1. SCHEDULE

Opening of the call: Tuesday 2\textsuperscript{nd} July 2024 on e-space for the online submission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUMENTS</th>
<th>FRIA Call 2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Electronic validation deadlines (^1) on e-space</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPLICANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} Grant</td>
<td>FRIA-B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} Grant</td>
<td>FRIA-B2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*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 F.R.S.-FNRS will give researchers who may be granted with a fellowship renewal (FRIA-B2) access to the electronic form via the e-space application.
- Applicants for a first FRIA grant will be required to pass a compulsory oral examination which will be held by videoconference via the Zoom tool.
  Jurys dates are available here.
  The precise time of the oral examination, as well as the practical details, will be communicated at the beginning of October.
- The decision to allocate the grants will be made by the FRIA Board of Trustees in December.

2. APPENDICES

2.1 For each instrument, appendices must be enclosed with the application. For further information, click on the relevant instrument below:

| 1\textsuperscript{ST GRANT} | FRIA-B1 |
| 2\textsuperscript{ND GRANT} | FRIA-B2 |

\(^1\) All times are Brussels local time.
2.2 Deadlines for providing appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEADLINES IN 2024</th>
<th>DOCUMENTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st GRANT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 29th August at 2 p.m.</td>
<td>Reference letter from the promoter, structured according to the template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 30th September</td>
<td>Appendices (see point 2.1)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference letters from:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>They will be contacted by the F.R.S.-FNRS.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd GRANT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 31st October</td>
<td>Advisory recommandation from the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEADLINES IN 2024 DOCUMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2023

3.1 Rules and Regulations

Implications of the Brussels Treaty

On 1st May 2024, the Brussels Treaty on the automatic recognition of higher education qualifications between the Benelux countries and the Baltic States came into force.

Consequently, as is the case for holders of a master’s degree of at least 120 credits awarded by a Belgian higher education institution, holders of a master’s degree of at least 120 credits awarded by a higher education institution in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania will no longer be required to provide a certificate of eligibility for a doctoral programme or a certificate of registration to a doctoral programme issued by the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium where the studies leading to the doctorate will be pursued.

Only a certificate of completion of the degree or a copy of the diploma(s) should be attached to the application file.

3.2 Creation of 2 new juries in the subject areas LS5 (neurobiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropharmacology, neuroimaging, systems neuroscience, neurological disorders, psychiatry) and PE2 (particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics)

In each of the 2 subject areas, an additional jury has been created following the high number of applicants in these subject areas during the FRIA call 2023.

² Where applicable, to be uploaded or mentioned by the applicant on a dedicated page at https://e-space.frns.be, as a follow-up of their application file after the validation deadline set for the applicant.
The composition of the FRIA juries is available at the following address: https://www.frs-fnrs.be/docs/Reglement-et-documents/FRS-FNRS_JurysFRIA.pdf.

3.3 Start date of 1st grants

The FRIA 1st Grant Scheme starts on 1st October 2024. The starting date may be postponed upon a duly justified in the application form.

If the FRIA accepts a starting date for a grant after 1st October 2024, the grant will be postponed by the number of months between 1st October 2024 and the actual starting date of the grant, up to a maximum of 4 months (which means an actual starting date of no later than 31st January 2025). No extension will be granted if the starting date of the grant is later than 1st February 2025.

4. SPECIFIC REMARKS

4.1 Grants Renewal

Applications for a Second FRIA Grant will be evaluated by the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee). Second Grant scheme starts as from 1st January 2025.

4.2 Fields and themes considered a priority by the Walloon government

Since FRIA grants are strictly restricted for holders of an academic degree who aim to develop their research career in the industry or agriculture, applicants whose project offers short, mid or long-term industrial or agronomic applications prospects, may select one or several fields and themes from the provided list.

The jury shall assess the application potential of the research program and the “Industry and Agriculture” approach, and shall give its opinion accordingly.

4.3 Scope of Article 4 of the Rules and Regulations

Given the interdisciplinary nature of certain programs, holders of one of the following academic master’s degrees (or equivalent) may apply indiscriminately to FRIA or FRESH, provided they have explicit support from the promoter and the local authority responsible for doctoral admissions (Doctoral Commission):

- Public Health Sciences
- Geographic Sciences
- Psychology and Educational Sciences
- Environmental Sciences and Management
- Agroecology

To do so, the applicant must attach to their application form the document attesting to the promoter’s support regarding the choice of the instrument.

4.4 Only one FRIA/FRESH application

Applicants are not allowed to apply for both FRIA and FRESH instruments in the same year.

5. 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 the documents to be enclosed with the application form…) and stresses again the sovereign consideration of the juries assessing 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

#### THE RESEARCHER

Information that enables verification of **eligibility criteria** (degrees, graduation date, institution)

**Academic background**

**Awards and honours** (max. 5)

The applicant’s **list of publications** (published or accepted, if any), structured according to the **template**

- As stated in section 2.2, in case of **publications accepted** after the applicant validation deadline, applicants may add them until 30th September.

**Title of the Master’s thesis**

#### THE RESEARCH PROJECT

**Title** in French and in English (max. 200 characters each, including spaces) and, **Abstract** in French and in English (max. 2,000 characters each, including spaces)

- In case of funding, these are released and made public on the [F.R.S.-FNRS website](https://www.frs-fnrs.be).

**Selection of the subject area** and of the **jury**.

- The applicant chooses the subject area they wish their application to be assessed in as well as the **jury** within this subject area.

**Selection of 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of relevance**, which can be supplemented by some **unrestricted keywords**.

- If applicants select only one descriptor field corresponding to the subject area selected, they shall justify their choice in the application form.

It is mandatory to use the template: FRIA-B1 ([FR](https://www.frs-fnrs.be) / [EN](https://www.frs-fnrs.be)) - FRIA-B2 ([FR](https://www.frs-fnrs.be) / [EN](https://www.frs-fnrs.be)).

The **description of the project** (max. 4 pages) is divided into 4 parts:

1. Goals of the research
2. State of the art
3. Research project
4. Work plan

Graphs and tables (max. 2 pages) are allowed in addition to the 4 pages.

A reference bibliography (max. 1 page) should be included and listed in the order of appearance in the text.

**Summary of the 1st year of Ph.D.** - For 1st Grant-2nd year applicants only.

Applicants to a FRIA grant may present the industrial or agronomic approach and **prospects** related to their project in the application file (see point 4.2).

#### THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

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.

- Data can vary depending on the nature of the project and the scientific field.

#### THE REFERENCE PERSONS

Contact details (first name, surname, email) of:

- 2 reference persons (different from the promoter) member of the academic personnel of a scientific institution,
- 2 reference persons from the industry and/or agriculture sectors.

- Applicants shall contact the reference persons prior to mentioning their contact details in the application form to ensure that they are willing to provide a reference letter as part of their application.

By submitting an application form, the applicant renounces all access to the confidential reference letters related to their application (promoter and reference persons).
No information will be communicated to the applicant on the receipt of the letters to ensure confidentiality.

6. **SELECTION PROCEDURE, JURIES**

6.1 Composition of juries

The FRIA has adopted 20 subject areas corresponding to the 20 LS and PE panels of the ERC (European Research Council). These subject areas are identified in a list of ERC descriptor fields complemented by FNRS keywords reflecting certain specificities of research in the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB).

The list including the **20 subject areas** is the following:

- **LS1**: molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, structural biology, biochemistry of signal transduction
- **LS2**: genetics, population genetics, molecular genetics, genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, computational biology, biostatistics, biological modelling and simulation, systems biology, genetic epidemiology
- **LS3**: cell biology, cell physiology, signal transduction, organogenesis, developmental genetics, pattern formation in plants and animals
- **LS4**: organ physiology, pathophysiology, endocrinology, metabolism, ageing, regeneration, tumorigenesis, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome
- **LS5**: neurobiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropsycharmacology, neuroimaging, systems neuroscience, neurological disorders, psychiatry
- **LS6**: immunobiology, aetiology of immune disorders, microbiology, virology, parasitology, global and other infectious diseases, population dynamics of infectious diseases, veterinary medicine
- **LS7**: aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of disease, public health, epidemiology, pharmacy, pharmacology, clinical medicine, regenerative medicine, medical ethics
- **LS8**: evolution, ecology, animal behaviour, population biology, biodiversity, biogeography, marine biology, eco-toxicology, prokaryotic biology
- **LS9**: agricultural, animal, fishery, forestry and food sciences; biotechnology, chemical biology, genetic engineering, synthetic biology, industrial biosciences; environmental biotechnology and remediation
- **PE1**: all areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics and statistics
- **PE2**: particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics
- **PE3**: structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences
- **PE4**: analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics
- **PE5**: materials synthesis, structure-properties relations, functional and advanced materials, molecular architecture, organic chemistry
- **PE6**: informatics and information systems, computer science, scientific computing, intelligent systems
- **PE7**: electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering
- **PE8**: product design, process design and control, construction methods, civil engineering, energy systems, material engineering
- **PE9**: astro-physics / chemistry / biology; solar system, stellar astronomy, galactic and extra-galactic; planetary systems, cosmolgy; space science, instrumentation

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3 Since the 2019 FRIA call, given that correspondence between PE3 and PE5 subject areas, PE5-jury 2 has been broadened, henceforth including members with expertise in PE3 subject area.
- **PE10**: physical geography, geology, geophysics, meteorology, oceanography, climatology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management
- **PE11**: Development of advanced materials: performance enhancement, modelling, large-scale preparation, modification, adaptation, optimisation, new and combined use of materials, etc.

Several juries may be built around the same subject area, depending on the number of applicants.

Each jury is composed of 1 non-academic member from a research center or an expert from the industry sector, along with 6 or 8 members from CFB universities, ensuring representation among the universities:
- → 2 UCLouvain, 2 ULB, 2 ULiège,
- → 1 UMons and/or 1 UNamur, depending on the field concerned.

The composition of FRIA juries is available [here](#). The composition is subject to modifications depending on the number of applicants and the conflicts of interest (COI) that might be reported by juries’ members. The composition also depends on member availability, any withdrawals or replacements.

### 6.2 Validation of the subject area and distribution of the files between the different juries of a subject area

The choice of subject area by the applicant will be accepted or denied by the Presidents of juries, as long as they don’t come from the same university as the applicant (in which case a Vice-president will be in charge of this procedure).

When there are more than one jury in the subject area of the jury chosen by the applicant, the FRIA reserves the right to transfer the applicant to another jury, taking into account the number of applicants and the management of potential conflicts of interest. If necessary, the FRIA may transfer the applicant to another jury when their (co-)promoter is a member of the jury.

### 6.3 How juries operate

Juries shall devote 30 minutes at most to each applicant.

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

Following the interview and the departure of the applicant the jury shall debate and grade them.

### 7. Evaluation criteria - evaluation report

The evaluation criteria taken into account are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the research project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feasibility, originality, host laboratory, work plan, and activities report (applicable only for applicants to a 1st Grant 2nd Year)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills of the applicant with regard to their speciality (CV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation and answers given to questions about the project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific knowledge in general</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
For applicants to a FRIA 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.

In accordance with the “European Charter for Researchers”, interviewed applicants will receive an evaluation report following the meeting of the FRIA Board of Trustees in December.


QUESTIONS: bourses-mandats@frs-fnrs.be