

The establishment of the Doctoral School of Psychology (PDI) began in the fall of 2022 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Károli Gáspár Reformed University. At that time, there were three doctoral schools operating at the university—including one within the faculty—so the regulatory framework was considered well-established.

The goal was to establish a disciplinary doctoral school encompassing as much of the field of psychological sciences as possible. Accordingly, the PDI comprises four major, clearly distinct research areas (cognitive neuroscience, interoception, mental health, social psychology, and cultural psychology). Three of these four areas, as well as the methodology module, are each led by an academic doctor.

Our doctoral program builds upon Károli's masters program and the department's specific research focus; thus, in line with international trends, it emphasizes the integration of applied health psychology and basic experimental psychology research, linking basic research to its applications through a translational approach. It also emphasizes presenting mental health alongside its community and societal conditions, and examines psychological phenomena within their sociocultural contexts. A distinctive feature of our methodological training is the greater emphasis placed on physiological measurements—and, more generally, on experimental methods—as well as the identification of types through cluster analysis. Like other training institutions, we consider the integration of qualitative and quantitative research strategies to be important.

Our goal is to operate a doctoral school with international ties that will gain renown over time; thus—in line with the faculty's development plans—we place special emphasis on faculty and student mobility, and through this, on establishing and fostering international collaborations. Among the objectives of the Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe, which was formulated in 2021 to define the goals of the European Research Area, we consider the creation of scientific value with societal impact to be particularly important, as it focuses on the practical application of research results in everyday life. In connection with the university's IFT, the PDI also aims to explore synergies among individual research groups and strengthen networking and multidisciplinary collaboration among them.