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PHD FELLOWSHIP: scoring descriptors criterion "Candidate" (preselection)

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, all detailed course scores should be available. 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.*

The proper scoring based on the provided percentiles should be well framed, and where relevant, be finetuned, taking into account other elements such as: upward trends during course of education, particular situations that may have influenced the study trajectory or results (cfr. personal statement), additional diplomas, (bachelor or) master thesis score, specific classes successfully attended, or other specific assets.

1.b Motivation and relevant competences

The candidates are asked not only to personally motivate their PhD fellowship candidacy, but also to substantiate acquired competences (expertise and skills). They should be able to present a credible approach to further improve skills and acquire missing competences if any. Evidence may be provided by mentioning previous and future research stays, publications. Evaluators should take into account the application file, the candidate's motivation letter, the supervisor's recommendation letter…, together with other provided info (research stays, publications, …) as also summarized on the cover sheet.

Relevant competences (expertise and skills) imply the proper scientific background to start the PhD project, apart from e.g. experimental skills, presentation or writing skills, international contacts, commitment/perseverance, that may have been acquired during the candidate's academic education, master thesis or extracurricular activities (academic or non-academic). Proven scientific seniority (post Master) may also be taken into account as well as scientific recognition (prizes, publications, …), international mobility, …

For PhD grants strategic basic research (SB), intersectoral mobility (e.g., internships in an industrial R&D environment) and entrepreneurial and innovation skills are an asset as well.

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PHD FELLOWSHIP: scoring descriptors criterion "Candidate" (preselection)

D	C	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
				>30%	**>20%**	**>10%**	**>5%**
0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Unacceptable	Weak	Fair/reasonable		Good/very good		Excellent/outstanding	
1.a. Study results (academic education)							
no scoring possibility	Study results less promising to start PhD research. **Master: <P70** (unless compensated for) or **Bachelor <P80** (unless compensated for)	Study results are reasonable (in view of starting a PhD) **Master: ≥P70** (or equivalent) or **Bachelor ≥P80** (confirmed by intermediate master study results) or equivalent.		(Very) good academic education record. **Master ≥P85** (or equivalent) or **Bachelor ≥P90** (confirmed by intermediate master study results) or equivalent		Top student with outstanding academic education record. **Master ≥P95**, or equivalent Or **Bachelor ≥P95,** or equivalent**.**	
1.b. Motivation and relevant competences							
no scoring possibility	Expertise and skills apparently not in line with what should be expected from PhD student. Some crucial competences are missing.	Candidate may not fully be motivated or prepared to start a research career. Evidence of some specific competences is missing. How these competences will be acquired is less well substantiated, and/or Candidate has started PhD research but with little evidence of progress made (incl. competences acquired)		Relevant competences and clear motivation likely are present and well substantiated (e.g. Master or Bachelor thesis) or some competences missing but clear and credible plan provided on how to acquire the proper skills (courses, training, …); and/or Candidate has started PhD research with proper intermediate results and development of new competences as a researcher.		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.	

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PHD FELLOWSHIP: scoring descriptors criterion "Project" (preselection + interview)

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, …)?
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) .

D	C	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
				>30%	>20%	>10%	>5%
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Weak	Fair/reasonable		Good/very good		Excellent/outstanding	
2.a Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality							
Project lacks an intellectual (PhD-worthy) challenge and/or an in-depth research question is missing.	Research question and challenge limited or less relevant, and/or the research objectives lack focus. PhD worthiness is on the low side, and/or the project is rather a catch-up effort relative to the state-of-the-art.	Scientifically relevant project, rather high quality, and sufficiently challenging as PhD-research. The research is less well focused and/or the project brings less pronounced added value to international state-of-the-art.		High-quality basic research, with significant scientific challenges (doctoral level). Original and significant contribution to the international state of the art.		Requirements as in "(very) good", and Very original project with potential to significantly impact the scientific state-of-the-art ("ground-breaking"). Targeted research results are based on inventive and challenging ideas, concepts and research strategies.	
2.b Quality of the research approach and feasibility of the project							
Quality research approach and planning is below par; and/or Research activities are too limited for a four-year grant period; and/or Project not feasible because of too many planned activities.	Project approach and planning are flawed. Intrinsic feasibility is low and/or the objectives are formulated too vaguely to evaluate their feasibility. and/or Project does not fit to an individual PhD project. and/or Ties with/dependence of other researchers, groups or external partners may jeopardize feasibility.	Research methodology reasonable well elaborated, but less well substantiated. Given some adjustments and risk control, project implementation appears to be feasible.		Adequate, substantiated research approach to achieve targeted results, logical set-up and realistic planning: feasible within the four-year time frame. Good fit of project in research group activities, giving candidate access to necessary expertise.		Requirements as in "(very) good" and precise identification of the risks with alternative strategies and fallback research options.	