lopen en informeel de sprekers vragen te stellen over de poster. Hierdoor was het effect van een poster weg en lijkt het veel te veel op een paperpresentatie, maar dan zonder de slides. Ik vond 8.30 uur 's ochtens beginnen op vrijdag wel erg vroeg (denk aan reistijd). Ik zou 9.00 uur of 9.30 uur beginnen (bijv. 9.30 - 11.30 sessie, 11.30 - 13.00 uur lunch met pitch van sprekers, 13.00 - 15.00 uur sessie). Daarnaast begon de conferentie donderdag juist pas om 11.00 uur. Alle cursussen beginnen normaal gesproken om 10.00 uur, dus dat had tijdens deze conferentie ook prima gekund en dan waren we ook om 17.15 uur klaar en niet pas om 18.15 uur. Veel feedback dus, maar juist bedoeld om de conferentie nog beter te maken :)
- I did not attend any of the workshops.
- Theme group lunch (theme 4) was quite unstructured. I would have liked to have a more structured introduction to all the members, because I did not know all the research topics. Sessions were a bit long, maybe split them up with a small break in between. Coffee and tea during lunch in addition to milk would be nice. Further

organisation was super!

- Overall, the ICO NFS was well organized and a good experience. Below I will write some minor issues.

Lunch on Thursday and coffee breaks were too long. I would have preferred it if the second day would start at 10 and end at 16 or something. Because of the early presentations on Friday people left the dinner quite soon, which was too bad.

The workshop registration process was quite weird. I didn't remember signing up for them - and I heard the same thing from others. Maybe it is better to do workshop registration a bit closer to the actual Fall School. Moreover, I didn't like that workshops and presentations were parallel. Since I was signed up for three workshops I could not go to any other presentation than the session in which I had to do a presentation myself.

It is probably very difficult and expensive to find a nice location, but I did not like the Ruppert building as a location. Having the lunches and coffee breaks in a big, cold hall I did not find very pleasant.

To end on a positive note, the dinner was very nice!

- Great organization. Wouldn't change a thing.
- The format of the poster session that I went to was not suitable for poster presentations. Each presenter had 10 min to present their poster and after that there was 10 min for discussion. 20 min to present a poster is too long. At the end we did not even have time to go around the room and really look at the posters. The poster presentations, as handled in this session, were almost the same as presenting a paper. There should be only very short poster pitches and the audience should have a lot of time to walk around and ask questions. The way this session was handled did not give the audience enough time to really appreciate the posters of the presenters. Why using the format of a poster when it is the same as presenting a paper?
- I enjoyed the dinner also. It was not clear for me that I had to arrange my own stay. That could be added to the website next time. Overall, it was really nice and well organized. I appreciate the feedback on my work, which I can use now.
- Goede tijdsindeling en duur slots. Eerste dag mag eerder starten. Workshop PhD begeleiding was erg goed opgezet en leuk om te volgen, maar bracht me niet veel nieuwe inzichten (vandaar de 3). Keynote vond ik persoonlijk niet erg boeiend; sprankelend. Website suggereerde junior discussianten om PPT te maken. Ik bleek een van de weinigen die dat had gedaan en ervaarde dat het niet goed werkte (kost te snel meer dan 5 minuten). Misschien discussianten aangeven dat ze korte overall reactie op werk, discussievragen en comments aan presenter op papier voorbereiden. Tijdens sessie dat voorbereide stuk kort toelichten en vervolgens overhandigen aan presenter? Overall enorm van geleerd, vooral methodisch. En, belangrijkste blijkt steeds weer om je werk te moeten verdedigen/vragen te leren beantwoorden. Dus daar vooral veel tijd voor houden!
- Jammer dat er niemand van Thema groep 10 was. Ik was niet bij de carrière lunch.
- Breaks were overly long. sessions could have been split up in shorter time slots as well
- The Meet-Your-Theme-Group-Lunch was a very interesting opportunity to get to know more about (some of) the ICO themes and courses. Unfortunately, for theme group 5 it took a while for someone to show up, because the actual coordinator wasn't available

at the time

- I think the breaks were too long. It's nice to be able to talk with colleagues, but it made the thursday a very long day. Also, the workshops could maybe better have been organized on the same moment, where everyone could follow one and be able to attend the paper/ poster/ round table presentations of their choice.
- In de email over het discussiant zijn werd aangegeven dat je een gesprek moest voeren met de PhD candidate, echter door de beperkte tijd was het geen gesprek, maar moest ik als discussiant gewoon al mijn commentaar achter elkaar opnoemen. Dat is minder leuk en interessant. Dus indien mogelijk meer tijd voor discussie om het interactiever te maken.
- The breaks were too long. I think it's better to have more time for presentations and a bit less for breaks.
- Postersessie met posters in 2 uur is te veel. Te lang staan/hangen, te weinig dynamisch waardoor het een erg vermoeiende zit werd. Een roundtable sessie vond ik hierentegen juist ontzettend goed werken. korte presentaties ahv een postertje, zittend (ipv staand in de posterruimtes), het poneren van 2 discussiepunten door de presenter, en daarna een levendige in-depth discussie.
- The option 'not applicable' would be convenient. I didn't attend 'professionalism & integrity', nor 'grant proposal', nor the career lunch (so I answered neutrally here). I liked the atmosphere during the poster session in which I presented, but I was quite surprized that we could present for longer than 5 min (as the website stated). If I had known that, it would have influenced my preparations.
- It wasn't clear to me that attending two workshops and presenting my own work meant that I could attend only one other session.
- I would recommend to schedule workshops not in parallel with the other sessions. Now there was hardly any audience in most of the sessions.
- Het was jammer dat bij paper presentaties eigenlijk geen disussie kon ontstaan, doordat de tijd meestal al op was na de presentatie en de twee discussianten. Misschien is het mogelijk om niet 4 presentaties in 1 sessie te doen, maar 3 presentaties waardoor je meer discussietijd hebt. Het was namelijk wel fijn om als PhD-er feedback te mogen geven, en om feedback te ontvangen van zowel een PhD-er als een al gepromoveerde onderzoeker.
- Door het schema waarbij er tegelijk workshops en presentaties waren, was er voor mijn gevoel weinig publiek bij de presentaties. Dit zou wellicht opgelost kunnen worden door maar in één timeslot workshops te verzorgen, zodat iedereen tegelijk een workshop volgt, en de rest van de tijd ingeruimd is voor presentaties. Ik vond het heel prettig dat de discussiant van mijn round table presentatie ook echt inhoudelijk expert was op het gebied van mijn presentatie. Hierdoor heb ik heel veel aan de feedback.