

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **CGS Teams with ProQuest to Explore the Future of Doctoral Dissertations**

Washington, DC — The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) today announced it will partner with ProQuest to [explore the future of doctoral dissertations](#) in a new Best Practice project, which will culminate in a workshop to be held in Washington, D.C. in January of 2016. The two-day workshop will convene graduate deans, publishers, library and information professionals, and other stakeholders to discuss how emerging technologies and other innovations in doctoral training may shape the Ph.D. dissertation of the future.

CGS plans to invite scholars and experts from different stakeholder groups to write short pieces on their view of the current state and future prospects of doctoral dissertations, and to collect these papers into an edited volume that will be distributed to CGS membership. “Ultimately, the goal will be to determine the questions that will require more sustained consideration by the graduate community,” explained CGS President, Suzanne Ortega. “What information do deans need to navigate the shifting landscape of doctoral dissertations? What kinds of questions should we be asking of our structures and policies, our staff and faculty partners, and our students?”

The changing nature of academic publishing and scholarly dissemination, new technologies, and new paradigms for graduate education have caused some to question whether the traditional doctoral dissertation should remain a strict requirement for the completion of the PhD. Might dissertations take different forms (such as through a series of blog posts or as collaborative work)? How might the dissertation be structured to reduce time to degree? What is needed to ensure nontraditional dissertations are archived sustainably? What, if any, differences exist among the broad disciplinary fields of humanities and social sciences and STEM dissertations? What roles do open access dissertations and embargoes play? These questions, among others, will continue to structure the conversation in the graduate community about doctoral dissertations.

ProQuest, renowned as a gateway for discovery and access to dissertations and theses from the world’s leading universities, will support this project. “This collaboration with CGS is both exciting and important,” said Niels Dam, ProQuest Vice President, Product Management. “As holder of the world’s largest collection of dissertation and theses, and partner to over 3000 global institutions we are pleased to be sharing data, metrics, and on-the-ground insight that will inform the discussion about the next generation of doctoral dissertations and help the dissertations community prepare for the future.”

CGS plans to share results of the project in the spring of 2016.

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**About CGS ([www.cgsnet.org](http://www.cgsnet.org))**

*The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 91% of the doctoral degrees and 81% of the master's degrees. \* The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

*\* Based on data from the 2013 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*

**About ProQuest (<http://www.proquest.com>)**

*ProQuest connects people with vetted, reliable information. Key to serious research, the company's products are a gateway to the world's knowledge including dissertations, governmental and cultural archives, news, historical collections and ebooks. ProQuest's technologies serve users across the critical points in research, helping them discover, access, share, create and manage information.*

*The company's cloud-based technologies offer flexible solutions for librarians, students and researchers through the ProQuest®, Bowker®, Dialog®, ebrary® and EBL™ businesses – and notable research tools such as the Summon® discovery service, the Flow® collaboration platform, the Pivot® research development tool and the Intota™ library services platform. The company is headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with offices around the world.*