

1. FRESH: A FUND DEDICATED TO HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH

In 2012, the Government of the French-speaking Community of Belgium created the Human Sciences Research Fund (FRESH – Fonds pour la Recherche en Sciences Humaines). The aim of this Fund is to meet the different and complementary needs of the **fundamental research in social and human sciences**.

The Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 21st June 2018 has decided to restrict the call to doctorate grants for graduates in Social and Human Sciences (term: 2+2 years).

2. SCHEDULE

Opening of the call on the F.R.S.-FNRS web-based application [e-space](#) for the online submission: **THURSDAY 9TH JULY 2020**.

INSTRUMENTS		APPEL FRESH 2020			
		DEADLINE ¹ TO ACCESS THE E-FORM	ELECTRONIC VALIDATION DEADLINES ¹		
			APPLICANT	PROMOTER	RECTOR
1 st Grant	FRESH-B1	Wednesday 26 th August at 2 p.m.	Thursday 27 th August at 2 p.m.	Monday 7 th September at 2 p.m.	Thursday 10 th September at 2 p.m.
			APPLICANT	PROMOTER	
2 nd Grant	FRESH-B2	-	Thursday 27 th August at 2 p.m.	Monday 7 th September at 2 p.m.	

- The F.R.S.-FNRS will give researchers who may be granted with a fellowship renewal (FRESH-B2) access to the electronic form via the [e-space](#) application.
- FRESH Juries will meet in autumn of 2020 on the premises of the **F.R.S.-FNRS, 5 rue d'Egmont, B-1000 Brussels**.
- The decision to allocate the grants will be made by the Management Committee of the FRESH in December. First Grant scheme starts as from 1st October 2020 while Second Grant scheme starts as from 1st January 2021.

3. APPENDICES

3.1 For each instrument, appendices must be enclosed with the application. For more information on the appendices, click on the link of the instrument considered:

1ST GRANT	FRESH-B1
2ND GRANT	FRESH-B2

¹ All times are Brussels local time.

3.2 Deadlines for providing appendices

	DEADLINES IN 2020	DOCUMENTS
1ST GRANT	Monday 7 th September at 2 p.m.	Reference letter from promoter
	Wednesday 30 th September	Appendices (see point 3.1) ²
		Reference letters from: - 1 referee (member of the academic staff of a scientific institution) in addition to the promoter, - 1 referee involved in the field outside the academic sphere. They will be contacted by the FRESH.
		Ranking ² completed by the faculty(ies) awarding undergraduate and master (or equivalent) degrees
		Publication accepted after the deadline of validation by the applicant ²
2^N GRANT	Monday 2 nd November ³	Advisory opinion from the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee)

4. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2019

4.1 [Rules and Regulations](#)

Change of article 5 § 2: childbirth and/or adoption

The maximum period of time set in article 5 is extended for one additional year per childbirth and/or adoption (decision of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 23rd June 2020).

4.2 Organisation of the examinations

Pre-selected applicants to a 1st Grant are required to take an oral examination; they will be informed of the date of the oral examination during the second half of October and it cannot be modified by any means.

Oral examinations will take place on the premises of the F.R.S.-FNRS (5 rue d'Egmont, B-1000 Brussels), except for proven cases of force majeure in due course.

The F.R.S.-FNRS remains alert to the development of the situation related to the health crisis.

4.3 Eligibility of Research Logisticians as Promoter

Research logisticians of rank B and C, as defined by the Royal Decree of 31st October 1953 fixing 'le statut des agrégés, des répétiteurs et des membres du personnel scientifique des universités de l'État', are eligible as promoters of doctorate fellowships. Research logisticians of rank A are not eligible as promoters; however, they are eligible as co-promoters provided that they hold a PhD (decision of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 21st June 2019).

5. SPECIFIC REMARKS

5.1 Grants Renewal

² Where applicable, to be uploaded or mentioned by the applicant on a dedicated page on [e-space](#), as a follow-up of their application file after the validation deadline fixed for the applicant.

³ The deadline for the Advisory opinion by the Supervisory Panel is generally on 31st October. In 2020, it falls on a Saturday so the deadline is postponed to the next business day.

Applications for a FRESH 2nd Grant will be evaluated by the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee).

5.2 Ethical aspects

As from 2018, in order to reduce the Ethics Committees workload and to make the administrative procedures more flexible for applicants, the researchers concerned by ethical questions will be required to submit their questionnaire accompanied by the opinion of the Ethics Committee to the F.R.S.-FNRS only in case of granting. Funding will be subject to a favorable opinion of the Committee.

5.3 Only one FRIA/FRESH application

Graduates in:

- Art of Building and Urban Planning
- Public Health Sciences
- Geographic Sciences
- Environmental Sciences and Management
- Psychology Sciences

are not allowed to apply for both [FRIA](#) and [FRESH](#) instruments the same year.

6. CONTENT OF A PROPOSAL

Applicants will have the choice to write their proposal either in French or in English.

The F.R.S.-FNRS insists on **strict compliance with the instructions given for each part of the proposal** (scientific section relevant to the instrument selected, number of pages allowed for documents to be enclosed with the application form...) and stresses again the sovereign consideration of the juries assessing the application file.

NOTICE: no further changes or modification can be made in the proposal after the validation deadline fixed for the applicant.

One of the specificities of the FRESH Fund relates to the **societal impact** of the funded research programmes, as stressed and redefined by the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS of 21st June 2018: "The FRESH Fund supports fundamental research projects whose outcomes are likely to improve the understanding or functioning of one sector in the society in the short-medium term at a local, regional, national or international level, from many perspectives such as culture, economy, politics, sociology and psychosociology."

Applicants have the opportunity to justify the potential societal impact of their project in their application file. They should highlight the players, groups or sectors that are likely to benefit from the results of the research in the short-medium term.

Applicants must enclose with their application file a **support letter from a referee actually involved in the filed outside the academic sphere**.

The application file contains the main sections described hereafter.

SECTION	CONTENT
THE RESEARCHER	Information that enables to verify whether the eligibility criteria are met (degrees, graduation date, institution)
	Academic background
	Awards and honours (maximum 5)
	The applicant's list of publications (published or accepted, if any), structured according to the template ➤ <i>As stated in section 3.2, In case of publication accepted after the validation deadline set for the applicant, applicants may add them until 30th September.</i>
	Professional background , including relevant activities with regard to the research project

SECTION	CONTENT
	Title of the Master thesis
THE RESEARCH PROJECT	Title in English and in French (max. 200 characters each, including spaces) Summary in English and in French (max. 2,000 characters each, including spaces) ➤ <i>Funded proposals are released and made public on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.</i>
	Selection of the jury and selection of 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of relevance which may be completed by some unrestricted keywords . ➤ <i>If applicants select only one descriptor field corresponding to the jury selected, they must justify their choice.</i>
	It is mandatory to use the template: FRESH-B1 (FR / EN) – FRESH-B2 (FR / EN). The description of the project (4 pages max.) is divided in 4 parts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goals of the research 2. State of the art 3. Research project 4. Work plan Graphs and tables may be added (max. 2 pages) to the 4-page description. A reference bibliography (max. 1 page) should be included and listed by order of appearance in the text.
	Summary of the 1 st year of Ph.D. - For 1 st Grant-2 nd year applicants only.
	Applicants have the opportunity to justify the societal impact of their project in their application file. They should highlight the players, groups or sectors that are likely to benefit from the results of the research.
THE WORK ENVIRONMENT	Facts that assess whether the environment (the intellectual means and/or equipment available to the applicant) is consistent with achieving the aims of the research project. ➤ <i>Data can vary depending on the nature of the project and the scientific field.</i>
THE REFEREES	Contact details (full name, email) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 referee (member of the academic staff of a scientific institution) other than the promoter, - 1 referee involved in the field outside the academic sphere. ➤ <i>Applicants shall contact the reference persons prior to mentioning their contact details in the application form if they want to make sure that their referees are willing to provide a reference letter as part of their application. After submission of the application file, the F.R.S.-FNRS will contact the reference persons referred in the application form and a reminder will be sent to each referee in due course. No information will be communicated to the applicant on the receipt of the letters to ensure confidentiality.</i>

7. (PRE)SELECTION PROCEDURE, JURIES

7.1 Composition of juries

Applications for a 1st Grant are evaluated by two juries: the first one is dedicated to **cultural challenges**, the second to **economic and social challenges**.

Each jury is made up of 3 civil society representatives, plus 9 members from French-speaking Community of Belgium universities, respecting the balance between universities:

- 2 UCLouvain, 2 ULB, 2 ULiège
- 1 UMon, 1 UNamur, 1 USL-B

Applicants' promoter and co-promoter may not sit or even partially take part in the jury of their applicants.

The composition of the FRESH juries is available at the following address: <https://www.frs-fnrs.be/fr/commissions-scientifiques>. It is subject to modifications depending on the conflicts of

interest (COI) that might be reported by juries' members. The composition also depends on the availability of members, any withdrawal or replacement, and may vary accordingly.

7.2 (Pre) selection procedure

The Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS has decided to establish a **pre-selection** of the application files. Members of the jury will focus on the scientific quality of the application by assessing four criteria as follows: **the research project (40%), the competencies of the applicant with regard to his/her speciality (CV) (40%), the research environment and the societal impact of the project (10%)**. For each criterion, irrespective of their weight, applicants must meet a minimum quality threshold.

Pre-selected applicants are required to take an oral examination on the premises of the **F.R.S.-FNRS, 5 rue d'Egmont, B-1000 Brussels**. Each application file is assigned to a rapporteur, depending on the 2-6 descriptor fields selected by the applicant. The applicant is interviewed by members of the jury and the rapporteur, who leads the discussion.

Juries shall devote 30 minutes at most to each applicant.

The oral presentation of the applicant may not exceed 10 minutes.

Following the interview, the jury shall debate and give a grade to the applicant in the absence of the applicant.

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA - EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluation criteria that will be taken into account are the following:

CRITERIA
Quality of the research project: Feasibility, originality, host laboratory, work plan, societal impact, and activities report (applicable only for applicants to a 1 st Grant 2 nd Year)
Competencies of the applicant with regard to his/her speciality (CV)
Presentation and answers given to questions about the project
Scientific knowledge in general

For applicants to a FRESH 1st Grant, juries will assess their capability to conduct their doctoral research in 4 years. Depending on the progress of the research work, juries may decide to recommend applicants whether for a 1st Grant 1st year or 1st Grant 2nd year.

To respect the European Charter for the Researcher, interviewed applicants will receive an evaluation report following the meeting of the FRESH Management Committee in December.

ALL DOCUMENTS, GUIDES 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-privée)