A practical introduction for starting FWO PhD Fellows

November 2019

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Agenda

• FWO: mission and key facts
• The FWO community
• PhD fellowship: agreement and rules
• PhD fellowship: financial aspects
• PhD fellowship: job related aspects
• “Out-of-Office”: holidays / illness / leaves
• Where to find more info
• Q&A
Congrats to 480 new PhD fellows!

- ‘aspirant’ fundamental research
  - 931 -> 280 granted (30,0%)
  - +2 ‘l’Oréal’ fellowships

- ‘aspirant’ strategic basic research
  - 534 -> 200 granted (37,5%)

*Keep the 80% succes rate (PhD after 4-5 years)!*
Preface

• What you should learn today...
  • How to live and work as a FWO PhD fellow
    • NL: “aspirant fundamenteel onderzoek / strategisch basisonderzoek”

• This presentation
  • serves as fellow’s “operating manual” (key topics only)
  • more details: webpages / regulations / FAQ / e-portal

• DISCLAIMER
  • Official & binding documents: regulations in Dutch
    • English regulations: no legal status
Welcome to the FWO

• Our mission
  • Funding of **fundamental** & **strategic** research
  • Funding programmes
    • *Individual researchers* (pre-, post-doc, mobility *Pegasus*)
    • *Research teams* (projects, *SBO, Odysseus,*…)
    • Research infrastructure
    • Scientific prizes

Principles

• **Bottom-up** in all disciplines
• **Scientific excellence** and interuniversity (incl research institutes) competition
• Transparent and **equal opportunities**

*Opening new horizons...*
The FWO by numbers

Budget 2020: 364 MEUR

- Fellowship: 20%
- Projects: 53%
- Infrastructure: 27%

2018
- Fundamental: 20%
- Strategic basic: 19%
- Clinical: 5%
- Infrastructure: 56%

2019
- PhD fellows: 32.4%
- Postdocs: 27.1%

1573 PhD fellows
703 Postdocs

82% PhD fellows 18% Postdocs
63% Postdocs 37% PhD fellows

23.4% Postdoc JR (170)
27.1% Postdoc SR (86)
FWO: Mission and key facts

- Label awarded in December 2010
- Implementation of Charter & Code
- Focus on transparent recruitment procedures and family/gender friendly measures
FWO: Mission and key facts

COMMUNICATION
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- Q&A
Join the FWO-Community
HOW?

STEP 1: FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- YouTube

STEP 2: USE #FWOVLANDEREN
Tag @fwoVlaanderen

Join our community
WHY?

We want to put your research in the spotlight

Join our community
WHAT?

Pictures and videos with #fwovlaanderen will feature on our website
Congrats to these three champs on obtaining a junior or senior postd...

Doctor in Sciences! 🎓 phd #postdoc #thesis...

Do I look like a real scientist? 🥰 Finally IHC time, moment of...

The bachelor 1 and 2 dance students brought 'The Kuru Field of...'
WHAT?

INSTAGRAM - TAKEOVERS

Join our community
Nu neem ik het hier even over! Ik ben Lisa Demets, historica en één van de 16 geselecteerden van de #VlaamsePhDcup 2019. Vanaf morgen neem ik jullie mee op de eerste mediatrainings ter voorbereiding van de halve finale. Volg alles hier op @fwovlaanderen en in jullie Instagramstories. #fwovlaanderen #phdcup #onderzoekersinbeeld

4 d.
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PhD fellowship: agreement and rules

• Agreement between FWO and the PhD fellow
  • Nov. 1, 2019 – Oct. 31, 2021
  • Renewal Nov 1, 2021 – Oct. 31, 2023 (apply spring 2021)
  • Final report
  • Continuously and full-time!

• Roles
  • FWO: funding agency ("grant-providing body")
    • Social security managed by HR-Department FWO
  • University: (main) hosting organisation
    • Disciplinary rules according to hosting university
    • In consensus with supervisor
  • Co-hosting organisation(s)
    • Agreement with university
    • If abroad, FWO approval needed
PhD fellowship: agreement and rules

- General rules / specific rules / bench fee regulations
  - (NL/EN) – *Dutch version is binding*
  - See webpages aspirant/PhD fellow [NL](#) [EN](#)

- Ethical questionnaire (General regulations Art. 4)
  - You were sent an ethical questionnaire
  - Human and/or animal test subjects
  - Ethical clearance by research ethics committee (@host institution)
Research Integrity

• As part of FWO Policy:
  • Clause in call text, application and contract on commitment to RI
  • Profiles for (co)promoters and researchers
  • Adaptations in General Regulation and Regulation pre- and postdoc fellowships on procedure and sanctions in case of RI violation

• ! Read the detailed information and the RI Clause

*Every applicant and beneficiary is expected to know the rules and what (s)he will be committed to.*
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• PhD fellowship: Financial aspects
• PhD fellowship: job related aspects & travel
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PhD fellowship: financial aspects

• Grant amount at level of assistant at Flemish university: **€ 2 015,51** (minimum net salary)
  • plus
    – any (scientific) seniority
    – family situation accounted for

• Exempted from personal income tax
  • Tax declaration:
    – At the expense (‘ten laste’) of the parents
    – At the expense of the partner when married or legally cohabiting

• Full social security (e.g. pension and health care)
  • You must join a health insurance (Ziekenfonds)

• **Child allowance**
  • Notify birth to FWO
  • Join a child allowance fund -> family and maternity benefits
  • ! No child allowance for the parents of the PhD fellow!
PhD fellowship: financial aspects

- The year-end bonus (halfway December)
  - based on the scholarship (59%*) of the current year and on the working period during the first nine months of that same year
- The holiday allowance (May)
  - based on your scholarship (92%*) of May of the current year and the working period during the previous year

*(Mentioned % based on gross amount, incl payroll tax)
PhD fellowship: financial aspects

Bench fee

- *For your independence & flexibility*
- *More info on FAQ webpages*

- PhD fellowship: € 3,720 per year
  - Common responsibility of PhD fellow and promotor
  - May be cumulated with other working allowances
  - Credit balances may be used the next year

- Paid quarterly to university (credit line @university)
  - Based on expenditure declarations
  - Managed by financial antenna at your university (contacts: see FAQ)

- During suspension (pregnancy leave, parental leave,...)
  - Bench fee remains available, but no expenditures can be accounted for
  - Administrative extension: no extra bench fee
PhD fellowship: financial aspects

Bench fee eligible costs (research related):

- **Items of lasting value** (equipment, computer, books, ...)
- **Consumables** (reagents, test animals & plants, chemicals...)
- **Operating expenditure** (copies, searches, data traffic...)
- **Remuneration** of persons not subject to social security who participate in the awarded research
- **Travel** (excl. commuting) and accommodation costs in Belgium and abroad (no fixed accommodation allowance)
- **Study stays** and participations to conferences abroad (if in line with awarded research)
- **Publication costs** (as 1st author – or co-author+ cost-sharing)
- **Printing costs PhD thesis**
- access to and **dissemination of research results**.
PhD fellowship: financial aspects

The bench fee is NOT intended for:

- registration on the university roll or as a regular student in Belgium or abroad;
- registration as a PhD student and for the PhD programme;
- fellow's or promotor's personal expenditure, incl. accommodation and commuter traffic;
- central management costs and/or general operating costs by the research group/dept or university;
- expenditure already covered by other financing sources;
- costs of other scholarship students, PhD students, postdoctoral fellows or staff members;
- costs for the award of the PhD (invitations public defense, hiring a room, reception, travel and accommodation of the jury, etc.);
- costs for the organisation of a workshop or conference.
PhD fellowship: financial aspects

Commuting costs reimbursed by FWO

- **Public transport costs**
  - in **Belgium** to go to and from work.
  - foreign residence: only costs from and to Belgian border
- Send copy/proof to FWO to hr@fwo.be
- Details: FAQ webpages

- **Bicycle allowance**
  - 0.21 € / km
  - Details: FAQ webpages
  - Application forms on the FWO e-loket/portal -> upload
PhD fellow: travel

Travel: basic principles

• **All** trips for research purposes:
  • Notify FWO of every stay abroad (online form: e-loket/portal FWO)
    • “melding buitenlands verblijf” / “Report stay abroad”
  • Travel insurance arranged by FWO
  • Always in consultation with your promotor
  • Permission promotor (sometimes rector) needed
PhD fellow: travel

Travel: how to finance

• Use bench fee:
  • Congresses and short stays (<4 weeks) (within Europe)
  • All other travel / accommodation costs

• Apply for a FWO travel grant. Apply 3 months before departure:
  • congresses (outside Europe)
  • long stays (in/outside Europe) (5 weeks to 12 months)
  • In a scientific institute
  • www.fwo.be/en/fellowships-funding/international-mobility/
PhD fellow: travel

Travel insurance

The FWO vouches for

- Insurance for occupational accidents abroad
- Travel insurance (AIG):
  - During professional trips abroad
    - + private trip following the professional trip (max. 14 days)
    - Co-traveling partner/children insured as well
    - Exclusively private trips are not insured

- Detailed information on conditions and coverage:
  - Contact FWO HR services – HR@fwo.be
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Career & intersectoral mobility

- to inspire you and your promotors
- to valorize research expertise in/out academic world
- to expand and strengthen your network
- to develop transferable skills

New possibilities

- Part of PhD research in other organisation
- 20% ‘other’ tasks
  - Mandatory doctoral training
  - Internships
  - Education master
- Remunerated activities outside PhD & host institute
Mobility: performing (part of research)

- (co-)hosting research institute
  - Flemish & federal research institutes
- part of PhD research in (any) organisation
  - Research institute, enterprise, public authority, ...
  - Per 2Y term: up to 12 months in Belgium
  - or up to 6 months abroad (if FWO permission)
- Agreement host university – organisation
- rights remain at host organisation
PhD fellow: job related aspects

A continuous & full-time occupation ...

- All other activities should not hinder or delay the PhD research
- Report planned activities to FWO at start academic year
- **Doctoral training programme is mandatory**

- **Max 20% ‘other’ activities** (40% if student physician-specialist ASO)
  - Administrative/clinical tasks
  - Other research and scientific service tasks
  - Training and education
    - Internships
    - teacher training (education master)
    - doctoral programme + courses related to PhD research
  - Assisting training and education tasks
    - Supervision of exercises, practical sessions, seminars
    - **NO** formal teaching assignments are allowed

- Real workload to accounted for (incl. preparation and related activities)
PhD fellowship: job related aspects

A continuous full-time occupation ...
• Cumulating of revenues is **not** allowed
• Why:
  • Income tax regulations
  • Nothing should hinder or delay PhD research

• Exceptions:
  • Allowance for a stay abroad
    • covers only *travel and lodging costs*
    • Form ‘Cumulatieaanvraag’ / ‘Combination request’ available at the FWO eloket/portal

• Remunerated activities not related to PhD research
  • If approved by host institution
PhD fellow: job related aspects

- Reporting
  - Application for renewal fellowship
    - (2nd term Nov 1, 2021 – Oct 31, 2023)
  - Final report
    - (also when ending fellowship earlier)

- All publications and reprints of PhD fellows
  - Acknowledge FWO Fellowship
  - Mention your project number
  - References in repositories host university – FWO-labeled

- All research related communication
  - Mention FWO affiliation
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Out-of-office: holidays

• # vacation days ~ regulations of the host university.
• Take holidays in consultation with head of department or your supervisor,
  • Host organization’s booking system
• Inform FWO once a year
  • only the 20 ‘legal’ holidays
  • To cope with social security regulations
Out-of-office: Illness

• You *must* join a health insurance (Ziekenfonds)!
• *Hospitalization insurance possible via university*

• Every absence due to illness:
  • Notify FWO + substantiate (medical certificate)
• More than 30 calendar days
  • inform your health insurance.
  • You receive forms that will be (partially) filled in by the FWO.
• As of the 31st calendar day:
  • suspension of FWO scholarship
  • Replacement income from your health insurance
• inform FWO when you resume work
Out-of-office: work accident

- Inform FWO immediately
  - Forms available on the FWO website (FAQ pages)
  - Insurance via FWO
- A work accident is:
  - an accident during the execution of one’s normal duties
  - an accident on the way to and from work
Out-of-office: other leave possibilities

- Maternity leave
- Time credit
- Parental leave
- Medical assistance leave
- Palliative care leave

- See FAQ & Regulations
Out-of-office: suspension/extension fellowship

- **Suspension** in case of pregnancy, long-term illness, parental leave, palliative leave, civil service, leave medical assistance
- Replacement income from RVA or health insurance

- **Extension** of the fellowship: duration of suspension (min. 14 days)
  - Extension of ≥ 3 months (fulltime & continuous): 1 year extension (≥ 3 months: period with replacement income, hence ≥ 4 months illness)
  - Time credit and voluntary part-time employment: no extension!

- ! Renewal application always in the second year
- ! Bench fee remains available, but no expenditures can be accounted for
- More info: FAQ pages
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Where to find more info & documents

• Website
  • See webpages aspirant/PhD fellow  NL / EN
  • Regulations (legal version: Dutch)
    General / PhD SB programme / bench fee

• E-loket / E-portal

• FAQ
  • http://www.fwo.be/nl/faq/predoctorale-mandaten/
  • http://www.fwo.be/en/faq/phd-fellowships/
PhD fellowships

- Documents that have to be submitted during recruitment and commencement of employment
- Suspension and extension of the fellowship
- Altering personal particulars
- Resignation
- Salary
- Year-end bonus and holiday allowance
- Absences (due to illness or an accident)
- Commuter traffic in Belgium
- Holidays and leaves
- Bench fees for FWO fellows
More info: FWO E-portal (e-loket)
Welcome, Mr. TESTER TEST (5/16/1984) to the FWO e-desk.

Modify additional personal information

**General**

Title: Mr.
Gender: male

Date of birth: 16 May 1984

Nationality: Belgian

Country: Belgium
Postcode / Town/City: 9000 Gent (9000)

Please specify which names you use to publish works (if any): 

Comments/message for the FWO employee: 

Save | Cancel
FWO ‘E-loket’ – e-portal

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<th>Personal details</th>
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<td>Civil status</td>
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<td>Spouse</td>
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<td>Children</td>
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<td>Other people for whom you are fiscally liable.</td>
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**Civil status**

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<td>Comments/message for the FWO employee</td>
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- Actually separated
- divorced
- legally cohabiting
- married
- Separate bed and board
- single
- widow
- widower

**Add document (MAX size 10 Mb.pdf only)**

**Document type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act of legal cohabitation</th>
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<td>Act of end of marriage/ legal cohabitation</td>
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<td>Act of marriage</td>
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**Upload**
Welcome, Mr. TESTER TEST (5/16/1984) to the FWO e-desk.
To notify immediately (FWO HR):

PERSONAL INFO:
• New address, phone and bank account number
• Marriage: copy of the marriage certificate and information about husband’s/wife’s professional activity
• Legal cohabitation: declaration
• Divorce or end of legal cohabitation
• Birth children: birth certificate

Must be uploaded to the FWO e-loket/portal

• Travelling for your scientific research
• Always - form ‘Melding buitenlands verblijf’ or ‘Report of stay abroad’
• More than 3 months - form ‘Cumulatie aanvraag’

Forms available on the FWO e-loket/portal

• Pregnancy (medical certificate stating the expected date of birth)
• Suspension of the fellowship
• Each absence (illness, work accident, …) -> medical certificate
• See FAQ pages

HR@FWO.be
Contact

https://www.fwo.be/en/contact/for-the-researcher/

Scientific & content related single point of contact:
PhD fellows fundamental research: bio / cult / med / gm / wt @fwo.be
interdisciplinair@fwo.be
PhD fellows strategic basic research: SB@fwo.be

All HR matters: HR@fwo.be

Travel grants: interprog@fwo.be

Bench fee contacts @university: see www.fwo.be/FAQ

Do not send questions, documents, ... to individual FWO mail addresses!
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Q&A

- ‘General interest’ questions
- Specific ‘personal’ questions
Thank you for your attention