

French version: [click here](#)

FRESH Rules and Regulations: [click here](#)

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 for 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: **TUESDAY 6TH JULY 2021**.

INSTRUMENTS		FRESH CALL 2021		
		ELECTRONIC VALIDATION DEADLINES ¹ ON E-SPACE		
		APPLICANT	PROMOTER	RECTOR
1 st Grant	FRESH-B1	Thursday 26 th August at 2 p.m.*	Monday 6 th September at 2 p.m.	Thursday 9 th September at 2 p.m.
2 nd Grant	FRESH-B2			

*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 in advance.

- 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 2021. Pre-selected applicants to a 1st Grant are required to take an oral examination. The date of the interview, as well as its terms and conditions, will be communicated in due time. That date will not be modified by any means.
- 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 2021 while Second Grant scheme starts as from 1st January 2022.

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 considered instrument:

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

¹ All times are Brussels local time.

3.2 Deadlines for providing appendices

	DEADLINES IN 2021	DOCUMENTS
1 ST GRANT	Monday 6 th September at 2 p.m.	Reference letter from promoter, structured according to the template
	Thursday 30 th September	Appendices (see point 3.1) ²
		Reference letters from: - 1 referee (different from the promoter) member of the academic staff of a scientific institution, structured according to the template , - 1 referee involved in the field outside the academic sphere. They will be contacted by the F.R.S.-FNRS.
		Ranking ² completed by the faculty(ies) awarding undergraduate and master (or equivalent) degrees
	Publications accepted after the deadline of validation by the applicant ²	
2 ^N GRANT	Tuesday 2 nd November ³	Advisory opinion from the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee)

4. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2020

4.1 [Rules and Regulations](#)

Additional eligibility criteria

The FRESH Management Committee of 6th October 2020 has decided to change the article relating to the field of the degree as follows:

“Additionally to the conditions defined in article 3, the master degree of at least 120 credits obtained by the applicant, by default, has to belong to one of the fields listed below:

- Philosophy,
- Theology,
- Language and Literature, and Translation Studies
- History, Art History and Archaeology,
- Art of Building and Urban Planning,
- Information and communication,
- Political and social Sciences,
- Juridical Sciences,
- Criminology,
- Economical and management Sciences,
- Psychology and Educational Sciences (except biomedical discipline in the broad sense and the likes),
- Arts and Sciences.

Holders of the following master's degrees are also eligible:

- Tourism Studies and Management;
- Public Health Sciences (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes);

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 2021, it falls on a Sunday so the deadline is postponed to the next business day.

- Geographic Sciences (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes);
- Environmental Sciences and Management (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes).

However, an additional master degree 60 obtained by the applicant, in the fields listed above, can be enough, provided an unconditional permission regarding access to the doctorate issued from the field doctoral Commission must be enclosed in the application file by 30th September of the year the application is submitted at the latest.”

5. SPECIFIC REMARKS

5.1 Grants Renewal

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. Effective funding will be subject to a favourable 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 of writing 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 set 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 also mention **a referee actually involved in the field outside the academic sphere** who will be contacted by the F.R.S.-FNRS to provide a reference letter as part of their application

The application file contains the main sections described hereafter.

SECTION	CONTENT
THE RESEARCHER	Information that enables to verify the eligibility criteria (degrees, graduation date, institution)

SECTION	CONTENT
	<p>Academic background</p> <p>Awards and honours (max. 5)</p> <p>The applicant's list of publications (published or accepted, if any), structured according to the template</p> <p>➤ As stated in section 3.2, In case of publications accepted after the validation deadline set for the applicant, applicants may add them until 30th September.</p> <p>Professional background, including relevant activities with regard to the research project</p> <p>Title of the Master thesis</p>
THE RESEARCH PROJECT	<p>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)</p> <p>➤ Funded proposals are released and made public on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.</p> <p>Selection of the jury and selection of 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of relevance, they can be completed by some unrestricted keywords.</p> <p>➤ If applicants select only one descriptor field corresponding to the jury selected, they shall justify their choice in the application form.</p> <p>It is mandatory to use the template: FRESH-B1 (FR / EN) – FRESH-B2 (FR / EN).</p> <p>The description of the project (max. 4 pages) is divided in 4 parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goals of the research 2. State of the art 3. Research project 4. Work plan <p>Graphs and tables (max. 2 pages) are authorised in addition to the 4 pages.</p> <p>A reference bibliography (max. 1 page) should be included and listed by order of appearance in the text.</p> <p>Summary of the 1st year of Ph.D. - For 1st Grant-2nd year applicants only.</p> <p>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.</p>
THE 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> <p>➤ Data can vary depending on the nature of the project and the scientific field.</p>
THE REFEREES	<p>Contact details (first name, surname, email) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 referee (different from the promoter) member of the academic staff of a scientific institution, - 1 referee involved in the field outside the academic sphere. <p>➤ 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.</p> <p>After submission of the application file, the F.R.S.-FNRS will contact the reference persons indicated 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.</p>

7. (PRE)SELECTION PROCEDURE, JURIES

7.1 Composition of juries

Applications for a 1st Grant will be 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 UMons, 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 [here](#). 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 skills of the applicant with regard to his/her speciality (CV) (40%), the research environment (10%) 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**. 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)
Skills 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, 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-priviee)