

Guideline BOS.QT PhD seminar

This document is meant to guide you in hosting a BOS.QT PhD seminar in your working group. It was developed by the PhD student representatives Kilian Unterguggenberger and Henning Mollenhauer based on a discussion in the BOS.QT Assembly in July 2024 and the outcome of a survey among the PhD students in May 2025. Please share this document with all presenting people from your group.

Definition

from the BOS.QT regulations:

The PhD seminar develops the scientific environment for the research projects of PhD students and provides peer-oriented scientific exchange of ideas and experiences, scientific discourse, feedback and stimulation. The seminar takes place at least three times per semester. Seminar presentations and short talks will focus on the research results of PhD students. The PhD seminar is a mandatory element of the BOS.QT curriculum (minimum participation: 80 % of seminars).

Audience

The BOS.QT PhD seminar is a peer-oriented format. Talks and lab tours are given by the PhD students of one working group for all other PhD students within the graduate school. Our research topics are diverse and include theoretical as well as experimental work. It is therefore essential for a successful seminar to keep as much of the talks accessible to an audience outside of your own research field. The emphasis should be on the introductory part and follow a tutorial-like style.

Preparation and chair

Please reserve a seminar room at your institution and inform the BOS.QT coordination office one week in advance about the address, room number and planned agenda including the topics covered by the speakers. You can typically expect up to 30 people at a PhD seminar. A hybrid option is not possible according to the Assembly's decision of October 16, 2025.

The seminar including lab tours should not exceed the time frame of two hours, typically from 4 to 6 pm.

A PhD student from the graduate school selected by the student representatives serves as the chair for the seminar. The PhD student should not be from the hosting working group. The chair discusses the agenda of the seminar with the hosting group in advance, typically immediately before the start of the seminar.

Agenda

The BOS.QT student representatives welcome the participants. They use the opportunity for announcements regarding the graduate school before handing over to the chair of the seminar.

Introduction

The seminar should start with a short introduction on the general research interest of the hosting group. It should not exceed 15 minutes including questions and is typically given by the principal investigator of the group.

BOS.QT PhD student talks

The main part of the seminar consists of two talks by BOS.QT PhD students from the hosting group. The duration of a talk is 30 minutes including questions. It can be extended accordingly. If no lab tours are planned, three talks can be given or the length of the individual talks can be extended. The talk should focus on a research topic of the PhD student while keeping the diverse audience in mind. Each PhD student should present once in a seminar during their time as members of the graduate school.

Lab tour

If the hosting group has experimental activities and regulations allow for it, a lab tour is often a highlight of the PhD seminar. Usually it is necessary to split the PhD students into groups.

Get together

After each seminar, all participants are invited to join for a social event. Usually, the PhD student representatives organize the get together. However, suggestions for activities, restaurants or bars from the hosting group are always appreciated!

Suggested schedule

for an experimental group with lab tours

| Time | Item | Speaker / responsible people |
|-------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 16:00 | Welcome | BOS.QT student representatives |
| 16:05 | Introduction | Host group PI |
| 16:20 | Seminar talk | Host group BOS.QT PhD student |
| 16:50 | Seminar talk | Host group BOS.QT PhD student |
| 17:20 | Lab tours | Host group |
| 18:00 | Get together | BOS.QT student representatives |