

Guideline for Doctoral Grant and Scholarship Awards (Research Committee, dated 18-11-2025)

I General Information

For doctoral students, at least two full scholarships and two doctoral degree completion grants can be awarded annually to particularly qualified scientists in the early stages of their careers. The academic doctoral project should be expected to make an important contribution to research.

The decision to award the grant or scholarship is taken by the Executive Board upon the recommendation of the Committee for Research and Junior Academics (Research Committee).

Paderborn University is committed to increasing the proportion of female scientists in the early stages of their careers. Therefore, women are strongly encouraged to apply. Provided the suitability, ability and professional achievements of the applicants are equal, preference will be given to women.

Both German citizens and citizens of foreign countries are eligible for funding.

Grants and scholarships are financed equally from the funds in the research reserve (50%) and the funds of the respective faculty of the scholarship holder's doctoral programme (50%).

Receiving the grant does not establish an employment relationship; it does not constitute remuneration within the meaning of the German Social Security Code (Sozialgesetzbuch).

II Applications

Grants and scholarships are only awarded upon application. Applications can be submitted by interested and qualified scientists. The application requirement is an existing Master's degree with a fixed final grade, which must have been completed before the final selection meeting of the respective selection year. The date can be found in the current call for applications.

As a rule, applications must be submitted to the Research Committee in February each year (please observe the current deadline for each application) in accordance with the current call.

The application consists of the following documents:

1. Letter of motivation (according to template on the FK website, Number of pages max. 1 page)
Defaults Formatting: Font Arial 11 pt., line spacing 1.2
2. Description of the doctoral dissertation project: a.) Research Exposé, including the working title of the dissertation (Number of pages max. 2 pages), b.) schedule and c.) literature references
Defaults Formatting: Font Arial 11 pt., line spacing 1.2
3. Tabular CV
4. Positive endorsement from the applicant's supervisor
5. Statement by the supervisor on the planned institutional affiliation of the scholarship holder and commitment to the use of the infrastructure
6. Proof of the applicant's current income

7. Proof of the educational qualifications obtained in the form of copies of the secondary school leaving/diploma/degree certificates (university entrance qualification, BSc., MSc.), including translation of the marks, if necessary.
8. Declaration of consent to data processing (originally signed by the applicant)

III Funding conditions

Acceptance of the funding obliges the scholarship-holder to,

- enrol continuously at Paderborn University during the funding period and to provide the FK office with appropriate proof of this,
- comply with the guidelines and procedures for safeguarding good scientific practice at the Paderborn University,
- comply with the guidelines on stating affiliations in scientific publications at the Paderborn University,
- provide the acknowledgement of the dissertation with a reference to the support by the graduate scholarship of the Paderborn University,
- send a digital copy of the dissertation to the Research Committee after completion of the doctoral procedure,
- inform the Research Committee of the overall grade of the doctoral degree for statistical purposes,
- and to inform it if a career perspective has resulted from the supported doctoral thesis.

IV Type of Funding

Financial support and scholarships are provided in the form of grants. The approval of the grant is subject to the proviso that appropriate budget funds (according to point I paragraph 5) are available for the grant period. There is no entitlement to these grants or scholarships.

1.) Full scholarship

A full scholarship may be granted to applicants who demonstrate academic performance and exam results that are far above average requirements and who are preparing for a doctoral degree.

As a rule, the period between graduation with a university degree and the commencement of the grant/scholarship funding should not exceed 15 months (**exceptions must be explained in detail**).

For applications for full scholarships, prior academic achievements and the preparations for the doctoral project must be described and a work plan outlining the content and schedule for the doctoral dissertation must be submitted. The first two years of funding serve to implement the research work, the third year to write the dissertation.

2.) Degree completion grants

A degree completion grant can be awarded if the doctoral project is largely completed and the doctoral dissertation is expected to achieve above-average results.

Scholarship holders who have already received a full or gender PhD scholarship from Paderborn University cannot apply for a PhD completion grant.

As a rule, a degree completion grant can be awarded directly subsequent to employment. In particular, periods of maternity leave (Section 6 (I) German Maternity Protection Act) and childcare, as well as periods of military service and periods spent devoted to the German Federal Volunteer Service, remain unaffected. For applications for degree completion grants, the applicant must submit a work plan that contains verifiable information on the status of the doctoral project and a work plan outlining the content and schedule for the doctoral dissertation.

3.) Other funding

A full scholarship or degree completion grant **cannot** be awarded if the scholarship applicant/holder receives or has received other funding from public sector or publicly-funded private institutions for the same purpose and for the same period.

4.) Gainful Employment

A full or final scholarship **cannot** be granted if the scholarship holder wishes to pursue gainful employment at Paderborn University parallel to the scholarship.

Gainful employment is permissible for an annual average of 8 hours per week in addition to the doctoral scholarship, if this is carried out outside the Paderborn University.

Gainful employment must be reported to the head office of the Research Committee without being asked in accordance with Section VII. The progress of the doctoral project must not be negatively influenced by the gainful employment.

V Duration of Funding

With regard to the duration of the funding, a **full scholarship generally lasts three years**, while a **degree completion grant lasts up to one year**.

A holder of a full scholarship may extend the maximum funding period by up to 12 months if he/she lives with his/her child/children in a household at the time the scholarship period commences and if at least one child is under 12 years of age. This also applies if the first child is born during the scholarship period. The holder of a degree completion grant can request an extension of the maximum funding period by up to 6 months if a child is born during the grant period.

Extension requests must be submitted to the Research Committee in good time before the end of the funding period.

The full fellowship can be interrupted exceptionally and once for a maximum of 1 year within the funding phase. This requires a justified application to the Research Committee. After approval of the application by the Research Committee, the period of approval from the respective notice of approval is suspended for the specified interruption period. No payment of the scholarship will be made for the approved interruption period. Further academic qualification and the continuation of the doctorate must be demonstrably pursued. The degree completion grant is only valid for the approved period. A delayed start differing from the grant period, or a suspension of the degree completion grant is not possible.

VI Duration of Approval Period

Full scholarships are approved and granted for three years. Degree completion grants are approved and granted for up to one year.

Scholarships and grants can be approved and granted for a shorter period of time if the funding purpose can be achieved during this shorter period or if a transition to another form of funding is expected to take place after this shorter period.

VII Obligations to notify the Paderborn University

Changes in circumstances that are relevant to the award of the scholarship/grant or concerning statements or explanations that were made in connection with the application must be reported to the Paderborn University immediately.

At the time of opening the doctoral procedure, the scholarship rate can be paid out for the last time, after which the entitlement to further funding expires. The scholarship holder must notify the Research Committee in good time (two months before the opening).

If the scholarship holder discontinues his/her academic project, he/she shall inform the Paderborn University immediately.

VIII Reporting Obligations

1.) Full Scholarship

Prior to the end of the first funding year (after 10 months) and the second funding year (after 22 months), the scholarship holder must submit a progress report on his or her work during the scholarship period and describe the results of the project. The supervisor of the project submits a progress report on the scholarship holder's progress and achievements to date.

On the basis of the reports and expert reports submitted by the supervisors, the Committee assesses the progress of the doctoral theses every year and checks whether the scientific achievements so far justify further funding.

2.) Expiration of the entire funding period

No later than 6 months after the end of the grant period, the scholarship holder must inform the Research Committee whether and when the dissertation was submitted.

If, in an exceptional case, the scholarship holder is unable to submit the dissertation by the end of the grant period, he or she must explain the reasons, describe the status of the dissertation thus far and outline its intended progress in a work report.

If the grant/scholarship is not extended or if the scholarship holder does not complete his or her dissertation after the end of the approved extension period, the scholarship holder shall be obligated to report annually, at a date to be determined, on the status of the doctoral project and dissertation until the dissertation has been completed, but at a minimum before three years have passed after the funding period.

If the doctoral project and dissertation are not completed within three years after the end of the funding period, the Research Committee will decide on the further course of action in one of its meetings by discussing it as a separate agenda item.

IX Amount of Grant/Scholarship

A grant/scholarship is granted in the amount of **2.000 Euro** per month (maximum amount).

In line with the funding rates of the programmes of the scholarship organisations (Begabtenförderungswerke) under the umbrella of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the scholarship holder shall receive a child allowance in the amount of a lump sum of 400 EUR/month if the scholarship holder has to support at least one child under 18 years of age. This amount is increased by 100 EUR per month for each additional child.

If the scholarship holder and his/her spouse or partner receive scholarships in accordance with these guidelines, the child allowance will only be granted once.

If the scholarship holder's spouse or partner receives a child allowance (or family allowance/childcare allowance) in accordance with other regulations whose objective corresponds to the statutory education grant or this guideline, the scholarship holder's child allowance can be topped up on application up to the upper limit of EUR 400/month (sentence 2 of this paragraph).

The child allowance is paid on presentation of the birth certificate from the month in which the entitlement arises. Any changes in circumstances must be reported to the Research Commission's office without being asked.

Scholarship holders must notify the Research Commission of any benefits they receive under the Federal Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act (Bundeselterngeld- und Elternzeitgesetz) and the state parental allowance laws without being requested to do so.

Financial support is provided in the form of grants. There is no entitlement to these grants or scholarships.

Any taxes related to the grant/scholarship are the responsibility of the scholarship holder. The scholarship holder is aware that the grant/scholarship provider is required to inform the tax authorities in accordance with the German Transaction Reporting Regulations (Mitteilungsverordnung – MV in its currently valid version).

X Revocation of the Grant/Scholarship Award Notice

- 1) The Paderborn University may revoke the decision on the granting of a scholarship in whole or in part, also with effect for the past. This applies in particular if the scholarship holder
 - a.) shows facts that he/she is not making the necessary efforts to realise the purpose of the grant and is responsible for this;
 - b.) has not used the funds for the intended purpose;
 - c.) is not or was not continuously enrolled at Paderborn University during the funding period;
 - d.) has obtained the grant by providing incorrect or incomplete information;

- e.) has not notified subsequent changes which render the prerequisites for the funding no longer applicable;
 - f.) has not submitted the dissertation by the end of the funding period or, in the case of the passage "V Duration of Funding", by the end of the extended period and he/she is responsible for this;
 - g.) has not fulfilled reporting obligations pursuant to section VIII or has not fulfilled them in due time;
 - h.) has received other funding within the meaning of IV, section 3) during the funding period;
 - i.) has pursued gainful employment during the funding period which is not permissible under IV. 4);
- 2) The decision to award a fellowship may be revoked in whole or in part with effect for the future if the Research Committee's assessment pursuant to IV, Paragraph 1.) does not justify continued funding.
 - 3) If the scholarship holder discontinues his/her academic project, the award shall be revoked as of the date of discontinuation.
 - 4) In all other respects, the grounds for revocation set out in Article 8 of the Framework Guidelines on Grant Awards at Paderborn University and in § 49 VwVfG NRW shall apply.
 - 5) If the approval is revoked with effect for the past, the scholarship is to be refunded according to the extent of the revocation.
 - 6) The notice of approval shall be revoked at the time of the commencement of the doctoral procedure with effect from the end of the month.
 - 7) The grant shall be issued subject to the grounds for revocation pursuant to sections 1-4. The reservation of revocation shall be attached to the notice of approval.
 - 8) The Executive Board shall decide on the revocation on the recommendation of the Research Committee. The scholarship holder shall be given the opportunity to comment beforehand.

XI Framework Guidelines on Grant Awards at Paderborn University

The Framework Guidelines on Grant Awards at Paderborn University applies in its currently valid version, complementary in those areas in which no more specific requirements are made in this guideline.