

F.R.S.-FNRS MINI-GUIDE GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS CALL 2026

French version: [click here](#).

1. SCHEDULE

Opening of the call: **WEDNESDAY, 10TH DECEMBER 2025** on [e-space](#) for the online submission.

INSTRUMENTS			GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS CALL 2026			
			ELECTRONIC VALIDATION DEADLINES ¹			
			ON E-SPACE			
			APPLICANT	PROMOTER	RECTOR	
POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER	Research Associate	CQ	Thursday 8 th January at 2 p.m.*	Thursday 15 th January at 2 p.m.	Friday 23 rd January at 2 p.m.	
	Postdoctoral Researcher	CR	Tuesday 20 th January at 2 p.m.*	Tuesday 27 th January at 2 p.m.	Monday 2 nd February at 2 p.m.	
	Postdoctoral Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc	CSPD				
	Postdoctoral Clinical Master Specialist	SPD				
	Postdoctoral Clinical Master Specialist renewal	SPD-REN				
	Clinical Researcher	CCL				
	Clinical Researcher renewal	CCL-REN				
	Senior Research Associate	MR				
	Research Director	DR				
	Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research extension	MISU-PROL				
DOCTORAL RESEARCHER	Research Fellow	ASP	Tuesday 17 th February at 2 p.m.*	Friday 20 th February at 2 p.m.	Tuesday 3 rd March at 2 p.m.	
	Research Fellow renewal	ASP-REN				
	Special Doctoral Grant ²	BSD				
	Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc and a Ph.D.	CSD				
	Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc and a Ph.D. renewal	CSD-REN				
	Clinical Master Specialist Applicant to a Ph.D.	SD				
	Clinical Master Specialist Applicant to a Ph.D. renewal	SD-REN				
	Veterinary MD. Ph.D. Student	VETE-CCD				
	Veterinary MD. Ph.D. Student renewal	VETE-CCD-REN				

*Please note that this is a **fixed deadline** and the applicant will not be able to edit, save or submit the application once this deadline has passed. Please make sure that it is submitted on time.

The decision to allocate grants and fellowships will be made by the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees in June 2026. The grants and fellowships will start on 1st October 2026.

The F.R.S.-FNRS will give researchers who may be granted with a fellowship renewal or a fellowship extension (ASP-REN, CSD-REN, SD-REN, VETE-CCD-REN, SPD-REN, CCL, CCL-REN, MISU-PROL) access to the electronic form via the [e-space](#) application.

¹ All times are Brussels local time.

² BSD instrument: see chapter 6, section 6.3 of this mini-guide.

2. APPENDICES

2.1 For each instrument (except MR, DR and MISU-PROL), appendices must be enclosed with the application. For further information, click on the relevant instrument below:

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER	CR	CSPD	SPD	SPD-REN	CCL	CCL-REN	CQ		
DOCTORAL RESEARCHER	ASP	ASP-REN	BSD	CSD	CSD-REN	SD	SD-REN	VETE-CCD	VETE-CCD-REN

2.2 Deadlines for providing appendices

	DEADLINES 2026	DOCUMENTS	INSTRUMENTS
POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER	Thursday 15 th January ³ at 2 p.m.	Opinion letter from the promoter	CQ
	Friday 23 rd January	Appendices (see section 2.1) ⁴	CQ
	Tuesday 27 th January ³ at 2 p.m.	Opinion letter from the promoter	CR, CSPD, SPD, CCL
	Monday 2 nd February	Appendices (see section 2.1) ⁴	CR, CSPD, SPD, SPD-REN, CCL, CCL-REN
	Monday 16 th March ³	Opinion letters from the reference persons	CQ, MR, DR
	Friday 1 st May ³	Only for applicants who will not have their PhD on 2 nd February 2026 (validation deadline for rectors): Certificate or copy of the Ph.D. diploma and Minutes of the thesis defence ⁴	CR, CSPD, SPD
		"Seal of Excellence Certificate" granted after the applicant validation deadline ⁴	CR, CSPD, SPD, CQ
		Publications accepted after the applicant validation deadline ⁴	All
DOCTORAL RESEARCHER	Friday 20 th February ³ at 2 p.m.	Opinion letter from the promoter	ASP, CSD, SD, VETE-CCD
	Tuesday 3 rd March	Appendices (see section 2.1) ⁴	All except ASP-REN
	Tuesday 31 st March ³	Inputs from scientific experts (see chapter 5)	ASP, CSD, SD, VETE-CCD
	Friday 1 st May ³	Ranking ⁴ completed by the faculty(ies) awarding undergraduate and master (or equivalent) degrees	ASP, CSD, SD, VETE-CCD
		Publications accepted after the applicant validation deadline ⁴	ASP, CSD, SD, VETE-CCD, CSD-REN2
	Sunday 31 st May	Advisory opinion from the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee)	ASP-REN, BSD, CSD-REN, SD-REN, VETE-CCD-REN Except CSD-REN2

3. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2025

3.1 Modification of the "scientific section" template

The scientific section has been split into several separate files in order to better structure the information expected and to facilitate its review.

³ Any additional documents relevant to the application are intended for Scientific Commissions members.

⁴ Where applicable, to be uploaded or mentioned by the applicant on a dedicated page at <https://e-space.frs-fnrs.be> as a follow-up of their application file, after the validation deadline set for the applicant.

3.2 Measures to limit the number of applications

The F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees in December 2025 adopted the following decisions:

- To limit the number of applications to a maximum of two attempts. This measure applies to the "Research Fellow (ASP)" and "Postdoctoral Researcher (CR)" instruments.

As per the ASP instrument, the academic degree seniority will be of 4 years maximum (instead of 3 years). This term shall expire at the latest on the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) to validate applications.

These measures will take effect **as of the 2027 call**.

- **As of the 2026 call**, any application withdrawn after the deadline for validation by the academic authorities (rectors) and before the Scientific Commission meeting will be recognized.
- As part of the ex-ante evaluation procedure, the Scientific Commissions, meeting in session, establish a consolidated ranking of the applicants. For the ASP and CR instruments, the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees has decided that applicants whose application is not ranked within the top 70% by the Scientific Commission in a call for proposals will not be allowed to resubmit an application to the same instrument in the following call. This measure will enter into force **as of the 2026 call**.

3.3 Eligibility criteria related to seniority for researchers becoming long-term foster parents

The F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees in December 2025 decided to extend by 12 months the maximum period used to calculate eligibility based on the required academic seniority for applicants who have taken in one or more children at the same time as long-term foster parents, designated as such by the court, by a placement service accredited by the competent Community, or by a Community service responsible for youth protection (Youth Welfare Services, Committee for Special Youth Assistance) in the context of a long-term placement.

3.4 Promotion Instrument "Research Director" (DR)

By decision of the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees in December 2025, at the date of validation of their application on [e-space](#), an applicant seeking promotion to the title of Research Director must have successfully completed the supervision of at least one doctoral thesis that has been publicly defended.

3.5 Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research (MISU)

The MISU Call will not be opened in 2026.

3.6 Postdoctoral Researcher (CR): Rules and Regulations modifications regarding fellowship interruptions

The F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees approved, in October 2025, a new version of article 8 of the Rules and Regulations of the CR fellowship.

This new version changes the Rules and Regulations of the fellowship interruptions:

- There are new specifications regarding postponing the **beginning** of the fellowship.
- **If the start of the fellowship is postponed**, the 3 years of interruption allowed by the rules and regulations are reduced by the number of months by which the fellowship is postponed.
- The recipient must have been on F.R.S.-FNRS payroll for at least 6 months before being allowed to interrupt their fellowship **after its effective start**.

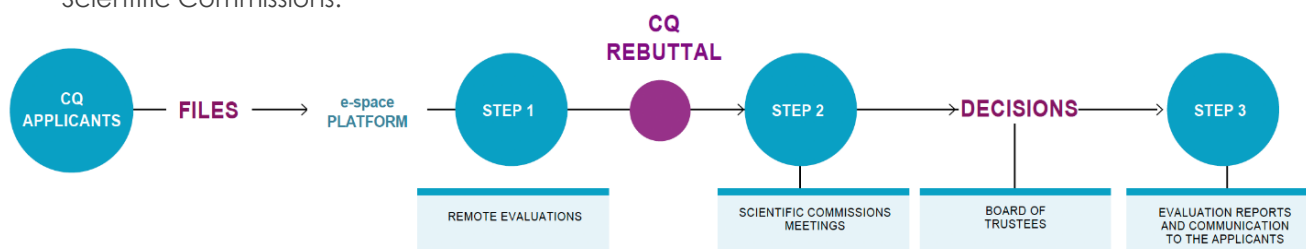
4. CQ APPLICANTS

4.1 REBUTTAL step

A rebuttal opportunity for applicants has been implemented, allowing applicants to clear up any misunderstanding or refute any allegation from the reviewers.

The rebuttal step takes place on [e-space](#), between step 1 (review by remote experts) and step 2 (review by the Scientific Commissions members).

CQ applicants will be provided more information about the rebuttal in early February. This step is planned to take place between early April and mid-May 2026, depending on the calendar of the Scientific Commissions.



4.2 Diffusion of the reference letters for CQ applicants recommended by the Scientific Commissions

The F.R.S.-FNRS will provide the universities with the reference letters (promoter and reference persons) of the CQ applicants recommended for appointment by the Scientific Commissions, as part of the internal selection by the universities.

By validating their application form, the CQ applicant accepts this transfer to the university of their choice.

5. SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS FOR DOCTORAL APPLICANTS

Doctoral applicants must provide the F.R.S.-FNRS with the references from two scientific experts who are not affiliated with any institution or university of the French Community of Belgium and close to their research field so they can give an external opinion on the project.

You are requested to:

1. Contact these people independently of one another to ensure that they accept this mission. The experts must not be aware of each other's identities to guarantee the independence of the evaluations conducted.
2. First make sure that these people have no conflict of interest with your application. They must be able to evaluate your research project with impartiality. For example, the F.R.S.-FNRS usually considers that there is a conflict of interest when:
 - there is an active collaboration with the applicant or its (co-)promoter (e.g. being co-author of a publication with the applicant or its (co-)promoter, having participated in the writing of the proposal, or being involved in the publication or implementation of the possible results of the proposal during the last 3 years);
 - there is (or has been over the last 3 years) a hierarchical or directly subordinate position with regard to the applicant or the (co-)promoter;
 - there is competition with the applicant or the (co-)promoter;
 - the applicant or their (co-)promoter is a close person to the reference person (friend, family, etc.).

Should a conflict of interest occur, or be reported by the scientific expert, the F.R.S.-FNRS will not come back to you and the input will not be communicated to the Scientific Commission, as stated below. It is therefore essential that the scientific expert is not in a conflict of interest situation.

They will be asked to give their input in **a one-page form (or maximum 4,000 characters)** on the quality of the research project according to these aspects:

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses
3. General comment.

This input **is not** a recommendation letter. It is an unbiased opinion, that will be relayed to the "F.R.S.-FNRS PhD Scientific Commission" of your choosing.

The people invited by the F.R.S.-FNRS based on the references you will have provided will also be informed about the assessment criteria used for your research project and the conflicts of interest management policy.

6. SPECIFIC REMARKS

6.1 Doctoral Researcher fellowships

The grade of the Master thesis, if available at the latest by the validation deadline set for the applicant, will be communicated to the Scientific Commission.

6.2 Doctoral Researcher fellowships Renewal

Research Fellow (ASP-REN), Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc and a Ph.D. (CSD-REN), Clinical Master Specialist Applicant to a Ph.D. (SD-REN) and Veterinary MD. Ph.D. Student (VETE-CCD-REN) Renewal fellowships applications will be evaluated by the Supervisory Panels (Thesis Advisory Committees).

The second renewal of the Medical Doctor Applicant to an MSc and a Ph.D. (CSD-REN2) fellowship will be subject to an evaluation by the relevant Scientific Commission.

6.3 Special Doctoral Grant (BSD)

To apply for a BSD, instrument intended for secondary education teachers, please send an email to the F.R.S.-FNRS at bourses-mandats@frs-fnrs.be. Please mention "BSD Call 2026" in the subject line and attach the following documents:

- a curriculum vitae (including date of birth, degrees, career path, information about the doctorate thesis: starting date, CFB university and promoter),
- a copy of the appointment letter in the secondary education.

BSD applications will be evaluated by the Supervisory Panels (Thesis Advisory Committees).

6.4 Part-time clinical (CSD, SD, CSPD, SPD, CCL) and veterinary (VETE-CCD) fellowships

The F.R.S.-FNRS reimbursements are limited to an annual limit. Limitations in force in 2027 are:

➤ Temporary doctor/veterinary	€58,700-
➤ Permanent doctor	€77,400-

6.5 Part-time Postdoctoral Clinical Master Specialist fellowship (SPD) and Clinical Researcher (CCL) Renewal

Only the first renewal (SPD-REN) shall be requested during the second year of the fellowship and simply upon request by the applicant. The request needs to be validated by the promoter and the host institution on [e-space](#).

From the second SPD renewal and the CCL fellowship (renewals included), the application will be subject to an evaluation by the relevant Scientific Commission.

7. CONTENT OF A PROPOSAL

Applicants will have the choice of writing their proposal either in French or in English. For some fields, using English can broaden the number of experts likely to take part in the evaluations. The [guide for applicants](#) provides further information about the content of a proposal.

It is recommended to applicants who wish to have their application file assessed by [Scientific Commissions](#) dedicated to SEN (Exact and Natural Sciences) and SVS (Health and Life Sciences) fields, as well as the Scientific Commission SHS-2, to submit their application in English. Should the application file be submitted in French, the F.R.S.-FNRS may require the applicant to provide a translation in English for the purpose of conducting the [ex-ante evaluation](#).

The applicants can use this [link](#) to download all the template documents (in .docx) to be filled within their application.

The F.R.S.-FNRS insists on **strict compliance with the [instructions](#) given for each template document** (expected contain, number of pages...) and reminds that the Scientific Commissions have the final say in the assessment of the application file.

NOTICE: no further change or modification to the proposal can be made after the validation deadline set for the applicant.

The application file contains the main sections described hereafter.

SECTION	CONTENT
RESEARCHER	Information that enables to verify the eligibility criteria (degrees, graduation date, institution)
	Academic background
	Awards and honours (max. 5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As stated in section 2.2, applicants to CR, CSPD, SPD and CQ can notify until 1st May a « Seal of Excellence Certificate » granted after the applicant validation deadline.
	The applicant's list of publications (published or accepted), structured according to the template document . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Applicants holding the academic degree of Doctor, who have been working <u>for 2 years at least</u> in institutions of the French-speaking community of Belgium (CFB) that have set up an <u>institutional repository (IR)</u>, must absolutely submit their publications list in a PDF format, directly created from this repository, and choose the appropriate F.R.S.-FNRS format. Please note that the list of publications must be a PDF document exported directly from a word processor or publishing software, not a scanned document. ➤ As stated in section 2.2, in case of publications accepted after the applicant validation deadline, applicants may add them until 1st May.
	Bibliometric data (except for applicants applying for ASP, BSD, CSD, SD, VETE-CCD): total number of publications, total number of citations, h-index, average number of citations and indication of the source chosen for these bibliometric data.
	Professional experience: career path, professional stays abroad of more than 30 days, academic positions, collaborations with other institutions (the 3 most important), main funding obtained. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Applicants to a post-doctorate CR fellowship who are planning one or several research stays will be required to provide a letter of approval or email exchanges demonstrating that formalities are being processed.
	List of supervised master and doctoral theses (only for applicants seeking a MR or DR promotion).
RESEARCH PROJECT	Title in French and in English (max. 200 characters each, including spaces) and, Summary in French and in English (max. 2,000 characters each, including spaces). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In case of funding, these are released and made public on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.
	Selection of the Scientific Commission and selection of 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of relevance (at least 2 descriptor fields must be relevant to the selected Scientific Commission), they can be completed by some unrestricted keywords . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If applicants select only one descriptor field relevant to the selected Scientific Commission, they shall justify the selection of the Scientific Commission in the application form. ➤ Applicants who select the Scientific Commission SUSTAINABILITY, dedicated to research projects relating to sustainability through interdisciplinarity, must demonstrate the "sustainability" aspect of their research project, including interdisciplinary aspects (max. 2,000 characters, including spaces).

SECTION	CONTENT
	<p>To be completed imperatively using the template document available in English or in French</p> <p>As a reminder, the applicants can use this link to download all the template documents (in .docx) to be filled within their application.</p> <p>Description of past research and project proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Summary of previous research achievements ➤ For all applicants (except MR and DR), description of the project divided in 4 parts accompanied by a reference bibliography: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Goals of the research II. State of the art III. Research project IV. Work plan ➤ For MR/DR promotion applicants, description of general orientation planned for their research for the next 5 to 10 years (max. 2 pages).
WORK ENVIRONMENT	<p>Facts allowing to assess whether the environment (the intellectual means and/or equipment available to the applicant) is consistent with the aims of the research project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Data can vary depending on the nature of the project, the scientific field and the type of fellowship.
SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS	<p>Contact details (first name, surname, email) of 2 scientific experts (only for applicants to ASP, SD, CSD, VETE-CCD). → See instructions in chapter 5</p>
REFERENCE PERSONS	<p>Contact details (first name, surname, email) of 3 reference persons (only for applicants to CQ, MR, DR).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Applicants shall contact the reference persons prior to mentioning their contact details in the application form to make sure that they are willing to provide an opinion letter following the instructions they will be given.

By submitting an application form, the applicant renounces all access to the confidential opinion letters related to their application (promoter, scientific experts and reference persons).

No information will be communicated to the applicant on the receipt of the letters to ensure confidentiality.

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA - EVALUATION REPORT

The application conditions, the goals of the different sections and the applicable criteria are detailed in the [guide for applicants](#).

The applicant is free to read the [evaluation guide](#) intended for experts in order to have a better understanding of the proposal's evaluation.

FELLOWSHIPS	CRITERIA	WEIGHT
RESEARCH FELLOW (DOCTORAL RESEARCHER)	Quality of the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ academic CV⁵ ➤ promoter's opinion (creativity, intellectual abilities, etc.) 	60%
	Quality of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ feasibility ➤ methodology ➤ originality ➤ potential impact 	25%
	Research environment	15%

⁵ It should be noted that Open Science practices constitute a key element adding value to the application file (and more particularly of the CV), but is not an evaluation criterion per se.

FELLOWSHIPS	CRITERIA	WEIGHT
POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER	Quality of the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ number and quality of the publications (journals, citations, etc.) ➤ promoter's opinion (creativity, intellectual abilities, independency, etc.) ➤ awards ➤ Open Science practices (optional)⁵ 	40%
	Quality of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ feasibility ➤ methodology ➤ originality ➤ potential impact 	40%
	Research environment	20%
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE	Quality of the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ number and quality of the publications (journals, citations, etc.) ➤ opinion of worldwide renowned referees (creativity, international influence, ability to develop a team, independency, etc.) ➤ project funding and grants obtained ➤ awards ➤ Open Science practices (optional)⁵ 	40%
	Quality of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ feasibility ➤ methodology ➤ originality ➤ potential impact 	25%
	Research environment	10%
	Potential / International recognition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ long stays abroad⁶ ➤ invitations to international conferences ➤ active collaborations, participation in networks 	25%

ALL DOCUMENTS, GUIDES, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND PRIVACY POLICY ARE AVAILABLE AT [HTTPS://WWW.FRS-FNRS.BE/EN/REGLEMENTS-GUIDES](https://www.frs-fnrs.be/en/reglements-guides) AND [HTTPS://WWW.FRS-FNRS.BE/EN/CHARTE-VIE-PRIVEE](https://www.frs-fnrs.be/en/charte-vie-privee)

QUESTIONS : bourses-mandats@frs-fnrs.be

⁶ A long-term stay outside the institution of origin is a key element adding value to the application file, whether it is a stay outside the institutions of the French-speaking community of Belgium (CFB) or in another institution of the CFB.