



### **D3.1 Individual study plans of three ESR**



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## Executive Summary

During the project period, we worked on study plans for early-stage researchers during two ESR workshops. From each country, we have now received a summary of the study plans of one early-stage researcher.

These summaries reflect past project work and outcomes for their qualification projects, and they provide concrete and realistic ideas on how best to finalize the qualification projects.

In particular, the summaries reveal that the ESRs were successful in publishing papers in books and journals as well as getting presentations accepted for international conferences. In that sense, the FEWL project seems to reach the goals aimed at supporting early-stage researchers and introducing them into the scientific communities.

The study plans have a preliminary shape. Originally, the plan was to work on these plans during the third ESR workshop, which was originally planned for June 2025. For several reasons, we moved this workshop to a slot in September. The further plan is to reflect the future study plans together with the ESR during the third ESR workshop to be conducted in September 2025 at Tallinn University in order to increase the probability that the ESR succeeds in finishing their qualification projects.

## **List of Abbreviations**

FEWL – Enhancing Research on the Formal Education Programmes and Workplace Learning

ESR – Early Stage Researchers

TLU -Tallinn University

UPB - Paderborn University

JYU – University of Jyväskylä

# Early Stage Researchers' Study Plans

## Jana Schwede, Paderborn University

### **Past Achievements** (the period since 2023):

- What research activities have you undertaken in the past two years?

Over the past two years, I have completed my master's thesis – a Delphi study exploring the digital future of adult education – and carried out a research project on Learning Location Cooperation within the German dual vocational education and training (VET) system.

- Which publications (journal articles, book chapters, etc.) have you authored or coauthored? Please include citation details and publication status.

Fully published papers:

Schwede, J., Heisler, D., & Harteis, C. (2025). Integrating practice-based learning into formal education: Stakeholder perspectives on the challenges of Learning Location Cooperation (LLC) in Germany's dual VET system. *Social Sciences*, 14(3), 117.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14030117>

Schwede, J., & Harteis, C. (2024). Weiterbildung des Weiterbildungspersonals – Vorwiegend eine Aufgabe des Lernens am Arbeitsplatz. In C. Müller, J. Pranger, & J. Reißland (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitsorientierte Weiterbildungsdidaktik: Die doppelte Multiplikatorenqualifizierung* (Vol. 73, pp. 147–164). wbv Publikation.

<https://doi.org/10.3278/9783763974382>

- What types of conference contributions (e.g., presentations, posters, roundtables) did you submit? Which of these were accepted?

I submitted several proposals for presentations and roundtables, all of which were accepted. (Further details are provided in the next section.)

- Which scientific conferences have you attended (a) as an active contributor (presenting or organizing) and (b) as a listener?

a) As an active contributor, I attended the...

-“Jahrestagung der Sektion Berufs- und Wirtschaftspädagogik der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft” in September 2023

-American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting in April 2024 and April 2025

-European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) SIG 14- Conference in August 2024

b) As a listener, I attended the...

-European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) Conference in August 2023

- In which other academic activities have you participated (e.g., reviewing, mentoring, supervising)?

(1) Together with Bianca Steffen and Christian Harteis, I have initiated the development of an edited volume entitled Learning for Sustainability in Digitalized Work, which addresses the intersection of digitalization and sustainability in the field of workplace learning. The book is planned for publication with Springer as part of the series Professional and Practice-Based Learning.

(2) I also teach a seminar on research methods in vocational education, contributing to the academic training of student teachers in this field.

- Did you receive any awards, fellowships, or formal recognitions during this period?

No.

#### **Ongoing Activities (current work and time schedules):**

- Which publications are currently in preparation or under review? Please mention expected submission dates.

One publication is currently under review with *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology*, section Performance and Development.

Research topic: Fostering Learning in Dynamic Work Environments – Towards Integrative Approaches for Work-Related Learning.

Another manuscript is in the final preparation stage and expected to be submitted to the *Zeitschrift für Berufs- und Wirtschaftspädagogik (ZBW)* in July 2025.

Research topic: The Digital Future of Adult Education.

- What conference contributions are you currently developing or preparing for submission?

I will soon begin preparing for my paper presentation at the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) Conference, which will take place in August 2025.

- What are your ongoing research activities? Please provide an overview including milestones and timelines.

## **Paper 2 – Systematic Literature Review (Q3/2025–Q4/2026)**

Working Title: Learning Location Cooperation in German VET – A Systematic Review of Research Lines, Findings, and Future Directions // What Has Been Studied, What Remains: A Systematic Review on Learning Location Cooperation in German VET

Objective:

This paper aims to systematically analyze existing research on Learning Location Cooperation within the German vocational education and training system. The focus is on identifying

- which thematic aspects have been addressed over time,
- when and why these topics gained relevance in their respective contexts,
- what findings they yielded, and
- what current gaps and promising future research directions remain.

## **Paper 3 – Delphi Study (Q4/2025–Q4/2026)**

Working Title: Future Skills in German VET – A Delphi-Based Perspective on the Role of Learning Location Cooperation

Objective:

To identify future skill requirements for apprentices due to transformation processes and examine how Learning Location Cooperation can support their development.

Method:

Multi-stage Delphi survey with experts from education practice, academia, and business. Goals include identifying future transformations, deriving relevant competencies, linking them to learning locations, and formulating concrete cooperation strategies.

Target journals for both papers:

- Zeitschrift für Berufs- und Wirtschaftspädagogik (ZBW)
- bwp@
- Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis (BWP)

**Timeline and Milestones Overview:**

Quarter	Paper 2 – Literature Review	Paper 3 – Delphi Study
Q3 2025	Topic refinement, methodology understanding, initial literature screening	– Not yet started –
Q4 2025	Review protocol, sorting papers, development of coding framework	Study design, participant recruitment, development of first-round questionnaire
Q1 2026	Coding and synthesis of results, beginning of writing phase	Conducting and analyzing rounds 1 & 2
Q2 2026	Finalization and submission of Paper 2	Conducting and analyzing rounds 3 & 4, derivation of practice-oriented recommendations
Q3 2026	Revision of Paper 2 (if review received)	Writing phase for Paper 3
Q4 2026	Possible second revision cycle and publication of Paper 2	Finalization and submission of Paper 3

- What challenges are you currently facing in your ongoing research? What can help you overcome these challenges?

Managing time pressure and juggling multiple tasks (including unpredictable day-to-day responsibilities) is, of course, a common feature of academic life. What may help in my case are clear structures that define when I work on which tasks, as well as learning to set boundaries and not say "yes" to every request.

**Future Activities** (plans for the period until 2027):

- What are your publication goals for the next two years? Include intended journals and expected submission timelines.

Please see above.

- Which conferences do you plan to (a) attend as a presenter and (b) attend as a listener?

a) As a presenter, I plan to attend the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) Conference in August 2025, where I am scheduled to deliver a paper presentation.

Depending on whether I am able to remain in academia after the end of my current contract in December 2025, I may attend the...

-American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meetings 2026 and 2027

-European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) SIG 14- Conference 2026

-European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) Conference 2027

-Researching Work & Learning International Conference 2026

- Are there other relevant academic or research activities (e.g., training, mentoring, funding proposals) you intend to pursue?

I aim to complete the edited volume Learning for Sustainability in Digitalized Work together with Bianca Steffen and Christian Harteis.

I also consider participating in our university's Mentoring Program for female PhD students to further support my academic development.

- Are you considering international mobility (research stays, exchange programs)? If so, please specify your plans.

In 2024, I spent one month as a visiting PhD student at the University of Antwerp (Team EDUBRON) through the Erasmus+ program, which was a highly enriching experience that I greatly enjoyed. I am eager to engage in international mobility again in the future. One opportunity under informal discussion within our research team is a potential stay with Lennia Matos at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP).

- Are there any specific skills or competencies you plan to develop?

Strengthening my time management and maintaining resilience under pressure remain key developmental goals. In addition, I plan to enhance my methodological expertise in quantitative research to broaden my empirical research profile.

- Do you plan to apply for any grants, fellowships, or academic positions within this timeframe?

Don't know yet, depends on what happens throughout the next months (see below).

- What do you identify as the most significant challenges in achieving your planned goals?

It is currently uncertain whether I will be able to continue in a research position at UPB or another university after December 2025. As a result, securing funding has become a key concern and challenge at this stage.

- What resources, support structures, or collaborations would be most helpful to you in succeeding?

Remaining alert to emerging funding options and actively engaging with institutional support structures.

#### **Doctoral Thesis** (focus on thesis-related progress and plans):

- What is the current working title of your doctoral thesis?

Learning Location Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (VET): Perspectives, Potentials, and Challenges at the Intersection of Theory and Practice

- What is the current status of your thesis? (e.g., completed chapters, data analysis phase, writing progress)

Paper 1 is published, so I am now beginning to work on Paper 2 and soon also on Paper 3 (see Timeline and Milestones Overview for more details).

- What were the most significant obstacles or turning points in 2023 and/or 2024 regarding your thesis?

The most significant obstacle in 2024 during the preparation of my now published paper were health-related challenges, which resulted in time pressure and delays.

- What do you foresee as the main challenges in completing your thesis in the next two years?

A key uncertainty concerns whether funding will be secured to enable me to pursue an academic career beyond my current position.

- When do you plan to (a) submit your thesis and (b) defend your thesis?

I hope both in 2027.

- What components still need to be completed before submission (e.g., analysis, chapters, revisions)?

See Timeline and Milestones Overview.

- What institutional or supervisory support do you require to meet your thesis goals?

Essential resources for achieving my objectives consist of structured dialogue with my supervisor and peers, critical and constructive feedback processes, and targeted support from student assistants for routine yet time-intensive tasks.

## Kaidi Nurmik, Tallinn University

### **Past Achievements (the period since 2023):**

- What research activities have you undertaken in the past two years?

I have conducted interviews with 20 Estonian primary school teachers and carried out a questionnaire with 2,074 sixth-grade Estonian students.

- Which publications (journal articles, book chapters, etc.) have you authored or co-authored? Please include citation details and publication status.

- Nurmik, K., & Timoštšuk, I. (2024). Integrating Work-Life and Student Work-Related Experiences in Classroom Learning—The Perspective of Primary Teachers. *Social Sciences*, 13(12), 649. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13120649>

- Nurmik, K., & Timoštšuk, I. (pre-print). Primary Teachers' Perceptions of Agency-Supportive Learning Environments. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4999400>

- What types of conference contributions (e.g., presentations, posters, roundtables) did you submit? Which of these were accepted?

I have given three presentations:

- Learning Context Factors Shaping Learner Agency – An Ecological Perspective; SIG 10, 21 & 25 Conference "Walking the Talk", Bari, 11–13 September 2024. University of Bari, p. 39.
- Integrating Working Life in Classroom Learning – The Primary Teacher Perspective; EARLI SIG14 Conference, Jyväskylä University, 21–23 August 2024. Ed. Rikala, P. Jyväskylä University, pp. 141–142.
- Supporting Primary Students' Agency at School Through Life-World Experiences; INTED2023 Conference, Valencia, 6–8 March 2023. IATED Proceedings, pp. 7259–7266. <https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2023.1992>

- Which scientific conferences have you attended (a) as an active contributor (presenting or organizing) and (b) as a listener?

**As an active contributor:**

- SIG 10, 21 & 25 Conference, Bari, 11–13 September 2024
- EARLI SIG14 Conference, Jyväskylä, 21–23 August 2024
- INTED2023 Conference, Valencia, 6–8 March 2023

**As a listener:**

- PROFRES Doctoral Research School Spring Symposium “Grappling with Methods: The What, How and Why of Research”, 18–19 March 2024
- In which other academic activities have you participated (e.g., reviewing, mentoring, supervising)?

I have supervised and reviewed master's theses in primary teacher education. I have also participated in the teacher qualification assessment committee and in the admission committee for primary teacher education.

- Did you receive any awards, fellowships, or formal recognitions during this period?

No.

**Ongoing Activities (current work and time schedules):**

- Which publications are currently in preparation or under review? Please mention expected submission dates.
- One article (Primary Teachers' Perceptions of Agency-Supportive Learning Environments) is currently under review.
- Another article will be submitted at the end of June 2025.
- One more article is being written and is planned to be submitted in autumn 2025.

- What conference contributions are you currently developing or preparing for submission?

I am currently preparing a presentation for a symposium at the FERA Conference 2025, which will take place 5–7 November 2025 at the University of Lapland.

- What are your ongoing research activities? Please provide an overview including milestones and timelines.

- Submit fourth article – September 2025
- Submit doctoral thesis for pre-defence – February 2026
- Submit doctoral thesis for final defence – June 2026

- What challenges are you currently facing in your ongoing research? What can help you overcome these challenges?

A major challenge is the long duration of the article review process—one article has been under review for a year. This could delay my thesis submission. Another challenge is balancing multiple responsibilities, including academic tasks unrelated to my dissertation. Solutions could include better time management.

#### **Future Activities (plans for the period until 2027):**

- What are your publication goals for the next two years? Include intended journals and expected submission timelines.

I aim for the article currently under review to be published in 2025. In addition, I plan to submit two more articles during the year 2025. My primary goal is to complete and submit my doctoral thesis by 2026. Any additional publication plans will be considered after the thesis has been finalized.

- Which conferences do you plan to (a) attend as a presenter and (b) attend as a listener?

FEWA Conference 2025, which will take place 5–7 November 2025 at the University of Lapland (as a presenter).

- Are there other relevant academic or research activities (e.g., training, mentoring, funding proposals) you intend to pursue?

Not at the moment.

- Are you considering international mobility (research stays, exchange programs)? If so, please specify your plans.

Not at the moment.

- Are there any specific skills or competencies you plan to develop?

Yes, I plan to develop skills in using AI tools to support academic writing and data analysis.

- Do you plan to apply for any grants, fellowships, or academic positions within this timeframe?

Not at the moment.

- What do you identify as the most significant challenges in achieving your planned goals?

Maintaining motivation and focus during the final phase of the doctoral process, especially if publications are delayed or rejected.

- What resources, support structures, or collaborations would be most helpful to you in succeeding?

Collaborations with more experienced colleagues and regular guidance from my supervisor would be helpful.

#### **Doctoral Thesis** (focus on thesis-related progress and plans):

- What is the current working title of your doctoral thesis?

Student Agency Development in Interdisciplinary Learning in Primary School, Tallinn University, School of Educational Sciences

- What is the current status of your thesis? (e.g., completed chapters, data analysis phase, writing progress)

Phase 1 – Teacher study: Interviews conducted, data analyzed, and findings presented in two articles (one published, one under review). A third article will be submitted in September 2025. Phase 2 – Student study: Questionnaire data collected; article submitted in June 2025. From October 2025, I will start writing the analytical overview, with the goal of submitting for pre-defence in early 2026.

- What were the most significant obstacles or turning points in 2023 and/or 2024 regarding your thesis?

Time constraints were caused by additional responsibilities as a junior researcher and working as a primary school teacher.

- What do you foresee as the main challenges in completing your thesis in the next two years?

Whether the articles will be accepted and published in time to allow submission of the dissertation.

- When do you plan to (a) submit your thesis and (b) defend your thesis?

(a) Submit in February 2026

(b) Defend in October 2026

- What components still need to be completed before submission (e.g., analysis, chapters, revisions)?

The analytical overview.

- What institutional or supervisory support do you require to meet your thesis goals?

Regular meetings and feedback from my supervisor.

**Hanna Nygren, University of Jyväskylä**

**Past Achievements:**

The biggest activity since 2023 is that I started to work as a senior researcher at the Emergency Services Academy. I work as the editor-in-chief (with my working couple) of a scientific publication that publishes research about safety and rescue issues. We got the publication forum classification two months ago and that feels a great achievement.

I have been busy with my daily work, but I have been able to write my third article and the some summary. My daily work has been reviewing, mentoring, supervising the university of applied sciences thesis and writing funding applications.

Two times (since 2023), I have been organizing the “Research days” at the ESA [Pelastustoimen tutkimuspäivät 2025 - Pelastusopisto](#).

Now I am finalizing a publication (my third). We already got the peer review and comments, but there have been some unexpected, sad events in my personal life, which have had an impact on the workflow. I have a couple of months for my research now, and I just need to push.

**Future Activities (plans for the period until 2027):**

I know I will be working with scientific issues in my everyday work. I will be training, mentoring, and writing funding proposals. There are also some research activities coming that are connected to biometric measurements.

The current title of my research is “Adults’ adaptation to technology during the work-life change”. I have started to write the summary, and I am trying to finalize my third.

**Doctoral Thesis**

I hope to get it finished in December 2025 to defend my thesis in 2026.

## Conclusions

The collection of publications and conference activities reveal that the ESR succeeded in growing into the scientific community which was a major aim of WP3. Getting articles published or presentations accepted for conferences implies that the ESR were able to communicate their research endeavours appropriately and that these endeavours find appreciation in the community. Of course, these three ESR are at different levels of progress but all three indicate a clear plan for the future and for the finalization of their PhD work.

As a conclusion of our experiences, it might be too ambitious to plan cooperative work between PhD students, because their main focus is to meet the expectations at their home universities. However, on the one hand a serious progress of all ESR during the FEWL project phase can be observed, which is a great success, on the other hand, the ESR had the opportunity to experience the international research landscape through our activities.

The project activities generated a commitment between all project partners with sustainable effects, as the connections will remain beyond the project phase and allows all ESR to interact and to cooperate with the wider project team beyond the project phase that ends December 2025.