Applying for a FWO PhD fellowship ‘aspirant’
Info session - call 2023

December 2022
Preface

• What you should learn today...
  • to understand the evaluation & selection process
  • to prepare an application that meets the evaluation criteria

• This presentation
  • serves as applicant’s “quick starting guide” (key topics only)
  • more details: FWO predoc webpages incl. documents & regulations

• DISCLAIMER
  • Official & binding documents: regulations in Dutch
    • English regulations: no legal status
Outline

1. FWO mission & key numbers
2. PhD fellowships at a glance
3. Evaluation & selection process
4. Preparing your application
5. ... further reading & contact
Welcome to the FWO

- Our mission
  - Funding of **fundamental & strategic** research
  - Funding programmes
    - *Individual researchers* (pre-, postdoc, mobility)
    - *Research teams* (projects - fundamental/strategic, ‘brain gain’ 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 2022: **470 MEUR**

**Fellowships (1 Oct 22)**

- 1652 PhD fellows
- 785 Postdocs

- 79% PhD fellows
- 51% Postdocs

**Call 2022**

- 27.4% PhD fellows FR
- 30.6% PhD fellows SB
- 26.0% Postdoc (269)
Follow us on social media: @FWOVlaanderen

Spotlight on FWO-researchers

Researcher stories
“De Podkast”
#FWOVlaanderen
Stay tuned!
Outline

1. FWO mission & key numbers
2. PhD fellowships at a glance
3. Evaluation & selection process
4. Preparing your application
5. ... further reading & contact
FWO PhD fellowship (‘aspirant’) at a glance

• Target group
  • Young researchers to complete a PhD
  • Parallel calls Fundamental Research (FR) / Strategic Basic research (SB)
  • Apply up to 2 times for PhD fellowship
  • All nationalities (EEA, nEEA)

• 4-year grants
  • 2 years + renewal 2 years
  • Fellowship grant €2,246.91/’net’ amount per month (minimum)
  • Bench fee €3,720/yearly

• Key dates call 2023
  • Mar 1, 2023 Application deadline
  • Jun 05 (SB) & Jun 30 (FR) Preselection results
  • Aug 30 – Sep 29, 2023 Interview
  • Oct 6, 2023 Communication results
  • Nov 1, 2023 Startdate PhD

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Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
PhD fellowship: fundamental vs strategic

Both fellowships: challenging & original research (PhD level)

**Fundamental research**
- “Curiosity driven”
- Applications *may* follow
  - Societal & economic *benefits*
  - Long term

**Strategic basic research**:  
- “Use inspired”
- Innovative *applications*
  - *Products, processes, services*
  - *Long term perspective*
- *Economic* added value

PhD -> strategically thinking and innovation oriented scientist  
PhD -> independent scientists with a critical mindset
Eligibility master diploma

- Master diploma ‘ManaBa’ / EEA+Switzerland
  - **EEA**: EU + Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein
  - Other countries (incl UK): NARIC attestation:
    - “level” Flemish master
    - Advanced Master (‘ManaMa’) not taken into account

- Eligibility time window (master)
  - Mar 1, 2020
  - 3 years
  - Mar 1, 2023 submission
  - Nov 1, 2023 start

Extensions eligibility window (+1Y):
- Regulations Art 26 maternity-, parental-, sickness leave > 3m
- (+ x Y): Phys./pharm.-specialist or resident veterinarian >1Y training
Eligibility time window (scientific seniority)

- **Scientific experience / seniority**
  - ≤ 18 months since (1st) master
    - *Not accounted for during (advanced) master studies*
    - *Accounted for employment %*
    - *Counted as on March 1, 2023!*
  - Any kind of ‘scientific activity’ (not just PhD research)
  - *All university/university college appointments*
    - Excl. ATP, practice/teaching assistant...
  - *Business enterprise R&D experience*
  - -> prove by contracts, documents, statements

Limit date in case of fulltime continuous research: Sep 1, 2021

18 months

Mar 1, 2023 submission

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Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
Eligible host organisations

- **Main host organisation**
  - 5 Flemish universities
  - Evangelic Protestant Faculty Leuven (not SB)
  - Faculty for Protestant Theology in Brussels (not SB)

- **Additional host institution**
  - Flemish/federal research institutes (research location)
  - Limited list: pick list in application form

- **Main promoter @main host institution**
  - [Regulations](#) Art.10
  - FWO invites main promoter for recommendation letter

- **Co-promotor(s) (minimum postdoc level)**
  - FWO notifies co-promotors – No recommendation letter!
Additional fellowships / bench fees

FWO-fellowships
- “Meise Botanic Garden – FWO” fellowships (FR / SB, 1-2 fellowships)
  - Collection-based biodiversity and conservation research
- “INBO – FWO” fellowships (FR / SB, 1-2 fellowships)
  - Flemish research and knowledge centre for nature and its sustainable management and use
- “VITO – FWO” fellowships (FR / SB, 1-2 fellowships)
  - (Sustainable) energy, materials, chemistry, health and land use
- “WL – FWO” fellowships (FR / SB, 1-2 fellowships)
  - Investigates the impact of human activity and nature on water systems and the consequences for navigation

Principle
- Agreement on being additional host institute (before submitting application)
- “Seal-of-excellence” principle (approved by FWO but on reserve list)
- Fellowship under FWO regulations

Concurrently
- Kom op tegen kanker ➔ Best ranked candidate in Med4 panel FR
- Frank De Winne Call 2023 ➔ 8 fellowships SB to promote Flanders Space
Frank De Winne PhD fellowships SB

• ‘Talent’ for the Flemish space economy
  • Opportunities for young researchers
    – to take space research in Flanders to the next level
    – establishing a sustainable career in the Flemish space economy
  • Flanders Space

• Frank De Winne PhD fellowship SB focus:
  • Bridging academia and industry: research stay(s) in (Flemish) space economy enterprise
  • Training component ‘transferable skills’ (innovation, valorization, ...) e.g. internships, courses
  • Strategic research in line with impulse programme Flemish space economy

• 3-year impulse program (2021-2022-2023)
  • Call 2023 -> 8 fellowships
Other PhD programmes

• **FWO Special PhD fellowship:**
  • 1 year fellowship to complete PhD
  • 1 dedicated panel
  • Candidates currently not working in research *(deadline March 1, 2023)*

• **European University Institute (EUI) fellowship**
  • Social sciences – Florence
  • Deadline **January 31, 2023**

• **Baekeland PhD programme**
  • PhD project with (co-financing!) Flemish enterprise
  • PhD programme @ Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)
Obtaining your PhD in Florence?
• Have a look at Doctoral programme of the EUI
• Academic year 2023-2024: FWO will finance max. two EUI-fellowships for PhD students complying with eligibility criteria as set out by FWO

PhD in four domains (EUI departments):
• Economics
• History and Civilisation
• Law
• Political and Social Sciences

Submission at EUI:
• Submission deadline: January 31, 2023
• Evaluation partly by FWO (first evaluation round)
Outline

1. FWO mission & key numbers
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Submission to expert panels

- Panels fellowships fundamental research (FR)
  - ‘Fellowships’ (PhD/postdoc) panels
  - Expert panel reform! (next slides)
  - 32 panels: 31 in 5 scientific domains + interdisciplinary panel (cross-domain)
  - Updated panel members list published March 2023
    - ±12 members incl. scientific chair
    - >50% members with non-Flemish affiliation

- Panels PhD fellowships strategic basic research (SB)
  - 24 SB panels + Frank De Winne panel
  - Updated panel members list published March 2023
    - ±12 members, moderated by FWO representative
    - >50% members with non-Flemish affiliation
    - ≥1/3 involved in R&D business enterprise sector
FWO expert panels reform (FR)

- **Panel structure** fundamental research has been **reformed**
  - ‘Fellowships’ panels (PhD/postdoc)
  - 32 panels: 31 in **5 scientific domains** + **Specific Interdisciplinary Panel** (cross-domain)

  - **Biological Sciences**
    - Bio1: Molecular and Cellular Biology
    - Bio2: Functional Biology
    - Bio3: Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution
    - Bio4: Applied Biological Sciences
  
  - **Humanities**
    - Cult1: Linguistics
    - Cult2: Art, Art History, Architecture, Design and Literature
    - Cult3: History and Archaeology
    - Cult4: Theology and Religious Studies
    - Cult5: Philosophy and Ethics
  
  - **Social Sciences**
    - G&M1: Sciences of Law and Criminology
    - G&M2: Economics, Business Administration and Management
    - G&M3: Psychology, Pedagogy and Educational Sciences
    - G&M4: Media and Communication Studies, Political Science, Social Work, Social and Cultural Anthropology and Sociology
  
  - **Interdisciplinary research**
    - **Specific Interdisciplinary Panel**

  - **Medical Sciences**
    - Med1: Pharmaceutical Sciences and Medical Biochemistry
    - Med2: Bio-informatics, Genetics and Functional Genomics, Developmental and Stem Cell Biology
    - Med3: Immunology and Microbiology
    - Med4: Cancer Research
    - **Med5: Neurology, Neuroscience, ENT medicine, Ophthalmology, Psychiatry**
    - Med6: Respiratory System, Cardiovascular System, Hematology, Nephrology
    - Med7: Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hepatology, Metabolism and Nutrition, Reproduction, Urogenital System
    - Med8: Health Sciences
    - Med9: Movement & Sports Sciences, Dermatology, Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Sciences, Dentistry and Maxillofacial Medicine, Orthopedics & Musculoskeletal Sciences, Rheumatology
  
  - **Science and Technology**
    - W&T1: Mathematical Sciences
    - W&T2: Physics
    - W&T3: Condensed Matter
    - W&T4: Chemistry
    - W&T5: Computer Science & Information Technology
    - W&T6: Chemical and Materials Engineering
    - W&T7: Electronics, Energy, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering
    - W&T8: Sciences of the Earth and Space
    - W&T9: Science, Technology and Sociotechnical Analysis of the Built Environment
FWO expert panels reform (FR)

- **What is new?**
  - New **Med9** panel created
  - Thorough update of the **scientific scope** of **ALL** panels
    - Check these scopes carefully!
  - New approach towards **interdisciplinary research**

- **More information:**
  - [Digital brochure on FWO website](#)
  - [Webinar on FWO panel reform](#)
FWO expert panels reform (FR)

• Specific Interdisciplinary Panel
  • Submitted proposals should meet the functional definition of interdisciplinarity:
    • There is more than one discipline involved, and these disciplines are sufficiently distinct
    • The disciplines are at the same coordinated level; each discipline is essential to achieve the expected outcome.
    • The use of different, sufficiently integrated disciplines leads to synergy. Due to this synergy, the state of the art is advanced in all involved disciplines and/or in a shared area.

➔ Clearly motivate choice for Int-Dis panel using this definition

➔ Interdisciplinarity is assessed during the evaluation!
  • A minimum score of 4 (‘good’) on interdisciplinarity is necessary to receive funding from this panel
  • It is no longer a requirement to combine disciplines from different scientific domains (e.g. Bio & W&T)
• **Panel structure** strategic basic research
  • 25 panels: 24 in 5 scientific domains + Frank De Winne panel (space industry)

SBBio1 - Molecular & cellular biology of the Eukaryotes (except plants)
SBBio4A - Applied biological sciences A - Environmental technologies, geology, ecotoxicology
SBBio4B - Applied biological science B - Food technology and industrial biotechnology
SBBio4C - Applied biological sciences C - Plant and crop sciences and technology
SBBio4D - Applied biological sciences D - Microbiology, biotechnology and bioinformatics
SBBio4E - Applied biological sciences E - Animal and veterinary sciences
SBBio4F - Applied biological sciences F - Environmental sciences, health and safety
SBBio4G - Applied biological sciences G - Food, nutrition and human health
SBBio4H - Applied biological sciences H - Agricultural sciences and technology
SBBio4I - Applied biological sciences I - Horticulture and garden sciences
SBBio4J - Applied biological sciences J - Forestry and wood technology
SBBio4K - Applied biological sciences K - Fisheries and aquaculture
SBBio4L - Applied biological sciences L - Oceanography and marine sciences
SBBio4M - Applied biological sciences M - Space industry

SBBio1 - Medical biochemistry
SBBio2 - Genetics and functional genome research; bio-informatics science
SBBio3 - Human immunology and Infectious diseases
SBBio4 - Cancer research
SBBio5 - Organs and organ systems: neurology, psychiatry, rheumatology, orthopedics, physiotherapy, dentistry, maxillofacial, ENT medicine and dermatology
SBBio6 - Organs and organ systems: cardiovascular system, respiratory system, nephrology, urogenital system, hematology, gastroenterology, hepatology, endocrinology, metabolism and reproduction
SBBio7 - Health sciences
SBBio8 - Veterinary and animal production
SBBio4 - Chemistry A: Organic synthesis, medicinal chemistry
SBBio4 - Chemistry B: Material/polymer chemistry - analytical and inorganic chemistry
SBBio4 - Data science
SBBio5 - Informatics and data communication
SBBio6 - Chemical engineering and catalysis
SBBio7 - Material sciences
SBBio8 - Mechanical engineering A: mechatronics, product design & development, manufacturing engineering, industrial engineering
SBBio9 - Mechanical engineering B: energy generation, conversion and storage, fluid mechanics, biomechanical engineering
SBBio10 - Electronics and telecommunications
SBBio11 - Construction and architecture, spatial planning
Process: single submission 2-phase evaluation & selection

**Phase 1**
- Remote assessment: 3 panel members
- (online) panel meeting consensus scoring & ranking
  - Rejected proposals
  - Retained for phase 2 interviews

**Phase 2**
- Panel meeting: interviews consensus scoring & ranking
  - Rejected proposals
  - Selected candidates
  - Feedback by panel
Evaluation by expert panels

Evaluation of your proposal:

• **Consensus** panel decisions (scoring & ranking) in both phases (preselection / interviews)
• **Roles** (per application):
  • 3 panel members as *internal evaluators (report) of your proposal* in phase 1
  • Internal reviewers take the lead in interview
    – but all panel members involved in Q&A
  • 1 of the internal evaluators compiles feedback to the applicant

• **Attention to various researcher profiles and research results**
  • Away from one-sided focus on ‘classical output’ (*publications’*)
  • Towards broader view on scientific accomplishments
  • **Research career:** range of scientifically relevant activities, skills, experiences and achievements
  • Adapted application form and evaluation criteria

• Assessment takes into account what might be expected from a last year master student vs. a candidate with scientific seniority

December 2022
Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
Selected to phase 2: interviews

- Invitations and instructions June 05 (SB) and June 30 (FR) 2023 (end preselection)
- Interviews 30 Aug. - 29 Sep. 2023
- @FWO in Brussels
- Interview format: pitch + Q&A
  - Interview instructions and guidelines will be available
  - Opportunity to mention realizations since submission date
- Evaluation criteria different from preselection (criterion ‘candidate’)
  - Score grid ‘interview’
  - Focus on assessing your ‘potential’ capacity as PhD researcher (‘total picture’)
  - Not the ‘performance’ but contents of what you say...
Evaluation criteria “candidate” & “project”

**Phase 1 preselection**

Study results *(academic education record)*
- Position in study group (percentile)
- Other equivalent evidence of ‘standing out’

Motivation & relevant competences
- Motivation / research interest
- Activities, skills, experiences
- Scientific background / competences

**Phase 2 interviews**

Potential competence as independent researcher
- Knowledge about own research field
- Insight in project approach and positioning
- Reasoning skills and critical scientific mindset
- Motivation

**Phase 1 + 2**

Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality
- Originality / contribution state-of-the-art
- Risks and challenges

Quality research approach, feasibility
- Methodology
- Feasibility, risk mitigation

Weighted total score (both phases)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Fair/Reasonable</th>
<th>Good/Very good</th>
<th>Excellent/Outstanding</th>
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50% 50%
Evaluation criteria: Specific Interdisciplinary Panel

1/ Candidate

2/ Project

3/ Interdisciplinarity
- More than one discipline involved and these disciplines are sufficiently distinct
- Disciplines at similar coordinated level and each discipline is essential to achieve expected outcome
- Advance state-of-the-art in all involved disciplines and/or in a shared area

Total score:
- 50%
- 30%
- 20%
**Evaluation criteria: “candidate” “project” ”application potential”**

### Phase 1 preselection

**Study results (academic education record)**
- Position in study group (percentile)
- Other equivalent evidence of ‘standing out’

**Motivation & relevant competences**
- Motivation / research interest
- Activities, skills, experiences
- Scientific background / competences

### Phase 2 interviews

**Potential competence as independent researcher**
- Knowledge about own research field
- Insight in project approach and positioning
- Reasoning skills and critical scientific mindset
- Motivation

**Potential competence as strategically thinking and innovation oriented researcher**
- Insight in strategic importance & positioning project
- Notions of economic landscape (IPR, players, innovations)

### Phase 1 + 2

**Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality**
- Originality / contribution state-of-the-art
- Risks and challenges

**Quality research approach, feasibility**
- Methodology
- Feasibility, risk mitigation

**Weighted total score (both phases)**
- Strategic importance research approach (relevance)
- Strategic importance for possible users (impact)

50%  30%  20%
Uniform evaluation: scoring descriptors

Check Score grids preselection / interview used by panels!

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP EVALUATION/ score grid with scoring descriptors - PRESELECTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Scientific contribution of the candidate</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s scientific contribution to the state of the art, as evidenced by a range of scientifically relevant activities and achievements, such as the quality and impact (rather than the quantity) of the publications recorded, as well as other meaningful scientific output. The latter may include e.g., software, prototypes, theoretical letters, invitations to scientific meetings, the organization of such meetings, the contribution of the participation in conferences, acting as a scientific reviewer for submitted papers or grant applications and the like, and any other relevant output. Consider also scientific or other creative, economic, or impact beyond publications and obtained research funding. – Assess evidence of a growing scientific reputation and/or upward trajectory. – For senior post docs, scientific independence (as e.g. evidenced by publications in other areas of research) and/or as evidence of no other relevant research output.</td>
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<td>2. Average scientific contribution to the state of the art, taking into account the scientific relevance of activities and achievements scored in other research outputs and impact</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s scientific contribution to the state of the art, as evidenced by a range of scientifically relevant activities and achievements, as well as other meaningful scientific output. The latter may include e.g., software, prototypes, theoretical letters, invitations to scientific meetings, the organization of such meetings, the contribution of the participation in conferences, acting as a scientific reviewer for submitted papers or grant applications and the like, and any other relevant output. Consider also scientific or other creative, economic, or impact beyond publications and obtained research funding. – Assess evidence of a growing scientific reputation and/or upward trajectory. – For senior post docs, scientific independence (as e.g. evidenced by publications in other areas of research) and/or as evidence of no other relevant research output.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Meaningful scientific contribution to the state of the art, taking into account the scientific relevance of activities and achievements properly acknowledged in the scientific community (quality and impact of publication record and/or other research outputs and impact).</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s scientific contribution to the state of the art, as evidenced by a range of scientifically relevant activities and achievements, as well as other meaningful scientific output. The latter may include e.g., software, prototypes, theoretical letters, invitations to scientific meetings, the organization of such meetings, the contribution of the participation in conferences, acting as a scientific reviewer for submitted papers or grant applications and the like, and any other relevant output. Consider also scientific or other creative, economic, or impact beyond publications and obtained research funding. – Assess evidence of a growing scientific reputation and/or upward trajectory. – For senior post docs, scientific independence (as e.g. evidenced by publications in other areas of research) and/or as evidence of no other relevant research output.</td>
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<td>4. Proven track record of scientific research and/or other relevant research outputs and impact</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s scientific contribution to the state of the art, as evidenced by a range of scientifically relevant activities and achievements, as well as other meaningful scientific output. The latter may include e.g., software, prototypes, theoretical letters, invitations to scientific meetings, the organization of such meetings, the contribution of the participation in conferences, acting as a scientific reviewer for submitted papers or grant applications and the like, and any other relevant output. Consider also scientific or other creative, economic, or impact beyond publications and obtained research funding. – Assess evidence of a growing scientific reputation and/or upward trajectory. – For senior post docs, scientific independence (as e.g. evidenced by publications in other areas of research) and/or as evidence of no other relevant research output.</td>
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</table>

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP EVALUATION/ score grid with scoring descriptors - INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
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<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Competence as a post-doctoral researcher</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s competence as an independent researcher on a post-doctoral level. Important aspects are the scientific knowledge and insight in the proposed project, intellectual capacity and creativity, research and critical mindset, and motivation and vision on the own professional future. Descriptions in this score grid (“scientific expertise”, “ability”, “skills”, “mindset”, “motivation”, “vision”, “…”) should take into account the evaluation criteria of the preselection grid.</td>
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<td>2. Research and critical mindset are present</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s competence as an independent researcher on a post-doctoral level. Important aspects are the scientific knowledge and insight in the proposed project, intellectual capacity and creativity, research and critical mindset, and motivation and vision on the own professional future. Descriptions in this score grid (“scientific expertise”, “ability”, “skills”, “mindset”, “motivation”, “vision”, “…”) should take into account the evaluation criteria of the preselection grid.</td>
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<td>3. The candidate’s competences and insights on the project are well grounded and well-established arguments</td>
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<td>– Assess the candidate’s competence as an independent researcher on a post-doctoral level. Important aspects are the scientific knowledge and insight in the proposed project, intellectual capacity and creativity, research and critical mindset, and motivation and vision on the own professional future. Descriptions in this score grid (“scientific expertise”, “ability”, “skills”, “mindset”, “motivation”, “vision”, “…”) should take into account the evaluation criteria of the preselection grid.</td>
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<td>4. The candidate demonstrates the potential to conduct sound research; excellent understanding of the project concept and project success</td>
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Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
PhD fellowships distribution per panel

Distribution
- Available PhD fellowships (293 FR, 195 SB)
- 90% fellowships proportionally distributed to each panel (quota)
- 10% fellowships assigned after all panel selections to best remaining candidates (wildcards)
  - Best ranked candidates with score for Candidate (≥4), Project (≥4), (SB) for application potential (≥2)
- Additional PhD Fellowships by co-hosting organisations (Plantentuin Meise, INBO, VITO, WL)

Process
- (2 x quota) Candidates invited for interview
- (quota) Candidates assigned direct PhD Fellowship
- (10% and additional) Best ranked candidates from reservelist
- Reserve list with ungranted candidates to be sent to university (BOF, ...)

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Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
Feedback to candidates

- All feedback AFTER selection decision Board (06 Oct. 2023)
  - Compiled by panel member (‘rapporteur’)
  - Including comments based on panel consensus decision and scores
  - Template per criterion (Candidate, Project, SB Application Potential)
    - “Strengths”
    - “Weaknesses”
    - “Findings interview”
    - “Conclusions – why (not) to be funded”
    - “Comments and suggestions for improvement”
- No further correspondence on feedback
- Do NOT contact panel members!

Out in step 1
- Scores preselection
- Panel comments

Out in step 2 or Grant
- Scores interview
- Synthesis panel comments step 1 & 2
Timeline Call 2023 evaluation & selection

- Submission: Mar 1, 2023
- Preselection results: June 30, 2023
- Feedback out-of-preselection: Aug 30-Sept 29, 2023
- Interviews: Oct 6, 2023
- Results: Oct 6, 2023
- Feedback & contract: Oct-Nov, 2023
- Start fellowship: Nov 1, 2023

Dates interviews published early 2023
Outline

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2. PhD fellowships at a glance
3. Evaluation & selection process
4. Preparing your application
5. ... further reading & contact
Preparing your application – e-portal (“e-loket”)

Direct access: [https://fwoweb.fwo.be](https://fwoweb.fwo.be) or via [www.fwo.be](http://www.fwo.be)

Or first: register in time!

- FWO Validation /48hrs

December 2022

Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
Preparing your application – personal details
Some hints in completing the form

- **General:**
  - National registration number
  - Also non-Belgian applicants with Belgian ID card
  - ORCID registration [https://orcid.org/](https://orcid.org/)
  - Scientific Disciplines: use level 4

- **Addresses**
  - *(Future) ‘Belgian service address’!
  - Legal domicile address
    - Non-Belgian domicile in EU: add **TIN code** (tax identification number)

- **Academic degrees & positions**
  - Correct, complete & up to date!

- **Publications**
  - Complete list as on Mar 1, 2023
  - Published or **accepted for publication**
Preparing your application - publication list

- Publication types
  - A1 ‘peer reviewed articles in journals’
    - No distinction between WoS, VABB-SHW a.o.
  - A2 ‘non-peer reviewed articles in journals’
  - B {1 2 3} related to books
  - C {1 2 3 4} conference proceedings, PhD, patent ...

- Adding publications
  - Import XML (Flemish universities bibliography) – A1 -> C1 only
  - Other publications: add manually
  - Only if published or accepted for publication

- PhD application: situation as is on submission (1 Mar 2023)
  - No updates sent to panel
  - Mention new publications during pitch/interview
Checklist before starting new application

Personalia

General
- Gender
- Place of birth
- Nationality
- ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor ID)

Addresses
- Domicile address (in Belgium or abroad)
- (Future) service address

Academic degrees

Publications

no access to new application before these 7 items are completed...

December 2022
Info session PhD fellowships call 2023
Starting a new application form

Choose fellowship type:
- Fellowships
- PhD Fellowship fundamental research

Working title (optional):
Define a working title for your application so you can easily identify it later. This title is not a part of the application itself and can be changed later on.

Create application
Application form: general

- **Title of your research proposal** *(NL-EN)*
- **Abstract** *(NL-EN)*
- **Up to 5 scientific disciplines fitting proposed research** *(Personal data)*
- **Up to 3 free-text keywords or concepts**

Position your proposal in terms of economic finality
- **Companies and sectors**

Transition areas and their science, technology and innovation priorities
- **Socio-economic benefits** In line with 2025 Flemish transition priorities *NL – EN*
- **Picklist Transition Areas** -> Priorities
- E.g. “Health and Wellbeing” -> “Disorders of the brain”
- E.g. “New Energy Demand and Delivery” -> “Technologies for energy grids”
Application form: personal data

- Explain any career breaks

**STUDY RESULTS (ACADEMIC EDUCATION)**
- Study results positioning by percentile
- Study results narrative

**MOTIVATION AND COMPETENCES**
- Motivation statement
- Scientific activities, experiences and achievements
- Earlier mobility (research stays) in another organization
- Concrete mobility (research stays) within the FWO PhD fellowship
  - Concrete invitations can be uploaded (tab PROJECT)
- Scientific awards
  - Best master thesis, etc.
Study results (academic education)

- **Percentile** (or rank in study group)
  - More info on webpage NL - EN
  - e-Application form + *signed (cand. + prom.) form*
  - Relevant master study result (global percentage)
    - In final master year: refer to bachelor diploma
    - NOT an ‘advanced master’ (ManaMa)
  - Find percentile score tables Flemish university (*in e-portal application form*)
  - Non-Flemish diploma → contact your university

- **Positioning your results:** ‘study results narrative’
  - Clarify study result / percentile
  - Other evidence of distinguishing yourself / standing out during studies
    - Master thesis, dedicated courses’ marks and grades,
    - Other studies (advanced master (ManaMa), specific courses, …)
    - If in last master year: 1st master year results
How to... percentiles (example)

<table>
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<th>Acjaar</th>
<th># diploma's</th>
<th>P10</th>
<th>P20</th>
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<td>80,36</td>
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</table>

Karel: MSc 2022 with 72,08% -> - - - > P60 (89 students) -> top 40% of study group
Tess: MSc 2021 with 74,93% -> - - - > P85 (92 students) -> top 15% of study group
Shari: MSc 2023
  -> BSc 2021 with 78,65% -> - - - > P95 (158 students) -> top 5% of study group

A/ Your study result ≠ percentile value -> Look for the closest percentile value that is LOWER than your result.
B/ Your study result = one or more percentile values -> Look for the lowest percentile value that EQUALS your result.
  (e.g. 69,00% -> P75)

Beware of percentiles in small (<25-30) study groups!! (use aggregated academic years or other info)
Motivation and competences

• **Motivation statement**
  - Personal motivation, research interests
  - Scientific background and competences to start PhD research
    - Master thesis, start as (PhD) researcher, ...
  - Skills built up & to be (further) acquired
    - E.g. experimental skills, presentation or writing skills, commitment/perseverance

• **Scientific activities, experiences and achievements**
  - ‘First steps’ as (potential) scientist (past/planned)
    - Master thesis, start as (PhD) researcher, ... -> describe goal, activities, (intermediate) results, ...
  - (If applicable) publications/other output (data, software, prototypes, ...), awards, ...
  - Past/planned experiences, e.g. training, internships, presentations, collaborations, mobility, ...
  - **SB:** contacts, internships/research stays in industrial R&D, (development of) entrepreneurial and innovation skills, ...
Main Flemish host institution
- Main promotor
- Optional co-promotor(s)

Additional host institution: Flemish or Federal scientific institution(s)
- = collaboration/research location
- Pick list
- Co-promotor(s)

Other organization(s) / co-promotor(s)

Do not add recommendation letters!
- FWO will invite main promotor only to provide recommendation
- Co-promotors will be notified by FWO
Application form: project

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project description – WORD template ≤10 pages *(SB: 12 pages)*

- Improvements w.r.t. 1st application
- Rationale and positioning w.r.t. the state-of-the-art
- Scientific research objective(s)
- Research methodology and work plan
- **SB: strategic dimension and application potential**

OTHER FUNDING
PROJECT POSITIONING AND EMBEDDING
SCIENCE COMMUNICATION
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

OTHER FUNDING

• Proposal content submitted before AND funded or funding decision still pending?
  Potential overlap, complementarity, added value…
  Update FWO on pending evaluations!
  Be open and transparent!

PROJECT POSITIONING AND EMBEDDING

• Fit into the research activities of the host institution(s)
  • Position your previous/current research
• Position the project in a national and international context
• Gender and diversity issues
• Work with societal actors

RRI: responsible research and innovation

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

• Communication of results to a non-expert audience
INTERNAL PEER REVIEW

Motivate your choice of expert panel

5 scientific fields -> Thematic Panel -> In line with scope (updated 2023!)

Specific Interdisciplinary Panel -> In line with functional definition

Select the appropriate panel

(FR) New Med9 panel

(SB) Based on contribution to state-of-the-art (not per se field of application)
  • Exc.: SB Frank De Winne (SBFDW): scope on applications space economy
  • Finetuned scope SBWT5A (data science)

Motivate your choice of expert panel

• Avoid out of scope (= project score 0)
• Double check before submitting expert panel (submit = submit)
Application form: ethics / DMP / Consent

- Research Foundation - Flanders - Research ethics (fwo.be)
- fwo-manual-ethics-checklist.pdf
- ! Non-human primates -> ethical approval at least 1 month before panels (< Aug 2023)

- Research Foundation - Flanders - Data Management Plan (fwo.be)

- DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT
  - General (Including GDPR)
  Declaration that all personal data info is accurate and up-to-date.

- Research Integrity
  Read the detailed information and the RI Clause
  Every applicant and beneficant is expected to know the rules and what (s)he will be committed to

I agree
Application form: submit

March 1 2023 – 17:00 CET

Dear researcher,

With this message we confirm that your application [ApplicationType] (file number [ApplicationNumber]) has been submitted. Your application will be submitted for evaluation to the members of the FWO Expert Panel [code panel – Engels omschrijvende panel].

If you were mistaken about your panel choice, you must let us know within seven working days after the official submission date via [contact information here].

Kind regards,
The FWO administration

- Automatic confirmation
- ApplicationNumber
- Code Panel

→ Eligibility check: Q&A with FWO
Outline

1. FWO mission & key numbers
2. PhD fellowships at a glance
3. Evaluation & selection process
4. Preparing your application
5. ... further reading & contact
Further reading & contact

• Programme webpages
  • Fundamental Research  [NL - EN]
  • Strategic Basic Research  [NL - EN]

• Including
  • Regulations (legal version: Dutch)
    • General / PhD programme / bench fee / peer review
  • Supporting documents
    • Presentation info session PhD Fellowships / Screenshots e-application
    • Information on percentiles
    • Scoring grids (preselection – interview)
    • Guidelines interview

• Help! Who to contact
  • Additional info & specific questions
  • Contacts at your university
  • FWO file administrators per scientific domain (or SB)
  • Gerrit Pierreux, Program Manager PhD Fellowships
    • FWOhelpdesk@fwo.be
      • (e-portal/IT problems only)
Thank you for your attention