

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 4TH JULY 2023**.

INSTRUMENTS		FRESH CALL 2023		
		ELECTRONIC VALIDATION DEADLINES ¹ ON E-SPACE		
		APPLICANT	PROMOTER	RECTOR
1 st Grant	FRESH-B1	Thursday 24 th August at 2 p.m.*	Monday 4 th September at 2 p.m.	Thursday 7 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 on time.

- 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.
- Applicants pre-selected for a 1st FRESH grant will pass an oral examination between 6th and 17th November 2023. The F.R.S.-FNRS' Bureau of the Board of Trustees has decided that this examination will be held **exclusively at the premises of F.R.S.-FNRS** located at 5 Egmont Street, 1000 Brussels.

However, in exceptional cases, applicants who are unable to attend are requested to duly justify their situation by email to auditions-jurys@frs-fnrs.be as soon as possible. The emails will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Bureau of the Board of Trustees or the Secretary-General of F.R.S.-FNRS.

Jurys dates are available [here](#).

The precise time of the oral examination, as well as the practical details, will be communicated in October.

- 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 2023 while Second Grant scheme starts as from 1st January 2024.

¹ All times are Brussels local time.

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

3.2 Deadlines for providing appendices

DEADLINES IN 2023		DOCUMENTS
1ST GRANT	Monday 4 th September at 2 p.m.	Reference letter from promoter, structured according to the template
	Saturday 30 th September	Appendices (see point 3.1) ²
		Reference letters from: - 1 reference person (different from the promoter) member of the academic staff of a scientific institution, structured according to the template , - 1 reference person 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 validation deadline for the applicant ²	
2ND GRANT	Tuesday 31 st October	Advisory recommendation from the Supervisory Panel (Thesis Advisory Committee)

4. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2022

4.1 [Rules and Regulations](#)

Scope of Article 4

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.

² Where applicable, to be uploaded or mentioned by the applicant on a dedicated page at <https://e-space.frs-fnrs.be>, as a follow-up of their application file after the validation deadline set for the applicant.

4.2 Impact of the USL-B - UCLouvain merger on the FRESH juries

Following the merger of the USL-B with UCLouvain, effective in September 2023, the composition of the FRESH juries has been adjusted.

The Cultural Challenges jury now consists of 8 pairs of academic members (full members and alternate members) instead of 9, along with 3 members from civil society. The Economic and Social Challenges 1, 2, 3 juries are composed of 8 academic members (instead of 9) and 1 member from civil society.

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 Only one FRIA/FRESH application

Applicants are not allowed to apply for both [FRIA](#) and [FRESH](#) instruments in 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 change 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 may 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 reference person substantially 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 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 3.2, in case of publications accepted after the validation deadline set for the applicant, applicants may add them until 30 th September.
	Professional background , including relevant activities with regard to the research project

SECTION	CONTENT
	Title of the Master's thesis
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>➤ <i>Funded proposals are released and made public on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.</i></p>
	<p>Selection of the jury and selection of 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of relevance, which can be supplemented by some unrestricted keywords.</p> <p>➤ <i>If applicants select only one descriptor field corresponding to the jury selected, they shall justify their choice in the application form.</i></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 into 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 allowed in addition to the 4 pages.</p> <p>A reference bibliography (max. 1 page) should be included and listed in the 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>➤ <i>Data can vary depending on the nature of the project and the scientific field.</i></p>
THE REFERENCE PERSONS	<p>Contact details (first name, surname, email) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 reference person (different from the promoter) member of the academic staff of a scientific institution, - 1 reference person involved in the field outside the academic sphere. <p>➤ <i>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 confidential reference letter as part of their application.</i></p>

By submitting an application form, the applicant renounces all access to the 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.

7. (PRE)SELECTION PROCEDURE, JURIES

7.1 Composition of juries

Applications for a 1st Grant will be evaluated by four juries: one is dedicated to cultural challenges, the three others to economic and social challenges.

These 4 juries cover the following subject areas:

- **"Cultural Challenges" jury (DC):** Cultural Anthropology, Art and Architecture, Performing Arts, Contemporary History, History of Pre-Industrial Societies, Languages and Literature, Heritage and Archaeology, Philosophy
- **"Economic and Social Challenges 1" jury (DES-1):** Psychology, Social Psychology, Education Sciences
- **"Economic and Social Challenges 2" jury (DES-2):** Economics, Management, Law, Criminology
- **"Economic and Social Challenges 3" jury (DES-3):** Political Science, Social Science, Urban Planning, Mobility, Communication, Human Geography, Environmental Management

The DC jury is made up of 3 civil society representatives and 16 members, 8 full members and 8 alternate members, from French-speaking Community of Belgium universities, respecting, for both full members and alternate members, the balance between universities:

- 2 UCLouvain, 2 ULB, 2 ULiège
- 1 UMons, 1 UNamur

The DES juries are made up of 1 civil society representative and 8 members from French-speaking Community of Belgium universities, respecting the balance between universities:

- 2 UCLouvain, 2 ULB, 2 ULiège
- 1 UMons, 1 UNamur

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 their specialty (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 the 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 shall not exceed 10 minutes.

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

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA - EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluation criteria 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 their 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.

In accordance with the European Charter for Researchers, all 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-privee)

QUESTIONS: bourses-mandats@frs-fnrs.be