**PHD FELLOWSHIP: SCORING DESCRIPTORS CRITERION “CANDIDATE” (PRESELECTION)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
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### 1.a. Study results (academic education)

Depending on whether the master studies are already concluded, master or bachelor percentiles (referring to their university study group) are to be provided by the candidates. In addition, detailed course scores should be added. Bachelor percentiles in particular should, if possible, be complemented by intermediate master study results. Students from non-Flemish universities should provide either a percentile score (if available), or at least their rank within their study group (if available). Also, percentiles referring to small study groups should carefully be dealt with.

In the ‘Study results narrative’ section in the application, though, candidates may refer to other evidence of having distinguished themselves during their studies. One may refer to upward trends during course of education, particular situations that may have (positively/negatively) influenced the study trajectory; also to results of additional studies/diplomas, (bachelor or) master thesis score, specific classes successfully attended, or other specific assets.

#### No scoring possibility

The study results do not stand out (may be at the head of the pack within study group, but below average in the applicants population).

- □ (e.g.) <P70 for relevant master diploma, and no other evidence of “standing out”;
- OR
  - □ master students: (e.g.) <P80 for bachelor, and lack of other evidence of distinguishing elements, such as partial master results.

#### Rather good study results

Rather good study results, situated well above average and at the subtop in the study group, as evidenced by:

- □ (e.g.) ≥P70 for relevant master diploma;
- □ master students: e.g. bachelor (e.g.) ≥P80 (and e.g. confirmed by intermediate master study results);
- □ other evidence that would categorize the candidate as equivalent to this group, e.g. a reasonable upward trend in academic results or other specific assets, as substantiated in the application.

#### (Very) good academic education record

(Very) good academic education record situated in the (broad) top of the study group, as evidenced by:

- □ (e.g.) P85 for relevant master diploma, or even P90 (score 5);
- □ master students: (e.g.) bachelor ≥P90 (confirmed by intermediate master study results);
- □ other evidence that would categorize the candidate as equivalent to this group, e.g. a strong upward trend in academic results or other specific assets, as substantiated in the application.

#### Top student with an excellent/outstanding academic education record

Top student with an excellent/outstanding academic education record, as evidenced by:

- □ (e.g.) P95, or even top 1% (score 7), for relevant master diploma;
- □ master students: (e.g.) P95 bachelor with proven top start of master studies, or other evidence;
- □ other evidence that would categorize the candidate as equivalent to this group, as substantiated in the application.
**1.b. Motivation and substantiation of relevant competences of the candidate**

Does the application ("motivation statement") reveal a proper motivation and research interests? Assess the candidate’s (present as well as developing) scientific background and competences (including e.g. experimental skills, presentation or writing skills, commitment/perseverance, ...) in relation to the proposed project and to the requirements for a PhD researcher in general. Assess further evidence in terms of a range of (passed as well as planned) scientific activities, experiences and (where applicable) achievements that may be relevant for this application. These may relate to the academic education or extracurricular activities, (ongoing or finished) thesis (master or advanced master), or (PhD) research already started. Assess –passed or planned- activities and experiences such as (e.g.) dedicated courses, internships, presentations, collaborations, international contacts, mobility. (Intermediate) scientific results, publications, software, data, prototypes and any other meaningful scientific output and achievements may also be taken into account, as well as scientific recognition (e.g. thesis awards).

The assessment should take into account what might be expected from a last year master student vs. from a candidate with some scientific seniority.

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<td>0</td>
<td>□ Expertise and skills apparently are not in line with what should be expected from a PhD student. Some crucial competences are missing and likely not to be acquired.</td>
<td>□ The application reveals fair/reasonable motivation regarding development towards a researcher. Less convincing evidence of (past and planned) activities and experiences.</td>
<td>□ Scientific background and competences to carry out PhD research may be less present, and how they will be acquired is less well substantiated.</td>
<td>□ The application reveals a proper/strong motivation and research interests. This is evidenced by relevant (past/planned) activities and experiences (e.g. training, internships, presentations, collaborations, international contacts, mobility, ...).</td>
<td>□ Relevant scientific background and competences to carry out PhD research have been acquired or are being built up (including e.g. experimental skills, presentation or writing skills, commitment/perseverance, ...). Some first achievements (of master thesis/started PhD research...) may be an asset, e.g.(intermediate) results, publications, software, data, prototypes or other output, scientific recognition as by e.g. thesis awards, ....</td>
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Requirements as in "good", AND the candidate has substantiated to have actively acquired all proper competences to successfully conduct PhD research. Clear plan to further enhance these capacities. Reveals clear motivation and drive.
**PHD FELLOWSHIP FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH EVALUATION/ score grid with scoring descriptors - PRESELECTION**

**PHD FELLOWSHIP: scoring descriptors criterion “Project” (preselection + interview)**

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**2.a Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality**

A PhD project is scientifically challenging and relies on a proper and focused research question. It should significantly contribute to the current international state-of-the-art. To what extent is the proposal original and will it generate knowledge that goes beyond the state-of-the-art (e.g., novel theories, concepts or approaches, new methods, ...)?

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<td>□ The project is <strong>out of scope</strong>: it does not comply with the scope of the panel it was submitted to. (preselection only)</td>
<td>□ Research question and challenge limited or less relevant;</td>
<td>□ Scientifically relevant project, rather high quality, and sufficiently challenging as PhD-research. The research is less well focused;</td>
<td>□ Original and significant contribution to the international state of the art;</td>
<td>□ Highly ambitious and original project of potentially groundbreaking nature and large scientific impact;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Project lacks an intellectual (PhD-worthy) challenge: an in-depth research question is missing.</td>
<td>□ the research objectives lack focus. PhD worthiness is on the low side;</td>
<td>□ the project brings less pronounced added value to international state-of-the-art.</td>
<td>□ high-quality basic research, with significant scientific challenges (doctoral level).</td>
<td>□ very high level of scientific risks. Clear inventive and challenging ideas, novel concepts and strategies.</td>
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**2.b Quality of the research methodology and feasibility of the project**

To what extent is the proposed research methodology appropriate to achieve the goals laid down in the research project? To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible, bearing in mind a personal grant with a duration of four years? Finally the fit in the research team may be of importance (guidance and access to expertise).

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<td>□ Quality of research approach and planning is below par;</td>
<td>□ Methodology and planning are flawed. Intrinsic feasibility is low, or the objectives are formulated too vaguely to evaluate feasibility.</td>
<td>□ Research methodology reasonably well elaborated, but less well substantiated. Given some adjustments and risk control, project implementation appears to be feasible.</td>
<td>□ Adequate, substantiated research methodology to achieve targeted results, logical set-up and realistic planning; feasible within the four-year time frame.</td>
<td>□ thorough identification of the research risks, with alternative research strategies and “fall back” research options.</td>
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<td>□ Research activities are too limited for a four-year grant period;</td>
<td>□ Project does not fit to an individual PhD project.</td>
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<td>□ Good fit of project in research group activities, giving candidate access to necessary expertise.</td>
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<td>□ Project not feasible because of too many planned activities.</td>
<td>□ Ties with/dependence of other researchers, groups or external partners may jeopardize feasibility.</td>
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PHD FELLOWSHIP: scoring descriptors criterion “Interdisciplinarity” (preselection + interview)

### Specific Interdisciplinary Panel only

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#### 3. Level of interdisciplinarity

This criterion, only used in the Specific Interdisciplinary panel, invites you to assess to what extent the application is interdisciplinary. You may take both the project proposal, the profile of the candidate and the research group(s) in which they will be working into account in applying this criterion.

A minimum score of 4 on the aspect ‘Interdisciplinarity’ is necessary in order to be able to receive funding from the Specific Interdisciplinary Panel.

- **□** The project is not interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary at all. The proposed research is focused within one discipline.
- **□** The project is multidisciplinary instead of interdisciplinary in nature. Although the research covers at least two different disciplines, the expertise, methods, tools, data, … of one discipline are merely used as an ‘instrument’ for the other domain. The various domains do not offer benefits to one another nor do they mutually influence each other. Instead they are juxtaposed. The outcomes of the project are not likely to impact all involved disciplines.

**One or more of the following items apply:**

- □ Some characteristics of interdisciplinarity are present, but not all requirements for the category “good/very good” are met. While there is more than one discipline involved in the proposed project, these disciplines are not sufficiently distinct. This is for example the case if these disciplines are located in the same FWO panel.
- □ Although mutual interactive input is necessary from at least two distinct disciplines to address the research question(s) under investigation, the level of coordination and integration is insufficiently extensive/profound.
- □ The involved disciplines do not sufficiently influence one another and as a result they do not benefit to the same extent from the project.

**All of the following items apply:**

- □ There is more than one discipline involved in the proposed project, and these disciplines are sufficiently distinct.
- □ The disciplines are at a similar coordinated level and each discipline is essential to achieve the expected outcome.
- □ The state of the art is advanced in all involved disciplines and/or in a shared area.

**Requirements as in “good/very good”, AND**

- □ There is a pronounced synergy between all involved disciplines, that strongly benefit from and mutually influence each other in an integrated and well-designed way.

**AND**

- □ The outcomes will clearly impact all involved disciplines and as such there is substantial added value for each involved discipline and/or new bridges between previously rarely related fields are built or new subdisciplines could result from this project.