



RESEARCH
IN FRANCE

A HOW-TO GUIDE
FOR PHDS

A HOW-TO GUIDE

FOR PHDS

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Cover photo:

Sample of a reef fragment collected 23 metres deep in the town of Roscoff, Bretagne.

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Why pursue a PhD in France?

France has a demonstrated track record of excellence in research, innovation and culture. To date, the approach to higher education is steeped in Enlightenment philosophy, advocating the fundamental role of knowledge and scientific discovery. The need for progress and advancement in areas such as art, science and industry contributes to the development of national, European and global innovations for fundamental and applied research.

Research in France can be conducted in specialised institutions such as universities, *Grandes Ecoles*, research laboratories, businesses, foundations and other research bodies. The most brilliant minds across the globe are drawn to these institutions as their reputation of excellence fosters the desire to work on international scientific projects.

France also provides dynamic scientific environments with quality working conditions for PhD candidates. As funding your PhD is compulsory throughout the thesis-writing process, a large number of funding opportunities have been made available. These include scholarship programmes, PhD contracts, employment contracts in the public or private sector and international partnerships. You will be diligently guided and supervised for the entire duration of your programme as you learn the techniques of research *through* research.

Compared to other countries, France has very competitive tuition fees for PhD programmes, currently standing at €380 per year.



Research in computer science, robotics and microelectronics.
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Écoles Universitaires de Recherche (EUR)

The *Écoles Universitaires de Recherche* (EUR) are a type of graduate school in France. They are communities of universities, schools and research bodies with added financial resources that bring together graduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as one or more high-level research laboratories.

Students selected to join a EUR are therefore guaranteed an exceptional research environment.

To date, there are 58 EURs offering an environment of excellence. They aim to train students in research starting at the master's level, and assist them with their professional integration.¹

¹ For the full list of EURs in 2023, visit www.campusfrance.org/en > Researchers > Écoles Universitaires de Recherche

Research in France

71 500

PhD students in France in 2023

38%

international PhD students

4th

most popular study destination for international PhD students (OECD)

4th

in the world for Nobel Prizes

2nd

in the world for Fields Medals

2nd

in Europe for filing European patents

€55,5 BN

in R&D expenditure in 2021, representing 2.22% of GDP

How can you register in a PhD programme?

PRE-PhD PROGRAMMES

In countries such as the United Kingdom, Belgium and Norway, pre-PhD training is the standard. These short programmes involve introducing international students to the world of research and preparing them to pursue their PhD. Students will learn how to conduct research while laboratory directors are given an opportunity to meet potential candidates.

Such programmes have been on the rise in France. The *Fondation Sciences Mathématiques de Paris* manages 14 laboratories specialised in science and mathematics with more than 1,800 researchers and 5 Fields Medal recipients. The foundation offers pre-PhD training in addition to its PhD and postdoctoral programmes.

ENS Paris-Saclay's yearlong pre-PhD programme abroad:

<https://ens-paris-saclay.fr/en/masters/ens-paris-saclay-degree/year-pre-doctoral-research-abroad-arpe>

Institut Pasteur's pre-PhD internships and programmes:

<https://www.pasteur.fr/en/education/programs-and-courses/internships-and-pre-doctoral-programs>

STARTING YOUR PhD PROGRAMME

To start your PhD programme, you must follow a number of steps: i) identify your research area; ii) find one or more potential thesis advisors who will approve your research project; and iii) select the type of research institution where you will pursue your PhD.

Have you decided to pursue a PhD? Here is what you need to do, step by step:

- Identify the subject and specialisation linked to your master's degree.
- Identify the graduate schools (*écoles doctorales, etc.*) and research bodies that focus on this subject.
- Visit the graduate schools' websites to apply for existing opportunities or propose a research topic.
- Contact the thesis advisor.
- Ensure that there is funding available. Otherwise, identify funding opportunities.
- Once your research topic has been approved, apply to the graduate school.

- Once the graduate school has accepted your application, and upon receiving approval from your thesis advisor, you can start the necessary administrative processes for registering in your PhD programme and sign the Thesis Charter.²

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CERTIFICATION

It is possible to use your prior professional experience to get your PhD in certain fields through the VAE (*validation par acquis de l'expérience*) process. Contact your chosen graduate school for more information.

<https://vae.gouv.fr/>

² The French Ministry of Higher Education and Research defines the Thesis Charter (*Charte de la thèse*) as follows: 'This Charter defines the reciprocal commitments of each party. It refers to the code of ethics that has inspired the regulatory provisions in effect, as well as the practices adopted in keeping with the diversity of disciplines and institutions. It also aims to guarantee high-quality scientific research' (French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, National Education Official Bulletin n°. 36 of 1 October 1998). www.education.gouv.fr/bo/1998/36/sup.htm

Écoles Doctorales

An *école doctorale* (ED), a PhD-level graduate school, is a group of research units and laboratories commonly referred to as 'research laboratories'. It is in charge of recruiting PhD candidates, monitoring research quality, implementing PhD projects and ensuring that students transition smoothly to the next stage of their career. In addition to promoting its own PhD programmes abroad, as well as joint programmes, it adapts to trends in the international scientific community.

ED graduate schools structure

ED graduate schools are accredited by the government and are evaluated every five years by the High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres). Hcéres makes the results of evaluations available to the public.³ The accreditation process of each graduate school, or graduate council (*collège doctoral*), covers its areas of specialisation. Any changes in accreditation will be published on the graduate school's website.

ED graduate schools are headed by a director, a board and a graduate council:

- the thesis advisor, who is certified to supervise research, is the intermediary between the PhD candidate, the institution and the laboratory;
- half of the graduate school board is made up of representatives from the institution and the research teams and units. 20% of the board's members are PhD candidates of the graduate school and are elected by other students.

In 2023, 288 ED graduate schools in the country were affiliated with accredited public universities and institutions.

³ Visit the section on Hcéres' website dedicated to evaluations and accreditation: https://www.hceres.fr/en/dei_evaluations-accreditations



What are the admission criteria for PhD programmes?

Thesis advisors are key stakeholders who are charged with supervising PhD candidates in the laboratory as well as directing their research for the three years of the programme. Thesis advisors must possess the certification to supervise research (*Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches*, HDR).

For admission into a programme, PhD candidates must come up with a research project that has the support of an advisor with the certification to supervise research. Secured funding is often an intrinsic condition for admission. It is for this reason that research topics are often proposed by institutions themselves, based on the available funding. These include graduate schools or boards, research laboratories, national, European or international research programmes, companies, etc.

In the exact sciences (physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, engineering, etc.), where funding is required for admission, candidates can apply directly for a topic formulated by a thesis advisor. These topics often come with funding.

STUDYING IN FRANCE

Non-EU students arriving in France for the first time must obtain a visa to pursue their PhD.

The type of visa required will depend on the candidate's situation:

- **Long-stay visa (VLS) – ‘Passeport talent – Chercheur’**

This visa is for foreign PhD candidates who hold a master's degree (or equivalent) and who have signed a PhD contract with a certified public or private higher education or research institution. Upon the visa's expiry, students are to request a multiyear residence permit.

- **Long-stay visa (VLS-TS) – Multiyear residence permit (*Carte de séjour pluriannuelle, CSP*)**

The multiyear residence permit is granted to non-salaried PhD candidates (or those without a PhD contract) who possess a sufficient level of financial resources to study in France. It is to be obtained after the first year of study in France.

Duration of the residence permit:

2 TO 4 YEARS

based on the level of study

FIND OUT MORE

- <https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en/>
- <http://www.campusfrance.org/en>
 - > Organising your stay
 - > Apply for your visa/Validate your residence permit

How do you choose a PhD research topic?

A PhD thesis is the culmination of intensive, high-level research on a unique topic. Regardless of the discipline, an original research topic is one that responds to a scientific problem and is of great interest to the researcher.

Students in the humanities and social sciences in particular must demonstrate the relevance of their topic in relation to their discipline, its feasibility over a specific period of time, as well as ensure that a research laboratory gives its approval, after first getting approval from their thesis advisors.

To see ongoing research projects and theses, visit www.theses.fr/

THESIS OFFERS

PhD research proposals are published on many websites:

- **The Research portal on Campus France's website**, is a unique hub of information made for international students who want to conduct their research in France.

www.campusfrance.org/en

> Researchers

- **Graduate Schools Directory:**

<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org/en/phd/dschools/main>

- **The ADUM network of graduate schools (*Accès Doctorat Unique et Mutualisé*)** publishes calls for projects and thesis proposals:

www.adum.fr

- **European Union funding programmes:** EURAXESS France, a member of the European Commission's research initiative, is a website created for researcher mobility:

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu>

- The websites of universities, research bodies, graduates schools and research laboratories

- CIFRE offers (see p. 14) to pursue your PhD in a company:

<https://www.anrt.asso.fr/fr/le-dispositif-cifre-7844>



DID YOU KNOW?

The Association Bernard Gregory (ABG) aims to assist PhDs throughout their career development. It offers training programmes, publishes employment offers on its website, lists thesis offers for both the graduate and postgraduate levels, and maintains a CV library of candidates from various scientific disciplines.

<https://www.abg.asso.fr/en/>

The ABG, the French business confederation (Medef) and France Universités created DocPro, a website that offers a global vision of the skill set PhDs will develop over the course of their career. The website is made open to PhDs, companies, graduate schools and laboratories.

www.mydocpro.org/en

What language can you use for your thesis?

WRITE YOUR PhD IN ENGLISH

En the **exact sciences, engineering, biology and medicine**, it is recommended that you have a sufficient level of French for everyday communication and to engage in research activities with your colleagues.

Although communication within research laboratories takes place in English or French, it is highly recommended that you take French classes during your studies. You may write your thesis in English, but the lengthy summary required must be written in French. If the thesis is written in English, the *viva voce* exam will also be conducted in English.

In fields such as **literature, art, the humanities and social sciences** (anthropology, geography, history, linguistics, philosophy, psychology, etc.), a high level of French is required (B2 or higher on the European Framework of Languages).

In disciplines such as **political science, economics, management, law, business, communication and marketing**, the level of French required varies.



Inoculation of fungus on a rose bush.
© Cyril FRESILLON / IMS / CNRS Images

FIND OUT MORE

- **FRANCE, Ministry of Higher Education and Research**, Government order of 6 January 2005 on joint international PhD programmes :
www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT00000258089
- **FRANCE, Ministry of Higher Education and Research**, Government order of 25 May 2016 setting the national education framework and the conditions for awarding nationally accredited PhDs:
<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000032587086>

What are the types of PhD programmes?

PhD candidates in France receive their postgraduate training at research units, which are affiliated with an ED graduate school (*école doctorale*). Each candidate is supervised by one or more thesis advisors. The programme lasts for three years (or more for certain disciplines) and ends with a *viva voce* examination.

3 TYPES OF PHD PROGRAMMES

A SINGLE PhD PROGRAMME

- 1 research unit or laboratory.
- 1 thesis advisor.
- Registration and *viva voce* exam at a PhD-accredited institution.
- Award of a French PhD.

A CO-SUPERVISED PhD

- 2 research units or laboratories, one of which must be in France.
- 2 thesis advisors.
- Registration and *viva voce* exam at the institution in France.
- Award of a French PhD.

INTERNATIONAL JOINT PhD SUPERVISION PROGRAMME

- 1 agreement between a French university and a partner university setting out the conditions for the joint programme.
- Registration at 2 universities and payment of tuition in one of the two institutions.
- 1 research unit or laboratory in France and 1 foreign research unit.
- 2 thesis advisors, one at each institution.
- 2 PhDs awarded (double degree) or 1 PhD awarded jointly by the two institutions (joint degree).

An international joint PhD supervision programme (cotutelle internationale de thèse) is the outcome of an international partnership between a French institution and another abroad.

These programmes allow PhD candidates to benefit from a unique experience as they will get the opportunity to work in research teams in two countries. The thesis topic will be determined with both advisors and will be approved by the graduate school at each institution.

*Joint PhD programmes follow strict guidelines. Before programmes can begin, graduate schools draw up an agreement where they set out the administrative conditions relating to registration, presence in both countries and funding, as well as those relating to the *viva voce* and the award of the degrees.*

A Highly Selective Process

Admission to a PhD programme is a highly selective process. Candidates must:

- Hold a nationally recognised master's degree or equivalent (Bac+5, 300 ECTS).⁴
- Secure funding for at least 3 years (€1,400 per month, minimum).
- Have a sufficient level of French and/or English to conduct research and produce the thesis.

The thesis advisor and the graduate school are involved at varying stages of the selection process based on each school's recruitment policy.

- **'International joint PhDs' brochure:** www.campusfrance.org
> Resource centre > Panorama of Higher Education and Research in France > Degrees > International Joint PhD
- **'PhD studies in France' brochure:** www.campusfrance.org
> Resource centre > Panorama of Higher Education and Research in France > Degrees > PhD studies in France

⁴ ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (60 ECTS corresponds to one year).

FIND OUT MORE

- **'International Joint PhD' brochure**
www.campusfrance.org > Resource centre > Higher Education and Research in France > Degrees

Which PhD contract is best suited for you?

PUBLIC SECTOR PhD CONTRACTS

A **public sector PhD contract** is a type of contract open to all PhD candidates. These contracts are signed between a registered PhD candidate and an employer whose employees are public sector workers. These include public scientific and technological institutions and public administrative institutions in higher education.

Contracts have a three-year duration and can be extended twice by one year. Candidates involved in research-only activities will receive a guaranteed minimum remuneration of €2,044 per month (gross) in 2023.

(2024: **€2,100**; 2025: **€2,200**; 2026: **€2,300**). Under the French law on research planning (*Loi de Programmation de la Recherche*, LPR) for 2021 to 2030, any additional tasks given as part of this contract will carry additional remuneration (teaching, consulting, etc.).

Public sector contracts are drafted by graduate schools and are identical at all public higher education institutions.

They provide students with all the social benefits of a traditional public sector

employment contract, while satisfying their programmes' requirement to develop their professional research skills.

French Ministry of Higher Education and Research:

<https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/fr> > Recherche > Loi de programmation de la recherche

PRIVATE SECTOR PhD CONTRACTS

Under the French law on research planning (*Loi de Programmation de la Recherche*, LPR), employees may register in a graduate school with a private sector PhD contract if their employer's main activity is research (i.e. greater than or equal to 5/6th of the total annual duration) and if it corresponds to an area relating to their thesis.

A partnership agreement is signed between the employer, the employee PhD candidate and the accredited institution setting out the material conditions of the research project, the amount of time to be spent at the employee's place of work and any additional tasks. It also defines how results will be shared on the application programming interface (API) and the conditions for accessing

training opportunities from the graduate school and the employer.

Within the company, a supervisor is responsible for assisting the employee PhD candidate in navigating the work environment and for following up on the technical and scientific components of their research, regularly liaising with the thesis advisor.

Private sector PhD contracts are open to employees who work in the private sector. Examples include employees working in R&D in a public industrial and commercial institution (*Établissement public industriel et commercial*, EPIC), a public interest foundation (*Fondation reconnue d'utilité publique*, FRUP) or a general interest private higher education institution (*Établissement d'enseignement supérieur privé d'intérêt général*, EESPIG).

A defined fixed-term contract (CDD) is to be signed between the employer and the employee no later than three years after the end of the PhD programme. This contract will give employees additional work experience to ease their transition to permanent public or private sector research positions.

How can you fund your PhD?

TYPES OF FUNDING

• Host institution funding

Each year, graduate schools, laboratories, research bodies and companies offer funded thesis topics on their websites. They are also available at: <https://doctorat.campusfrance.org/en/phd/dschools/main>

• PhD contracts

Graduate schools fund specific thesis topics, either through dedicated research budgets from the supporting institution – or from the institution's own endowment – or by supplementing the candidate's own funding obtained from a third party.

• Contracts with research bodies (CNRS, CEA, CNES, etc.)

Thesis topics are determined with the research body in question.

• Home country funding

Some governments have implemented bilateral funding programmes for their citizens to pursue their PhD between two countries. Examples include the scholarship programme set up by the DAAD between France and Germany, and the CONACYT programme for students interested in doing their PhD between France and Mexico.

For more information, contact the French Embassy in your country.

• **Funding from the European Joint Doctorate network:** <https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/actions/doctoral-networks>

• **Funding from CIFRE employment contracts:** www.anrt.asso.fr/fr/le-dispositif-cifre-7844

• Personal funding

This type of funding must be indicated on applications. Each graduate school has its own policy vis à vis personal funding.

Other sources of funding exist for PhD programmes such as from research bodies, regional authorities, foundations and associations.

Grant search engine: <https://campusbourses.campusfrance.org>
> Level > PhD > Postdoctoral

A majority of PhD students in France have an employment contract, which is seen as an opportunity for professional research experience. In most cases, they also have a secured source of funding. PhD programmes are now registered with the National Registry of Professional Certifications (RNCP), where candidates can access the list of skills they will acquire during their research. There are now many forms of assistance and funding for PhD studies.

www.francecompetences.fr



France Excellence Eiffel scholarship programme (PhD)

Developed and financed by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the **Eiffel programme** aims to develop the attractiveness of French higher education and research institutions and provide assistance to talented international students in pursuing their studies in France.

Institutions that present candidates commit to register Eiffel awardees in the programme for which they were selected.

7 disciplines are covered under the Eiffel scholarship:

Science and technology

- Biology and medicine
- Mathematics and digital technology
- Engineering
- Ecological transition

Humanities and social sciences

- Law and political science
- Economics and management
- French history, language and civilisation

The Eiffel programme aims to disseminate French excellence, attract talent, assist international students and produce the leaders of tomorrow. It has a duration of 6 months to 3 years for joint PhD or co-supervised PhD programmes.

<https://www.campusfrance.org/en/france-excellence-eiffel-scholarship-program>



IN-COMPANY PhDs: CIFRE

Under the CIFRE scheme (industrial agreements for research-based training) managed by the French National Association for Research and Technology (ANRT), subsidies are granted to French companies who employ PhD candidates to work in a public research laboratory for the duration of their three-year PhD programme.

The annual minimum gross salary in 2023 is **€24,529**. This amount will increase in 2024 to **€25,200**, in 2025 to **€26,400** and in 2026 to **€27,600**.

Companies will offer a role to employee PhD candidates that corresponds to their thesis topics.

The research laboratory will supervise the work of employee PhD candidates who are registered in the affiliated graduate school.

Some offers are for citizens of specific countries (CIFRE India, Morocco, etc.) or are about specific programmes (CIFRE EITDigital, etc.).

<https://www.anrt.asso.fr/fr/le-dispositif-cifre-7844>

Starthèse, a new programme from the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research

Launched in 2023, *Starthèse* was created for PhDs whose research aims to solve the major problems facing our society such as climate change, healthcare, industry, food and nutrition, culture and greater inclusion. It aims to promote the creative capacity of new researchers by implementing their projects. The initiative has a wide scope of scientific application, ranging from innovations in the humanities and social sciences and cross-disciplinary approaches, to technological innovations and deep tech.

French Ministry of Higher Education and Research:
<http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>

FIND OUT MORE

- Information on PhD contracts:
www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid96370/contrats-doctoraux.html
- The Funding Guide published by the National Association of PhDs (*Association nationale des docteurs*)
<https://andes.asso.fr/guide-desfinancements/>
- Campus France portal: www.campusfrance.org
> Home > Researchers > Doctorate > Use the 'Research' portal
<https://www.campusfrance.org/en/researcher>



NEW: The PhD oath



Since January 2023, each new PhD holder must individually take a scientific integrity oath during their *viva voce* exam at their host institution. This step will be recorded in the minutes of the *viva voce* exam.

The scientific integrity oath is as follows:

'In the presence of my peers.

'With the completion of my doctorate on [date], in my quest for knowledge, I have carried out demanding research, demonstrated intellectual rigour, ethical reflection and respect for the principles of research integrity. As I pursue my professional career, whatever my chosen field, I pledge, to the greatest of my ability, to continue to maintain integrity in my relationship to knowledge, to my methods and to my results.'

Official Gazette of the French Republic (Journal Officiel de la République Française) n°. 0201 of 31 August 2022, Government order of 26 August 2022 modifying the order of 25 May 2016 setting the national education framework and the conditions for awarding nationally accredited PhDs:

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/article_jo/JORFARTI000046229036

What can you do after your PhD in France?

POSTDOCS

After completing their PhD, interested students can pursue a postdoctoral contract in France, thereby adding valuable professional research experience to their career development. Postdoctoral contracts are signed for a fixed term (between 12 and 24 months in general) and are open to researchers holding a PhD who wish to conduct research for a short period of time. Postdocs will be full members of the research laboratory team and take part in all research activities such as publishing articles, attending seminars, participating in conferences, etc.

POSTDOCTORAL CONTRACTS

Public sector postdoctoral contracts are transitional contracts which allow new researchers to acquire additional professional experience after completing their PhD. They will develop their research skills, access permanent positions in public and private research institutions more easily, and be able to undertake scientific responsibilities.

These postdoctoral contracts are to be signed no later than three years

after completion of the PhD, and can be renewed once within the limit of four years. They are drawn up when researchers are awarded a call for projects in one of their areas of study. Recruitment notices and details about the position are published at least one month before the application deadline on the institution's website or on any other website dedicated to employment offers, and on the European Commission's Euraxess website.

These postdoctoral contracts allow students to do their research in France as well as participate on delegation visits abroad for 18 months at the maximum, with the possibility of receiving additional remuneration. Beneficiaries of postdoctoral contracts will receive a minimum gross remuneration of €2,300 (up 30%) starting in 2023.

Private sector postdoctoral contracts are transitional contracts that give new PhDs stability, greater access to skills training and development, and added assistance as they continue pursuing their career goals. Eligible employers are those who work in research and development in a public industrial and commercial institution (*Établissement public industriel et commercial*, EPIC), a public interest foundation (*Fondation*

reconnue d'utilité publique, FRUP) or a general interest private higher education institution (*Établissement d'enseignement supérieur privé d'intérêt général*, EESPIG).

Private sector postdoctoral contracts are to be signed no later than three years after completion of the PhD. They ease the transition to permanent public or private sector research positions. These contracts have a minimum duration of one year and can be renewed for a maximum duration of four years (with a possible extension of nine months in case of maternity leave, illness or occupational injury). Contract holders will be entitled to unemployment benefits if they do not secure a permanent position at the end of their contract.

Specific measures are in place that enable postdoctoral students to market their skills as well as provide assistance in moving to the next stage in their career. Coordinators will help postdocs to navigate their professional environment and help them learn the skills related to their area of research. Postdocs are required to attend regular meetings with coordinators to determine their material and training needs, learn how to market their skills and get information on finding permanent employment.

FINDING A POSTDOCTORAL CONTRACT

All research bodies, research laboratories and R&D departments of companies publish postdoctoral contracts offers on their websites each year.

Short-term mobilities are an important part of researchers' career development, where they can conduct research in laboratories, collaborate on research projects, attend conferences and participate in summer school programmes.

There are specific grants for short-term mobility programmes in addition to the funding offered by the host laboratory.

- **Country-specific mobility grants:** contact your local French Embassy
- **Grants from French Research Institutes Abroad (IFRE):** Joint research units of the French Research Institutes Abroad (*Unités Mixtes des Instituts Français de Recherche à l'Étranger*) of the CNRS: <https://www.umifre.fr/bourses>
- **Scholarships from the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF):** www.auf.org
- **Grant search engine:** <https://campusbourses.campusfrance.org>

Hubert Curien partnerships

Hubert Curien partnerships are a French initiative that support international researcher mobility. They are jointly and equally funded by France (the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Higher Education) and an international partner.

These partnerships, around 60 of which are managed by Campus France, contribute to developing scientific exchange and technological excellence. Research teams have specific budgets for funding the mobility (transport, living expenses and insurance) of researchers participating in their projects.

The Hubert Curien partnerships serve as a trampoline to larger-scale European projects, where researchers can develop or start their own such projects. They are open to public and private research laboratories, whether scientific or industrial. All scientific fields are eligible. Funding is granted for one to two years.

Campus France also manages the research mobility programmes for the different geographic areas.

www.campusfrance.org > Researchers > Grants and Funding

Summer school programmes

Each year, research bodies, universities and laboratories organise summer school programmes where researchers can develop interdisciplinary skills in specific scientific areas, broaden expertise and share ideas.

The programmes regularly call on French and international experts to speak at conferences.

The CNRS offers over 100 summer school programmes each year: www.cnrs.fr

EXAMPLES:

- School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences summer school programme: www.ehess.fr/fr/summer-school
- Institut Pierre-Simon Laplace summer school programme: www.ipsl.fr/formation/linnovation-pedagogique/les-ecoles-thematiques/
- Université de Côte d'Azur, summer school programmes: <https://univ-cotedazur.fr/recherche-innovation/structures-de-recherche/academies-dexcellence/academie-/actions/ecoles-thematiques>
- Université Grenoble Alpes, Institut Fourier: <https://www-fourier.ujf-grenoble.fr/?q=fr/content/l-ecole-dete-a-linstitut-fourier>
- Sciences Po summer school: <https://www.sciencespo.fr/summer-school/en/>
- Sorbonne Université, summer school course cycles: <https://lettres.sorbonne-niversite.fr/en/formation/formation-tout-au-long-de-la-vie/universite-d-ete-en-sorbonne/programme-des-cycles-de-cours>
- Université Paris-Saclay International Summer Schools: <https://www.universite-paris-saclay.fr/en/education/summer-schools>

FIND OUT MORE

> FRANCE

- Association Bernard Gregory (ABG): <http://www.abg.asso.fr/en>
- PhD in France portal: <http://www.campusfrance.org/en> > Researchers
- *France Universités* : <https://franceuniversites.fr/en>
- Media libraries of the CNRS and the INRAE:
 - > www.science-ouverte.cnrs.fr/mediatheque-video/
 - > <https://mediatheque.inrae.fr>
- French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation:
www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr

> EUROPE

- Academic Positions, the portal to find academic and research positions in northern and central Europe: <http://academicpositions.fr>
- Research Science Jobs and Postdocs in Europe:
www.eurosciencejobs.com/job_search

> GLOBAL

- EURAXESS, a European initiative that aims to assist researchers during their mobility, has developed a platform where it publishes international job offers and funding opportunities: <https://www.euraxess.fr>
- EURAXESS jobs: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs>

> FOR THE SCIENCES

- PhD Talent Career Fair, a search engine for international PhD opportunities in academia or the corporate world: <https://careerfair.phdtalent.fr>



DID YOU KNOW?

THE ANDÈS BROCHURES

The National Association of PhDs (ANDÈS) has published a series of brochures with best practices on how to pursue a PhD in the best conditions possible: <https://andes.asso.fr/loupe/>

SUBMITTING YOUR THESIS

Institutions that are accredited to award PhDs are required to make mention of past theses. PhD candidates must submit their thesis to their institution. This is in line with the legal requirement to archive theses.

Visit the national thesis archive: www.theses.fr

OPEN SCIENCE POLICY

HAL science ouverte is a search engine that can be used to access a regularly updated archive of research projects (PhD theses, work from professors, etc.): <https://hal.science/>

Research and Innovation in Europe

Through its 2021-2027 Horizon Europe programme, the European Union is extremely active in the area of research and has financed a number of initiatives to facilitate international researcher mobility. Here are some of the programmes and actions.

EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ERC)

The ERC is the foremost pan-European funding agency and is charged with coordinating research efforts among Member States of the European Union.

www.horizon-europe.gouv.fr/erc

THE MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions are the European Union's flagship initiatives to boost research and innovation as well as develop the careers of European and international researchers. The programme provides support for international researcher mobility, both at the PhD and postdoctoral levels.

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions>

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Quality research infrastructure development is one of the objectives of the Horizon Europe 2021-2027 programme. The aim is to produce high-level results and attract talent from all partner countries.

European University Alliances

Europe's strategy for universities involves supporting 60 European University alliances by mid-2024, representing more than 500 higher education institutions. European University alliances are associations of higher education institutions across Europe that work together in areas such as education, research and innovation with a long-term approach that benefits students. Each alliance is led by a coordinating institution and projects are shared among its members.

<https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/fr/les-universites-europeennes-46476>

A majority of European University alliances have at least nine member higher education institutions, as well as associated partners (companies, local authorities, research institutes, etc.

The main objectives of the European University alliances are as follows:

- implement a joint education and research strategy;
- create an inter-university campus allowing at least 50% of students to participate in mobility programmes;
- support an interdisciplinary approach to respond to social challenges;
- develop best practices to boost the attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education.

Support for research is covered by the European excellence initiative from the **Horizon Europe programme**: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative>

HORIZON EUROPE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW RESEARCHERS

€95,5 BN
for the 2021-2027 budget

The Horizon Europe programme focuses on four pillars:

- excellent science
- global challenges and European industrial competitiveness
- a more innovative Europe
- increased participation and strengthening the European Research Area.

The Excellent Science pillar supports frontier research projects through the European Research Council and boosts investment in research infrastructure. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions fund researchers' mobility and training.

In addition to research infrastructure, support for networking and access will be provided.

FIND OUT MORE

- European Commission website: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/horizon>
- The French portal of the Horizon Europe programme for research and innovation: www.horizon-europe.gouv.fr

The Research in France Portal

www.campusfrance.org/en > Researchers > Research in France > Find a thesis



- **A graduate schools directory:** a search engine where you can quickly find graduate schools and laboratories by area of study and access useful information such as: contacts, links, research areas, admission criteria and information, welcome measures, funding, study abroad information, contact information for associated research laboratories, etc.
- **A compilation of current funded and unfunded offers,** published on the websites of the various graduate schools, research bodies and other research stakeholders (for PhDs, postdocs and interns in research-focused master's programmes).

<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org/phd/dschools/main>

<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org/en/phd/offers>

Candidates can receive alerts from the portal whenever a thesis topic corresponding to their criteria is posted.

- **Information on European and international funding programmes**
- **Campus France information and brochures:**
Graduate schools: description of graduate schools, contacts, laboratories, practical information on how to prepare for a PhD.

- **Campus France's degree brochures:**
Resource centre > Panorama of Higher Education in France > Degrees



- **Brochures on major research disciplines:**
> Researchers > Research in France
Overview of French research by field

GOING FOR

A PHD ?



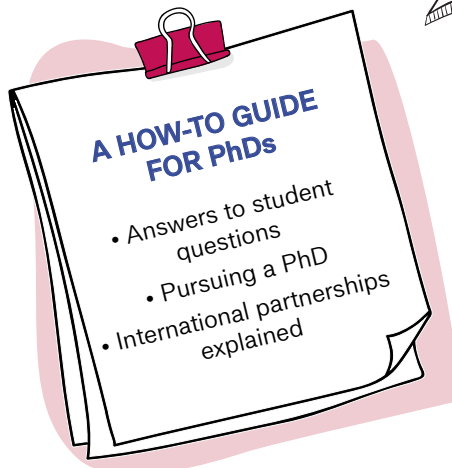
GREAT! You are about to embark on a personal, intellectual and cultural journey.

This guide was made for future PhD candidates like you. But how exactly do PhD studies work in France? You'll find everything you need to know before, during and after your PhD.

A guide specially made for international students, with an overview of the entire PhD procedure, practical information and useful links to learn about research in Europe.

A GUIDE FOR PROSPECTIVE PhD STUDENTS

This guide will help you prepare for your PhD and give you information on the various administrative and registration procedures as well as the steps leading up to your *viva voce* exam and the award of your PhD. Information is provided on the different types of international partnerships, visas, contracts, funding opportunities, as well as useful links to help you specialise in your area of research and get a glimpse of life after the PhD.



1. Registering for a PhD programme
2. Admission
3. Thesis topic and preparation
4. Types of PhD programmes
5. PhD contracts
6. Funding