

# Strategies for a Successful PhD

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The **PASET** Regional Scholarship  
and Innovation Fund

*An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology*



**PASET**  
Partnership for Skills  
in Applied Sciences,  
Engineering & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



# Where do you see yourself in 10 years?



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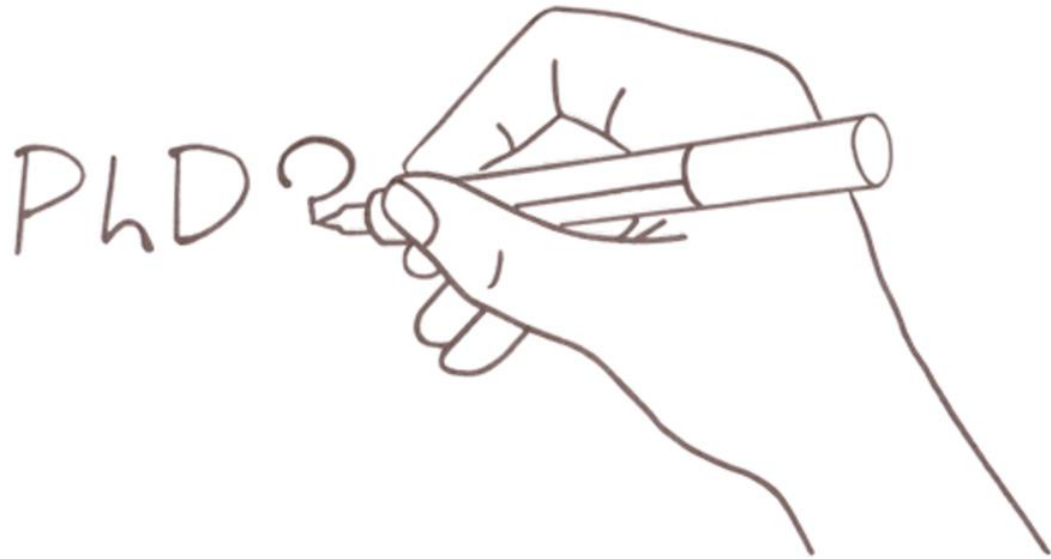
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# Why a PhD program?



- Employability
- To be the first from my village
- Learn more about the subject
- A natural step
- To be a Professor

# Strategies



**GOALS**

**PLANNING**

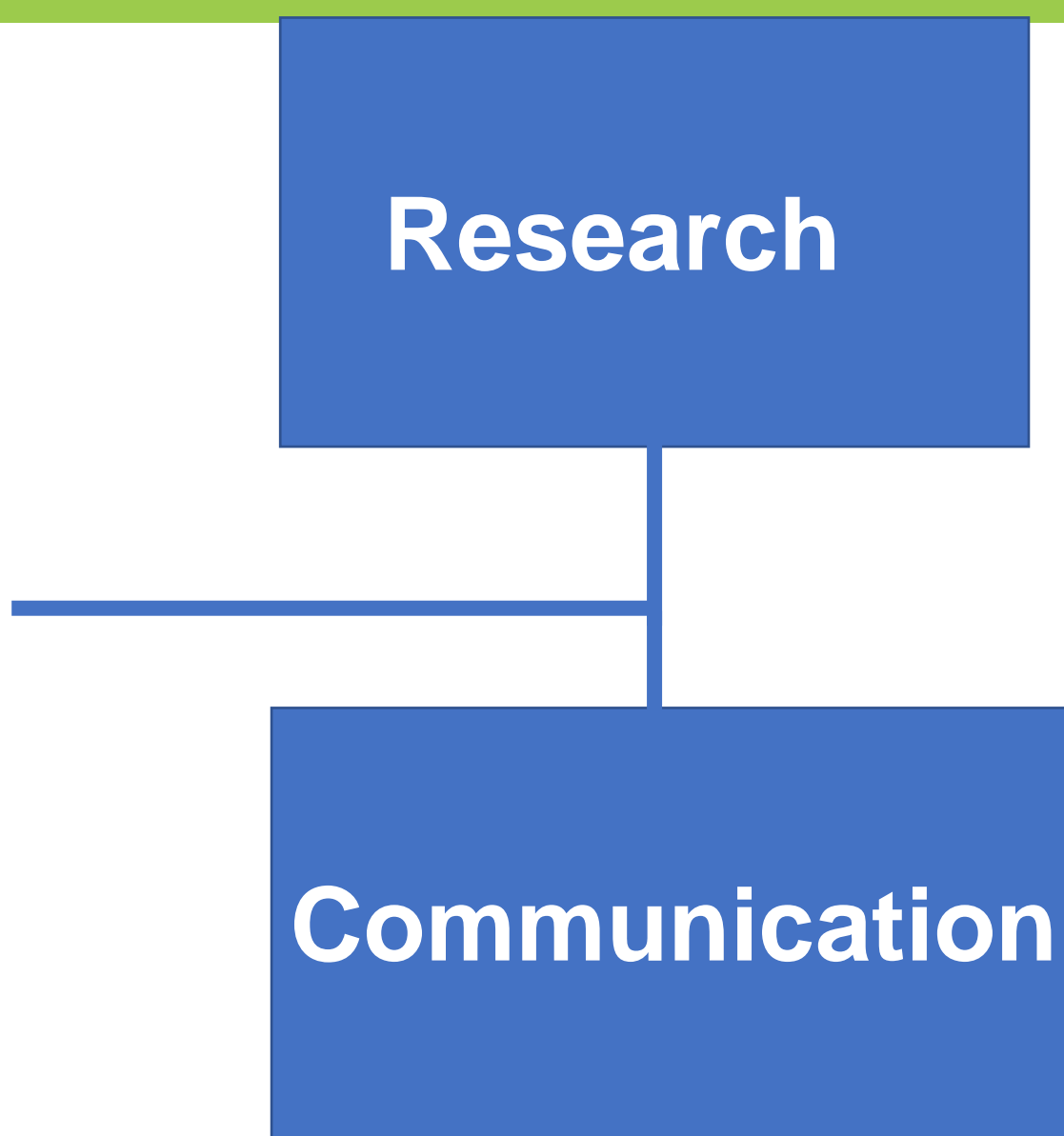
**TIME MANAGEMENT**

**PhD and TRANSITION**

# Step 1: GOALS



# Step 2: PLANNING



# A) Research

**10 QUALITIES OF A GREAT MENTOR**

Every successful person in the world whether they're an entrepreneur, an athlete or a musician all had great mentors who helped them unlock their potential. Here's how you can tell whether or not you have a great mentor or not.

**A great mentor...**

- 1 CHALLENGES YOU**  
A great mentor always pushes you to be better and never lets you rest on your laurels
- 2 IS EXPERIENCED**  
Your mentor should have a ton of relevant experience and wisdom they can draw upon
- 3 IS WHERE YOU WANT TO BE**  
Choose a mentor that shares the same vision of success as you
- 4 SUPPORTS YOU**  
A great mentor will pick you up when you stumble and fall
- 5 IS A GREAT LISTENER**  
Your mentor should be willing to listen to more than just their own opinion
- 6 IS INVESTED IN YOUR SUCCESS**  
A great mentor is happy to see you succeed and even potentially surpass them
- 7 GUIDES YOU TOWARD THE ANSWER**  
Mentors should never just give you the answer, but give you the tools to figure it out yourself
- 8 PROVIDES CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK**  
Your mentor will praise you when you've done right and, most importantly, help you figure out what went wrong
- 9 RESPECTS YOU**  
A great mentor should never look down on you and instead see you as their equal
- 10 IS AVAILABLE**  
A great mentor should always be available to provide the help and advice you need

## Selecting a potential mentor





# Main Research Components

- Formulating and selecting the research idea
- Design and experimentation
- Ethics (Standard Research Practice)
- Data Management Plan
- Monitor plan

**Mentor**



**Bottom up and  
not top down**

**Mentee**

# Communication

- Establish a communication strategy

e.g. listen, read and learn, attend scientific writing workshops, present at internal seminars (lab and student seminars), publish good papers (**start with a review paper**), learn and attempt grant writing; mentor undergrad. students, interns...

# GET on to the big stage



- Professional membership/ meetings
- Awards
- Mini-Grants

# Step 3: Time Management



## Balancing multiple responsibilities

- To do list
- Rank tasks
- Minimize distractions
- Track your time
- ??

# Step 4: PhD Defense and Transition



- 4 years of research in 20 min
- Follow University guidelines
- Prepare well
- Practice well
- Present well
- Answer questions well

# Graduation



PhD



**GOALS**

**PLANNING**

**TIME MANAGEMENT**

# Transition



# Thank you



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For more information contact

## **Regional Coordination Unit**

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