



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

THE PhD PROGRAM AS A CAREER PATH: Lessons learned by the PhD School in Psychology at the Catholic University of Milan

*A.C Bosio[°], M. Faldi^{°°}, G. Graffigna^{°°°}, S.
Caravita^{°°°}, M. Lanz^{°°°}, D. Margola^{°°°}, G. Riva^{°°°}*

[°]Dean, PhD School in Psychology UCSC

^{°°}Director, PhD Schools and Continuing Education UCSC

^{°°°}Coordinators, PhD School in Psychology UCSC



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

The PhD Program as a Career Path

PROJECT

REVISING THE MISSION AND THE FORMATIVE POSITIONING OF THE PhD SCHOOL IN PSYCHOLOGY, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MILAN (PhDS Ψ -UC)

TOPICS:

- 1) Project aims
- 2) Strategic developments
- 3) Implementation at the training
- 4) ... and organizational level
- 5) Open questions and challenges



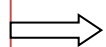
1/A) PHDSΨ-UC: HISTORIC BACKGROUND

- **Started in 2004 (xxvi cycle – 2011)**
- **~ 9 students per year (~ 30 students in total)**
- **Length: 3 years**
- **“Broaden vision” of psychology:**
 - ✓ **multi-thematic**
 - ✓ **... multi-theoretical**
 - ✓ **... multi-methods perspective**

- **Twin and parallel training path:**



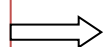
COMMON



Shared background



INDIVIDUAL



Specific and specialist research project

→ Historic choice: academic orientation



1/B) PhDSΨ-UC: THE REASONS FOR CHANGE

1 EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF THE SCHOOL'S OUTCOME

- Only 1/3 of the PhD candidates succeeded in an academic career evaluated as a “decent job”

2 ECONOMIC AND REGULATORY PICTURE

- The University Reform in Italy (25/01/11) and the national economic situation have not improved young researchers' career prospects

3 SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

- New demand for intangible knowledge/skills (information, communication, change, learning, empowerment, networking ...)
- New opportunities for soft/human sciences (also psychology)



2) PhDS Ψ -UC'S PROJECT: STRATEGIC ASPECTS

- Widening professional outcomes



IN THE PAST

⇒ **INSIDE the University**
(academic career)



NOW/IN THE FUTURE

⇒ **INSIDE the University**
(academic career)

And/or

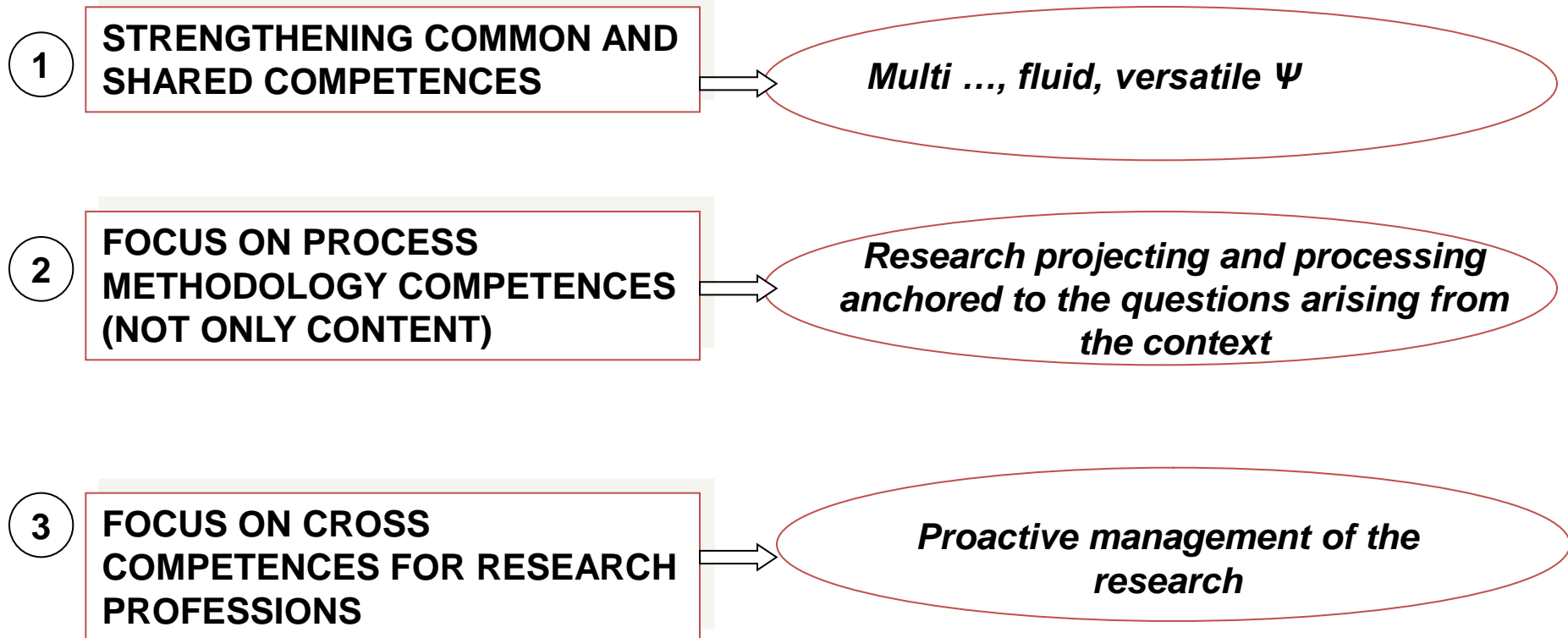
⇒ **OUTSIDE the University**
(applied research professions)

**The new positioning of the
PhDS Ψ**



3) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: A - TRAINING LEVEL

- Three intervention lines:





4) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: B - ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

- **NEW ATTENTION TO THE POST-DOC TRANSITION IN ORDER TO FOSTER PhD CANDIDATES' *ENTREPRENEURSHIP* IN THE SCOPE OF APPLIED RESEARCH PROFESSIONS**
- **TWO LINES OF INTERVENTION**
 - 1) **STRENGTHENING RESEARCHERS' MANAGEMENT SKILLS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS COMPETENCES (SEE ABOVE, CHART 3)**
 - 2) **SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCUBATORS FOR APPLIED SPIN-OFFS**



5) OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH LEVEL PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROFESSIONS IN EXTRA-UNIVERSITY CONTEXTS

1

TO MITIGATE A CAREER REPRESENTATION ONLY FOCUSED ON ACADEMIA

- How to convince PhD candidates (and their supervisors) that University is not the “only possible world”? ...
- ... nor always the best one?

2

TO DEVELOP A VIEW OF APPLIED RESEARCH FOCUSED ON THE DEMAND ARISING FROM THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

- How to promote/enhance the “multi” profile of a researcher
 - ✓ *Fluid, versatile*
 - ✓ *Able to design problem-based research?*



5) OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES, FOLLOWS

3

**TO PROMOTE A PRO-ACTIVE
MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH**

- How to sustain the development of the entrepreneurial-researcher?

4

**TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE AND
VALUE AMONG HIGH LEVEL
PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH
PROFESSIONS IN THE SOCIO-
ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

- How to make the context aware of applied psychological research relevance?
- How to involve stakeholders and potential Clients in the spin-off planning?



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

The PhD Program as a Career Path

All advice or shared experience is welcome!

Thank you for your attention!

claudio.bosio@unicatt.it