RULES AND REGULATIONS

RESEARCH PROJECT (PDR - PROJET DE RECHERCHE)

CREDITS AND PROJECTS CALL 2022

ADOPTED BY

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

ON 25TH APRIL 2022
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CHAPTER I: SCOPE

Article 1
The rules and regulations hereinafter are only applicable to the Research Project (PDR) instrument enabling the funding of research programmes within the framework of the Credits and Projects Call of the Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS1 (F.R.S.-FNRS).

Since 2021, some European research funding agencies have mutually opened their project funding instruments to research teams from partner agencies of the Weave network. Researchers from the French-speaking Community of Belgium can therefore include partners from another partner agency in the PDR instrument of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

In 2022, the F.R.S.-FNRS offers the possibility to submit collaborative project proposals (bi or trilateral) as part of the PDR instrument within the framework of the Credits and Projects Call with:

- German research institutions eligible to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG): German partners must comply with the guidelines of the Weave page of DFG.
  - Attention: projects in collaboration with a German partner have a duration of 3 years with a funding equal to that of a 4-year PDR.
  - The PDR starting date is set for the 1st April and the ending date for the 31st March.

- Flemish research institutions eligible to the Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO): Flemish partners must comply with the guidelines of the Weave FWO page as a partner agency.
  - Attention: a pre-submission to the FWO is compulsory for 24th May 2022 for any project in collaboration with a Flemish partner.

- Luxembourg research institutions eligible to the FNR Luxembourg (FNR): Luxembourg partners must comply with the guidelines of the INTER programme of the FNR.

- Swiss research institutions eligible to the SNSF Switzerland (SNSF): Swiss partners must comply with the guidelines of the SNSF Weave page.

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1 The Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS shall be understood as the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Co-promoter participation</th>
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<td>PDR</td>
<td>2 years or 4 years</td>
<td>Single-university PDR</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-university PDR</td>
<td>Yes but 1 maximum per institution. The co-promoter-applicant must be from another institution than the main promoter-applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Single-university PDR</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-university PDR</td>
<td>Yes but 1 maximum per institution. The co-promoter-applicant must be from another institution than the main promoter-applicant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Main promoter:** Researcher responsible for the submission of the application. They can ask for budget related to the tasks of which they will be in charge during the accomplishment of the project.

**Co-promoter:** Researcher who takes part in the preparation of the application and in the accomplishment of the project in case of granting. As such, they can ask for a budget related to the tasks of which they will be in charge.

**Project initiator:** Researcher whose skills and/or knowledge will be useful for the accomplishment of the project but who will not be in charge of any tasks. They can not ask for a budget.

**Article 2**

The research programme may be conducted in one or several institutions listed in Appendix 1.

**Article 3**

The main promoter is the person who assumes the scientific responsibility and is in charge of the administrative management of the funded research programme.

**CHAPTER II: APPLICATION**

**II- A.: PROMOTERS**

**Article 4**

The main promoter-applicant to a PDR must be:

- Either a Research Associate (CQ), a Senior Research Associate (MR) or a Research Director (DR) of the F.R.S.-FNRS who genuinely carries out the fellowship at the latest by 15th November of the year when submitting the application.
Or a researcher-promoter of an ongoing Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research (MISU) who genuinely carries out the fellowship at the latest by 15th November of the year when submitting the application.

Or a researcher appointed in a university of the French-speaking community of Belgium listed in Appendix 1 and must meet the following conditions altogether:

- Be permanently² appointed 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 at the latest by 15th November of the year when submitting the application.
- This academic or scientific position must be effective at the latest by 15th November of the year when submitting the application.

If the main promoter-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 funding 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 main promoter-applicant 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.

The project initiator is not subjected to any eligibility rule.

Article 5
The Cross-university PDR provides for the participation of one co-promoter-applicant per institution, provided that they are not from the main promoter-applicant’s institution.

Any co-promoter-applicant involved in a Cross-university PDR shall also meet the eligibility criteria as referred to in article 4.

II- B.: ACCUMULATION RULES

Article 6
Any promoter must comply with all the accumulation rules as detailed here as well as those regarding the PDR-Weave instrument.

II- C.: SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Article 7
The Credits and Projects Call is opened once a year and is published on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

² Research logisticians of rank A, as defined by the Royal Decree of 31st October 1953 fixing 'le statut des agrégés, des répéteurs et des membres du personnel scientifique des universités de l'État', are allowed to be co-promoter-applicant provided they hold a Ph.D.
The application can be submitted in French or in English. It must only be submitted on e-space, the online platform dedicated to the calls for proposals.

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.

All PDR applications are submitted to a procedure including successive electronic validations on the dates that will be indicated when the call is published.

a. The validation by the main promoter, responsible proponent accountable to the F.R.S.-FNRS administration; it accounts as a confirmation that the application file is complete.

b. The validation by the co-promoters (if any, and for Cross-university PDR only); it accounts as an electronic signature.

c. The validation by the research administration (or Board of Education) of the institution to which promoters are related – the Authority to which the application file is transferred once promoters have validated the application form. That authority may accept or refuse the application. The validation deadline set 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.

The validation dates are available in the mini-guide.

II- D.: ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICATIONS

Article 8
As part of PDR applications including other partner agencies of the Weave network, the F.R.S.-FNRS and each partner agency validate the eligibility of applications in accordance with their own criteria. In case an application has been declared ineligible by one of the partner agencies, the entire application will be declared as ineligible.

CHAPTER III: NATURE AND DURATION OF THE FUNDING

III- A.: ELIGIBLE AND NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Article 9
As part of the PDR the allocated fund can cover 4 types of expenses:

- Personnel
- Operating
- Support operating
- Equipment

Article 10
Support operating costs are allowed for the following expenses:

- Creating a book

3 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.
• Creating a dictionary
• Purchasing a book
• Encoding
• Software licence rental
• Registration for a congress
• Computer
• Scan
• Travel expenses

Article 11
Some expenses are capped:

• MRI \leq 3 \text{ Tesla} \text{ at } € 350/\text{hour}
• MRI > 3 \text{ Tesla} \text{ at } € 500/\text{hour}
• MEG \text{ at } € 300/\text{hour}

Article 12
The following operating costs are not authorised:

• Payment and reimbursement of rents
• Payment of the heating, light and telephone
• Costs for facilities maintenance and building costs
• Costs for equipment maintenance and repairing
• Costs for furniture
• Office supply costs (except for justified computer or computer equipment costs)
• Restaurant costs and expenses for foodstuffs (coffee, sugar, softs...) not related to missions or shift trips
• Visa fees for residence permits
• Insurance for appliance(s) or vehicle(s) belonging to the institution
• Thesis related expenses (printout, jury’s invitation)

III- B.: FUNDING CHARACTERISTICS AND PROVISIONS

Article 13
The duration of PDR is either 2 or 4 years.

The PDR starting date is set for the 1\text{st} January following the allocation decision date and the ending date for the 31\text{st} December.

In the particular case of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG):
- The PDR has a duration of 3 years,
- The PDR starting date is set for the 1\text{st} April following the allocation decision date and the ending date for the 31\text{st} March.

Article 14
A Single-university PDR application enables to apply for funding ranging from:

\begin{itemize}
\item[$\checkmark$] € 30,000 to € 80,000, on an annual average.
\end{itemize}

Personnel costs (non mandatory) amount to:
1 full-time equivalent (FTE) maximum, on an annual average for the duration of the project.

Concerning Single-university PDR (€ 80,000- maximum limit on an annual average):
- Personnel total costs are limited to a maximum of € 50,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project (to be justified in the application file), and,
- Operating, Support operating and Equipment costs are limited to € 30,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project. This limit can be extended up to a maximum of € 60,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project in case there is no request for Personnel in the PDR.

A Cross-university PDR application enables to apply for funding ranging from:
- € 30,000- to € 115,000- on an annual average.

Personnel costs (non mandatory) amount to:
- 2 full-time equivalent (FTE) maximum, on an annual average for the duration of the project.

Concerning Cross-university PDR (€ 115,000- maximum limit on an annual average):
- Personnel total costs are limited to a maximum of € 100,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project (to be justified in the application file), and,
- Operating, Support operating and Equipment costs are limited to € 15,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project. This limit can be extended up to a maximum of € 60,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project in case Personnel costs are minimised (requirement: the maximum limit of € 115,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project must be adhered).

Support operating costs (detailed in Article 10) are included in the budgetary limitation of the Single or Cross-university PDR and the maximum amount is of:
- € 5,000- on an annual average for the duration of the project, and per institution involved in the funding application.

Article 15

A Single-university PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG) application enables to apply for funding ranging from:
- € 120,000- to € 320,000- for the duration of the project.

Personnel costs (non mandatory) amount to:
- 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) maximum, for the duration of the project (i.e. maximum 36 months).
- In case of hiring of a Doctoral Researcher, this duration may be extended to maximum 48 months.

Concerning Single-university PDR (€ 320,000- maximum limit for the duration of the project):
- Personnel total costs are limited to a maximum of € 200,000- for the duration of the project (to be justified in the application file), and,
- Operating, Support operating and Equipment costs are limited to € 120,000- for the duration of the project. This limit can be extended up to a maximum of € 240,000- for the duration of the project in case there is no request for Personnel in the PDR.

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* Article 15 uses the wording “for the duration of the project” to soften the rules of application with the DFG (4-year funding for a duration of 3 years). Nevertheless, the “annual average” principle still applies: in this case, the amounts must be divided by three to comply with the annual average budget limitations.
A Cross-university PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG) application enables to apply for funding ranging from:

- € 120,000- to € 460,000- for the duration of the project.

Personnel costs (non mandatory) amount to:

- 2 full-time equivalent (FTE) maximum, on an annual average for the duration of the project (i.e. maximum 36 months by FTE),
- In case of hiring of a Doctoral Researcher, this duration may be extended to maximum 48 months.

Concerning Cross-university PDR (€ 460,000- maximum limit for the duration of the project):

- Personnel total costs are limited to a maximum of € 400,000-, for the duration of the project (to be justified in the application file), and,
- Operating, Support operating and Equipment costs are limited to € 60,000- for the duration of the project. This limit can be extended up to a maximum of € 240,000- for the duration of the project in case Personnel costs are minimised (requirement: the maximum limit of € 460,000- for the duration of the project must be adhered).

Support operating costs (detailed in Article 10) are included in the budgetary limitation of the Single or Cross-university PDR and the maximum amount is of:

- € 20,000- for the duration of the project, and per institution involved in the funding application.

**Article 16**

If the research project includes the training of a doctoral student, the promoter-applicant of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG) may request Doctoral Researcher personnel for a maximum duration of 4 years, at a steady budget, in order to enable them to finish their thesis.

**Article 17**

Categories of personnel\(^5\) are detailed in the table hereafter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Part time</th>
<th>Full time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Researcher – Grant(^6) or Salary</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Researcher(^7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-doctoral Researcher – Salary (capped)</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician – Salary (capped)</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n/a = not applicable

\(^5\) For all personnel, the promoter shall contact the relevant department of their host institution to determine their status and obtain an estimate of the total personnel costs involved based on the scientific seniority.

Amounts cannot be changed after submitting the application.

Non-doctoral Researcher and Technician categories are subject to an annual limit, calculated in proportion to the number of days worked. Limitations in force for the first year of funding are detailed in the Credits and Projects Call mini-guide.

\(^6\) In case of a grant, the Doctoral Researcher must only be hired on a full-time basis.

\(^7\) The promoter shall contact the relevant department of their host institution in order to determine the Postdoctoral Researcher’s status (Mobility situation, grant, employee…) and the work time.
Promoters are allowed to recruit personnel for a minimum of one month and the duration may not exceed the maximal duration of the funding agreement, except when the personnel of the Doctoral Researcher category is concerned as part of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG).

The identity of the personnel is not required when submitting a PDR application. However, the personnel category must be specified.

Article 18
On the date of the hiring by the host institution, Doctoral Researchers must have obtained one of the following degrees:

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

Article 19
On the date of the hiring by the host institution, Postdoctoral Researchers must have obtained a doctoral academic degree after the defence of a thesis.

Article 20
Holders of a Master’s degree (or equivalent) or a Ph.D. are not eligible under the Technician category.

Holders of a Master’s degree (or equivalent) are eligible for Non-doctoral Researcher category. The Non-doctoral Researcher cannot, under any circumstances, start any personal research work leading to a Ph.D. during the working hours devoted to this function.

Article 21
Teams’ personnel whose remuneration costs are not charged to the PDR may include amongst others:

- Members of the teaching, scientific, administrative or technical personnel from the French-speaking community of Belgium universities,
- Members who benefit from a grant allocated by a Belgian or a foreign body promoting research.

No compensation can be granted to the promoters or to the above-mentioned personnel.

CHAPTER IV: EXAMINATION OF APPLICATIONS

Article 22
Criteria that will be taken into account for the evaluation of the PDR applications are the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the promoters:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CV and publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Main research achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the research programme:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Feasibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Methodology and relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Originality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaborations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adequacy of the requested budget with regard to the submitted research programme will also be evaluated. The Scientific Commission may reduce the requested budget up to a maximum of 15%. If the adequacy between the research programme and the requested budget is not justified and appears to require a reduction of more than 15%, the research programme will not be deemed fundable.

Article 23
The decision-making body of the F.R.S.-FNRS allocates funds according to the budget that is available. It decides on the granting or rejection, and where provided for, on the amounts to be granted.

CHAPTER V: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Article 24
Funding granted through the PDR instrument is subject to a research agreement.

This agreement shall bear the signature of the following parties:

- **The promoter** commits to carrying out the funded research;
- **The F.R.S.-FNRS** commits to allocating grants covering the personnel, operating and equipment costs, each year covered by the agreement. No transfer between those 3 expense items may be accepted;
- **The host institution**.

In the particular case of joint research carried out by several promoters in several host institutions, each institution takes part in the agreement, which contains all the relevant provisions regarding personnel recruitment, grants management and equipment ownership.

The agreement provides for unilateral termination clauses, which must include a period of notice.

Article 25
Any change made to the planned expenses must receive the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

The budget devoted to the personnel is available only for the duration of the research agreement, which may be extended for maximum 6 months in case of postponement of personnel hiring expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement, and is divided according to the provisions of the agreement.

**As part of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG)**, concerning the Doctoral Researcher hired for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 16), the budget is available for the same duration as planned for the Doctoral Researcher (maximum 4 years), from the starting date of the PDR.
which may be extended for maximum 6 months in case of postponement of hiring expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement, and is divided according to the provisions of the agreement.

The budget devoted to operating and equipment costs can be used for the duration of the agreement, with an additional 12-month period.

As part of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG), concerning the Doctoral Researcher hired for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 16), the budget devoted to operating and equipment costs can be used for the duration of the agreement, with an additional 24-month period.

The unspent amount will be recovered by the F.R.S.-FNRS.

Article 26
Grants at the disposal of the promoters are managed by the financial department of the institution to which they are attached.

The financial department of the institution shall send the supporting documents to the F.R.S.-FNRS as soon as possible.

For the personnel costs relevant to a given calendar year, the supporting documents must be sent before the 1st March of the following year.

The supporting documents justifying operating and/or equipment costs must be sent before 1st March directly following the deadline to use the concerned budget.

Article 27
The promoter has to inform the F.R.S.-FNRS of any personnel hiring.

The replacement of personnel among the Doctoral Researcher category is not authorised during the last 6 months of the personnel employment period.

The personnel hiring which was expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement may be delayed. However, postponement shall be equivalent to the lost employment duration and not exceed by more than 6 months:

- the end date of the agreement,

or

- the employment period of the Doctoral Researcher planned as part of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG), for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 16).

The duration of the employment initially allotted may not be exceeded.

Article 28
Scientific and technical personnel shall be recruited in accordance with the scales and regulations in force within the host institution.

As for Non-doctoral Researchers and technical personnel, the F.R.S.-FNRS contribution is subject to an annual limit assigned from the Fund and is calculated in proportion to the number of days worked.
Article 29
The F.R.S.-FNRS shall reimburse personnel costs up to the total amounts indicated in the research agreement, while observing the Personnel categories.

Concerning Personnel categories there is some flexibility in terms of annual costs and duration, should the granting duration and maximum amount not be exceeded. Also for categories which are annually capped, this annual limitation shall not be exceeded, on the understanding that employment may not exceed the ending date of the agreement, except:

- in case of a Doctoral Researcher hired as part of a PDR in collaboration with a German partner (DFG), for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 16) and,

- in case the hiring has been postponed as provided for in article 27 § 3.

The financial participation of the F.R.S.-FNRS is limited to the global amount indicated in the agreement.

CHAPTER VI: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Article 30
Any device acquired with a credit from the F.R.S.-FNRS becomes the property of the host institution, to which the beneficiary of the credit is attached.

The purchase of any device must be done with due respect for the provisions defined by the relevant department of the host institution.

This institution commits, however, to putting the mentioned device at the disposal of the researchers involved for the time needed in order to conduct the research, which led to its purchase in the first place. In addition, the host institution commits not to alienating or lending the equipment without the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

In the event that the device was purchased with the provision of an additional funding, the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS will settle the ownership issue with the competent authorities.

Article 31
Grants are exclusively allocated for the execution of the research programme approved by the F.R.S.-FNRS. Promoters are required to use them solely for that purpose. Any fundamental change in the research programme must obtain the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

CHAPTER VII: RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PROMOTERS

Article 32
Any funded research programme must comply with the legal provisions in force regarding ethics.

Article 33
Promoters must submit to the rules imposed by the academic authority of the host institution where they work and observe its regulations. In addition, regarding the F.R.S.-FNRS, they must adhere to the regulation on property, protection and promotion of the results from the research carried out within the institution.
Article 34
Pursuant to the Regulation on the application of the Open Access policy to scientific publications resulting from research programmes supported by the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds, any scientific publication resulting partially or fully from the funding granted as part of the PDR instrument shall mention the source of this funding as follows:

“This work was supported by the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique-FNRS under Grant(s) n° [agreement number]”.

CHAPTER VIII: EX-POST INDICATORS

Article 35
The F.R.S.-FNRS collects ex-post quantitative indicators related to the funding of the PDR granted (e.g., number of publications, patents, dissertation and theses) as well as the publications list.

The main promoter shall communicate those data to the F.R.S.-FNRS on the e-space platform during the entire duration of the PDR extended by a 2-year period.
APPENDIX 1

Relevant institutions giving access to the funding of the F.R.S.-FNRS

PDR Instrument

Credits and Projects Call
Institutions de rattachement / Attached institutions

Instrument Projet de Recherche / Research Project

(SINGLE-UNIVERSITY PDR)

| Candidat promoteur d’une université CFB / Promoter-applicant of a CFB university |
| Universités de la Communauté française de Belgique (CFB) / Universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB) |
| - 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) |
### Institutions de rattachement / Attached institutions

**Instrument Projet de Recherche / Research Project**

*(PDR PLURI-UNIVERSITAIRE)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Candidat promoteur principal et candidat co-promoteur d’une université CFB</strong> / <strong>Main promoter-applicant and co-promoter-applicant of a CFB university</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universités de la Communauté française de Belgique (CFB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Université Catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain)</td>
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<td>Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB)</td>
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<td>Université de Liège (ULiège)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Université de Mons (UMons)</td>
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