

RULES AND REGULATIONS

FRESH (HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH FUND)

DOCTORAL GRANTS

ADOPTED BY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE F.R.S.-FNRS

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CHAPTER I: SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE GRANT

Article 1

The rules and regulations hereinafter are only applicable to holders of a FRESH grant from the Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS).

The FRESH Fund supports basic 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.

The granting of FRESH grants is intended for the completion of the Ph.D. within 4 years.

Article 2

FRESH grants are strictly restricted to graduates with an academic education who aim to carry out fundamental research projects with significant societal impact, using tools provided by human and social sciences. For this purpose, they shall pursue their studies leading to a Ph.D. in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium under the supervision of a promoter and a postdoctoral co-promoter (if any) from one of the institutions listed in [Appendix 1](#).

The promoter must meet the following conditions altogether:

- Be permanently appointed¹ to an academic or scientific position or on probation in that university.
- This appointment must have a final and conclusive assent from the competent body to legitimize this appointment in accordance with the Law or the university regulations by the time of the validation deadline fixed for the academic authorities (rectors) at the latest.
- This academic or scientific position must be effective by the time of the starting date of the grant, i.e., by the 1st of October at the latest, the year of the FRESH Call concerned.

If the promoter of a FRESH applicant who is appointed permanently accesses the legal age of retirement / becomes professor emeritus after the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) and before the end of the granting scheme in case of granting, the submission of the application shall be subject to prior approval by the Head of institution where the research will be carried out.

The promoter permanently appointed who will access the legal age of retirement / become professor emeritus by the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) is not eligible.

CHAPTER II: CANDIDACY AND DURATION OF THE GRANT

Article 3

Eligible applicants are holders of a degree as referred to in Article 4, confirming the completion of basic 2nd cycle studies in one or many fields below:

¹ *Research logisticians of rank A, 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 not eligible as promoters of doctoral fellowships.*

- 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 a Master degree in Tourism Studies and Management are also eligible.

Holders of a Master degree in Public Health Sciences (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes) are also eligible.

Holders of a Master degree in Geographic Sciences (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes) are also eligible.

Holders of a Master degree in Environmental Sciences and Management (Human or Social Sciences disciplines and the likes) are also eligible.

Article 4

FRESH Grants are accessible to holders of one of the following degrees in accordance with Article 3:

-1° A master degree for a value of at least 120 credits awarded by a Higher Education

Institution within the French-speaking Community of Belgium;

-2° A master degree for a value of at least 120 credits awarded by a Higher Education Institution within the Dutch-speaking Community, German-speaking Community or from the Royal Military Academy.

-3° Any degree as referred to in Article 115 of the Decree of 7 November 2013 of the French-speaking Community of Belgium that defines the landscape of Higher Education and the academic studies organisation.

Applicants who hold a degree as referred to in paragraph 1, 1° and 2° are required to provide a certificate of achievement or a copy of the diploma. The document must be enclosed in the application file by 30th September of the year the application is submitted at the latest.

Applicants who hold a degree as referred to in paragraph 1, 3° are required to provide a registration document or a certificate that enables the admission to doctoral programmes issued by the university of the French-speaking community of Belgium where the studies will be carried out along with a certificate of achievement or a copy of the degree concerned. Both documents must be enclosed in the application file by 30th September of the year the application is submitted at the latest.

Article 5

Applicants to a FRESH grant must have obtained an academic degree or diploma as referred to in Article 4 for maximum 7 years, and this period shall include the ongoing academic year.

The maximum period of time set in paragraph 1 is extended for one additional year per childbirth and/or adoption.

Article 6

Ph.D. researchers can be granted successively with a grant twice maximum. The duration of the 1st Grant is 27 months. The duration of the 2nd Grant is 21 months.

The duration of the 1st Grant may be reduced to 15 months if the applicant applies after one year of Ph.D.

The 2nd Grant can be allocated for less than 21 months but for a minimum term of 15 months.

Article 7

No applicant may apply more than twice for a 1st grant 1st year.

No applicant may apply for a 1st grant-2nd year if they applied for a 1st grant 1st year twice.

No applicant may apply for a 1st grant-2nd year twice, irrespective of whether the choice is made by:

- Applicants themselves when they apply (either they applied the previous year for a 1st grant-1st year or they worked full-time on their Ph.D. thesis);
- Or the jury which interviewed them, as per the guide to juries.

Researchers who have been granted with a FRESH Grant, regardless of its duration, can no longer apply for such grant.

No interruption may be possible between grants.

No applicant may apply for a 2nd Grant if s/he has not been granted with a 1st Grant.

FRESH Applicants who have not been granted with a 2nd Grant are not allowed to apply for anymore.

Grantees may have their grant revoked as soon as they do no longer meet the granting terms and conditions.

No applicant may apply for a FRESH Grant if they successively received two Research Fellow fellowships (ASP + ASP-REN) of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

Article 8

The call for FRESH applications is opened once a year and is published on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

The application for a 1st Grant can be submitted in French or in English. It must only be submitted through the [e-space](#) online platform dedicated to the calls for proposals

Applicants to a 2nd Grant are given access to the electronic form by the FRESH on [e-space](#).

Both 1st and 2nd Grant applications are submitted to a procedure including three successive electronic validations on the dates that will be indicated when the call is published:

- a) The validation by the applicant: it accounts as a confirmation that the application file is complete.
- b) The validation by the promoter selected pursuant to article 2: the F.R.S.-FNRS transfers the application file to promoters so that they give their approval for the submitted research project and confirm the accuracy of data provided by the applicant. The promoter may accept or refuse the application.
- c) The validation by the research administration (or Board of Education) of the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium, to which the application file is transferred once promoters have given their consent. The academic authority may accept or refuse the application. The validation deadline fixed for the rectors puts a final end to the call for proposals.

Applications that have not been validated within the time-frame of the call cannot be taken into account.

A mini-guide specifies the validation dates as well as the documents which must be included in the application.

Article 9

Applicants to a FRESH 1st Grant are required to take an oral examination. This oral examination takes place at the F.R.S.-FNRS and is based on the research project (feasibility, originality, host laboratory, work plan and activities report, if applicable), the applicant's profile with regard to their speciality (C.V.), their presentation and the answers given to questions regarding their research project, and their scientific knowledge in general.

Members of juries who evaluate the applicants are selected by the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS, upon the proposal of the Guidance Committee (COMA).

The FRESH requires the promoter and one additional professor/Research Associate (CQ)/Senior Research Associate (MR)/Research Director (DR) of the F.R.S.-FNRS to give their opinion concerning the profile of applicants to a FRESH 1st Grant and their application files.

FRESH 2nd Grant renewal applications are examined by the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee).

The Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee) must complete a document which shall be attached to the electronic form for a Renewal application. This document must be duly completed and signed and sent to the research unit (or Board of Education) of the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium in order to be signed by the academic authorities. The latter must send the document to the FRESH by **31st October** of the year the application is submitted.

When the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium takes the ultimate decision for the applicant not to further continue doctoral studies and when the Rector notifies the FRESH in writing, the FRESH grant will expire at the end of the ongoing grant.

CHAPTER III: ALLOCATION OF THE GRANT

Article 10

1st Grants are allocated by the Management Committee of the FRESH in accordance with Article 9.

2nd Grants are allocated by the Management Committee of the FRESH upon the positive recommendation of the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee).

Article 11

FRESH 1st Grant scheme starts as from the 1st of October. The starting date can be postponed with the agreement of the Secretary-Rapporteur of the FRESH. The 2nd Grant scheme starts as from the 1st of January.

When the Secretary-Rapporteur of the FRESH accepts a starting date of a grant running beyond 1st October, s/he decides the grant duration modalities. This implies that previous months between 1st October and the starting date of the grant shall not extend the duration of the grant, under any circumstances.

CHAPTER IV: RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FRESH GRANTEES

Article 12

Any research project being funded must observe statutory provisions in force governing ethics.

Article 13

FRESH Grantees are subordinated to the Management Committee of the FRESH, which acts through its President and/or Secretary-Rapporteur. They pledge to respect the rules and regulations in force within the Fund.

They must respect the discipline enforced by the academic authority of the institution where they work and observe its rules and regulations. As grantees of the F.R.S.-FNRS, they are also required to adhere to the regulation on the property, protection and promotion of the results from the research carried out within the institution.

Article 14

FRESH Grantees shall not take on any teaching position.

They must obtain a doctoral training certificate or get exempted from it in accordance with the Decree of 7 November 2013 and the specific provisions enacted in the doctoral regulations in force within the hosting institution.

Administrative work or tasks relating to didactic supervision within the host institution may be assigned to FRESH Grantees up to four hours per week on annual average.

Since the FRESH grant aims at carrying out an original dissertation to obtain the title of Doctor, grantees shall not take any other exams than qualifying exams as part of their doctoral training and/or any additional training accredited by the relevant academic authority in their hosting institution.

Article 15

FRESH Grantees may not be a member of the scientific or academic staff in a university or an academic institution, and may not receive any remuneration or salary.

However, the FRESH may, upon request, authorise them to receive full or part of the allowances that they may be entitled to have to study abroad.

FRESH Grantees may not carry out any professional activity and may not receive any remuneration or salary.

Article 16

FRESH Grantees receive an operating credit, which is under the responsibility of their promoter.

The operating credit can only be allocated if the holder genuinely carries out the fellowship.

Article 17

Grantees are required to provide reports on their research work at the end of each grant scheme and upon any request from the Secretary-Rapporteur of the FRESH.

FRESH Grantees are required to provide **a report** based on their doctoral work along with their publications list **by 31st August** following the allocation of their 1st and 2nd grants, at the latest.

Article 18

FRESH Grantees shall mention in their publications, papers and reprinted/e-print alike that they have been granted with a FRESH grant.

Article 19

FRESH Grantees who wish to study or pursue their research abroad must give prior notice to the F.R.S.-FNRS at least 15 days before the actual date of departure.

For any stay, a prior written agreement of the promoter must be sent to the FRESH.

In case of a long-term stay (90 days or more), a prior written agreement of the Head of the institution where the FRESH grantee carries out her/his research must also be sent to the FRESH.

Article 20

Any change regarding the civil status, the family responsibility, the domicile or residence must be reported online as soon as possible on [e-space](#), the personal data acquisition system.

Article 21

FRESH Grantees shall inform the FRESH of any interruption or suspension of their scientific activities as soon as they can and for any reason whatsoever.

Article 22

In case of illness or personal accident, a medical certificate attesting the starting date and the duration or extension of a period of professional incapacity must be submitted to the FRESH within 48 hours following the beginning of the incapacity period. The promoter shall send a copy of the medical certificate to the relevant department of the institution where the grantee carries out her/his research.

Article 23

In case of work accident, the administrative staff of the FRESH must be informed within 24 hours, by phone if necessary. The declaration of accident as well as the medical certificate establishing the accident must be sent to the Fund. The health department of the institution where the grantee carries out her/his research must be informed as well.

CHAPTER V: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Article 24

Grant amounts are determined once a year by the Management Committee of the FRESH, within the limit of the budget of the French-speaking Community of Belgium.

The amount of the grant is mentioned on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

FRESH Grantees shall give written notice to the FRESH of the date of their Ph.D. thesis dissertation and send a copy of their certificate of achievement to the secretariat of the FRESH.

One month after being graduated with a Ph.D., the grant amount of the FRESH grantee is increased in the same proportion that the scale for assistant professors who obtained their Ph.D.

Article 25

The FRESH grant is exempt from tax on income. The grant beneficiary is nonetheless subject to the employee social security scheme.

Article 26

Grantees shall be remunerated on a monthly basis, in arrears.

For 1st Grant beneficiaries granted in December of the Year X with effect on 1st October of the Year X (see article 11), allocation of the grants due in October, November and December of the Year X will be made at the beginning of the Year X+1 in one instalment.

The grant is transferred to a bank account of their choice, opened at a Belgian financial institution.

Any change of bank account number must be reported online on [e-space](#), the personal data acquisition system.

CHAPTER VI: WORK ACCIDENTS

Article 27

FRESH Grantees are covered by an insurance contract as required by the law. This contract covers ordinary work risks during seminars or in laboratory as well as risks of accidents occurring on their way to work.

It also covers the risks incurred during temporary missions in Belgium and abroad. FRESH Grantees may travel by any common transportation (sea, air or road transport) authorised for people transportation, inasmuch as they are not members of the crew.

CHAPTER VII: INTERRUPTION DUE TO MATERNITY, PATERNITY OR ADOPTION LEAVE

Article 28

The FRESH grant interrupted due to a maternity, paternity or adoption leave can be extended for a duration equivalent to the duration of the interruption.

The extension request must be reported at least one month before the grant expires. This extension agreement does not adversely affect the fixed-term nature of the grant.

Article 29

When a birth occurs, a declaration shall be done to the FRESH, which will transfer the required documents to receive family and childbirth allowances. The latter can be claimed as from the 5th month of pregnancy.

Article 30

During the maternity, paternity or adoption leave, the FRESH Grantee receives a replacement income paid by the mutual insurance company as from the time set by the law regarding sickness and invalidity insurance. In that case, the payment of the remuneration is immediately suspended.

To that end, FRESH Grantees shall give prior notice to their promoter and the FRESH of the starting date of their leave.

The Fund gives the FRESH Grantee in the situation mentioned above an extra payment to the indemnity provided by the mutual insurance company in order to compensate for the loss of income.

To that end, FRESH Grantees must provide the Fund with a certificate issued by the health care insurer (the mutual insurance company), mentioning both gross and net amounts of the maternity, paternity or adoption indemnity that they have received.

CHAPTER VIII: SUSPENSION DUE TO ILLNESS FOR ONE MONTH OR MORE

Article 31

The FRESH grant interrupted for a period of one month or more due to illness shall be extended over a period equal to the period of interruption.

Extension will be granted upon receipt of a medical certificate justifying the work incapacity for a period of one month or more.

The extension of the FRESH grant will be effective when the researcher returns to work, by signing a formal contract amendment stating the new ending date of the fellowship. The researcher will be required to send it to the FRESH for approval.

Article 32

Beyond the 1st month of the guaranteed remuneration, the FRESH will not pay allowance in addition to illness benefit from the social insurance.

CHAPTER IX: ANNUAL LEAVE

Article 33

The duration of the annual leave is equivalent to the calendar fixed in the hosting institution's rules of procedure. Periods of time are set by mutual agreement with the promoter. FRESH Grantees shall inform the FRESH Secretariat of their holiday dates.

CHAPTER X: FINAL PROVISION

Article 34

FRESH Grantees may terminate their grant agreement at any time. They shall give a written notice of their decision to the FRESH, their promoter and the head of the institution where they have carried out their research programme.

APPENDIX 1

Relevant Institutions for the co-promoter

Instrument: FRESH Grant

FRESH Cal

Bourse FRESH / FRESH Grant

<p>Co-promoteur d'une université CFB / Co-promoter of a CFB university</p>	<p>➤ Universités de la Communauté française de Belgique (CFB) Universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB)</p> <p>Université Catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain) Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Université de Liège (ULiège) Université de Mons (UMons) Université de Namur (UNamur) Université Saint-Louis - Bruxelles (USL-B)</p>
<p>Co-promoteur (de régime linguistique francophone) attaché à l'une de ces institutions / French speaking co-promoter attached to one of these institutions</p>	<p>➤ Établissements scientifiques fédéraux State Scientific Institutions</p> <p>Archives de l'État (AE) Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique (I.R.P.A.) KBR (Bibliothèque royale de Belgique) Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale (M.R.A.C.) Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (M.R.A.H.) Musées royaux des Beaux-arts de Belgique (M.R.B.A.B.)</p> <p>➤ Musée royal de Mariemont</p> <p>➤ Sciensano</p>