

**Regulations on the call for PhD scholarships  
and postdoctoral Fellowship for researchers  
of their cooperation partner countries  
(ARES and ULB)**

Call 2024 – Scholarship September 2024- August 2025

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# 1. Regulations on the call for ULB and ARES PhD scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships

## 1.1 PhD scholarships

ULB and ARES award nationals of their cooperation partner countries<sup>1</sup> mobility grants intended to cover:

- A whole **PhD** in the context of a new thesis (the scholarship will be renewable three times with the supervisory committee's agreement);
- Continuation of a **PhD** for a thesis in progress (excluding finalisation);
- **finalisation of a PhD thesis** (thesis begun at least 4 years ago): The candidate must have previously been registered for a thesis at ULB and must have received funding. The candidate must undertake to defend his/her thesis before the end of the finalisation grant;

The aim of these PhD scholarships is to build capacity throughout the researcher's career and to contribute to reciprocal capacity-building at the partner institutions through teaching, research and training. Particular attention will be paid to the researcher's integration within their home university.

### Nature of the funding

Scholarships can **cover stays between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2023**. The scholarship amounts must be aligned according to the "**financial rules**", set out in point 2. 1.

### Eligibility requirements

#### **Candidate for a PhD scholarship**

- They must be a permanent resident of a partner country (list in appendix);
- They must hold at least a 120-credit master or an equivalent degree giving access to a PhD. The degree must have been obtained at the time of applying for the scholarship;
- The application must include a promoter within ULB and a promoter within the home university;
- The thesis must be jointly supervised or, if this is not possible, jointly directed<sup>2</sup> with the PhD student's home university;
- An application by a PhD student who is currently working on their thesis is eligible - only if that student has started their thesis under the scientific direction of a supervisor at ULB and if the report by the supervisory committee (dating from a **maximum of 6 months** before the submission of the application) is positive;
- Candidates funded as PhD students on RPD/TPS projects in progress at the time of obtaining the grant are not eligible for this call.

#### **Supervisor at ULB supervising a candidate**

- The supervisor must be a member of ULB's academic staff;
- If a supervisor submits several applications, they are asked to set an order of priority;

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<sup>1</sup>List in appendix p. 12

<sup>2</sup> For candidates unable to produce their thesis under joint supervision, the granting of this scholarship will be conditional on providing a document proving the support of the competent authorities at the partner universities.

## **Submission of applications**

### **Composition of the application file**

The application is submitted by the supervisor by e-mail.

The e-mail must include:

- The completed "PhD" application form;
- The candidate's curriculum vitae (maximum of 5 pages including the list of publications);
- Two letters of reference, including details and arguments in favour of the application, from the supervisor at the home university and the supervisor at ULB respectively;
- For applications from PhD students on theses at ULB, a positive report by the supervisory committee (dating from a **maximum of 6 months** before the submission of the application);
- For candidates under joint direction rather than joint supervision, a document proving the support of the competent authorities at the partner university.

Additional appendices will not be taken into account.

### **Gender measure**

Applications from women are strongly encouraged. In addition, a "cascade" measure provides that the percentage of applications by women selected should be at least equal to the percentage of applications submitted by women, provided that the selection panel considers the quality of these applications at least sufficient for funding.

### **Date and procedure for submission of application files**

The application files, consisting of the application form and all its appendices, must be sent by **the thesis supervisor at ULB**, in a single e-mail, **no later than 28 January 2024 by 11.59 pm**, to the address [financements.international@ulb.be](mailto:financements.international@ulb.be)

The e-mail must specify in the subject line the type of scholarship sought (PhD/thesis finalisation) and the name of the applicant.

### **Selection**

#### **Criteria**

- a) The scientific quality of the research project (40%);
- b) The scientific value of the candidate (40%);
- c) The research environment at ULB and at the home university, the quality of the partnership between supervisors as well as the contribution to strengthening the capacities of partner establishments (20%).

If any of the criteria are deemed insufficient by the pool of experts, the application will be rejected.

For more information on the selection procedure, see point 3.

### **Communication of results**

Candidates will be told if their application has been selected by 30 June 2024. Unsuccessful candidates will receive an assessment of their application file.

### **Possibility of postponement**

A scholarship can be postponed in the case of pregnancy, labour or adoption (a postponement request can also be made for a father-to-be).

### **Advice for researchers seeking a supervisor at ULB**

1. Identify potential supervisors for your research on the "Research" pages of our website: <http://cvchercheurs.ulb.ac.be/Site/repertoire.php>. You can also refer to a list of thesis subjects suggested by ULB professors: <https://infofin.ulb.ac.be/IntraTHview.php>
2. When you submit a supervision request to these supervisors, make reference to this call, and explain the reasons for your choice of research subject and supervisor at ULB. Also send your CV, any scientific writing you have produced, and your thesis project (maximum of two pages).
3. The International Office cannot help you contact supervisors individually.

## 1.2 Postdoctoral fellowships

ARES awards nationals of cooperation partner countries<sup>3</sup> mobility grants intended to cover postdoctoral research through a research stay of up to 6 months at ULB.

The objective of these postdoctoral fellowships is to build capacity throughout the researcher's career and to contribute to reciprocal capacity-building for the partner institutions through teaching, research and training. Particular attention will be paid to the researcher's integration within their home university.

Under this call, we will award +/- 14 fellowships to finalise a thesis or postdoctorate (allocation to be decided by the selection panel).

### **Nature of the funding**

The fellowships can **cover a stay of up to 6 months - between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025-** in Belgium. The fellowship amounts must be aligned according to the "**financial rules**", set out in point 2.2.

### **Eligibility requirements**

#### **Candidate for a postdoctoral fellowship**

- They must be a permanent resident of an ARES partner country<sup>4</sup>;
- They must hold the academic degree of doctor, earned after defending a thesis for up to 10 years (at the time of closure of the call). This maximum period is increased by one year whenever they give birth to and/or adopt a child. The thesis must have been defended at the time of application;
- The researcher must be attached to a university in a partner country;
- The application must include a promoter within ULB and an academic supporting the application within the home university;
- Candidates funded as postdoctoral students on RPD/TPS projects in progress at the time of obtaining the grant are not eligible for this call.

#### **Supervisor supervising a postdoc candidate**

- The supervisor must be a member of ULB's academic staff;
- If a supervisor submits several applications, they are asked to set an order of priority;

### **Submission of applications**

#### **Composition of the application file**

The application is submitted by the supervisor by e-mail.

The e-mail must include:

- The completed "Postdoctorate" application form;
- The candidate's curriculum vitae (maximum of 5 pages including the list of publications);
- Two letters of reference, including details and arguments in favour of the application, from the supervisor at ULB and an academic supporting the application within the home university respectively;
- The jury's report following the defence of the thesis.

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<sup>3</sup> List in appendix p. 12

<sup>4</sup> Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Benin, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nepal, Philippines, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

Additional appendices will not be taken into account.

### **Gender measure**

Applications from women are strongly encouraged. In addition, a "cascade" measure provides that the percentage of applications by women selected should be at least equal to the percentage of applications submitted by women, provided that the selection panel considers the quality of these applications at least sufficient for funding.

### **Date and procedure for submission of application files**

The application files, consisting of the appropriate form and all its appendices, must be sent by the thesis supervisor at ULB, in a single e-mail, **no later than 28 January 2024 by 11.59 pm**, to the address [financements.international@ulb.be](mailto:financements.international@ulb.be)

The e-mail must specify in the subject line the type of fellowship requested (postdoctorate) and the name of the candidate.

### **Selection**

#### **Criteria**

- a) The scientific quality of the research project (40%);
- b) The scientific value of the candidate (40%);
- c) The research environment at ULB and at the home university, the quality of the partnership between supervisors as well as the contribution to strengthening the capacities of partner establishments (20%).

If any of the criteria are deemed insufficient by the pool of experts, the application will be rejected.

For more information on the selection procedure, see point 3.

#### **Selection notification date**

Candidates will be told if their application has been selected or not by 30 June 2024. All unsuccessful candidates will receive an assessment of their application file.

#### **Possibility of postponement**

A scholarship can be postponed in the case of pregnancy, labour or adoption (a postponement request can also be made for a father-to-be).

### **Advice for researchers seeking a supervisor at ULB**

1. Identify potential supervisors for your research on the "Research" pages of our website: <http://cvchercheurs.ulb.ac.be/Site/repertoire.php>. You can also refer to a list of thesis subjects suggested by ULB professors: <https://infofin.ulb.ac.be/IntraTHview.php>
2. When you submit a supervision request to these supervisors, make reference to this call, and explain the reasons for your choice of research subject and supervisor at ULB. Also directly send your CV, any scientific writing you have produced, and your postdoctoral project (maximum of two pages).
3. The International Office cannot help you contact supervisors.

## 2. Financial rules on PhD scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships

### 2.1. PhD scholarships

PhD scholarship amounts		
	ARES scholarship	ULB scholarship
Living allowance	€1,900	€2.366,90€ <sup>5</sup>
Air travel expenses	Max. 1.250 €	/
Taxi to and from the airport	Max. 100 €	/
Exceptional expenses related to visa applications	on the basis of receipts	/
Supervision fees	max. €300/month	/
Research costs	max. €400/month	max. €400/month
Local research grant	350€/month	350€/month
PhD tuition fees at ULB	€835/€32 <sup>6</sup>	To be covered by the PhD student

**The selection panel decides what type of scholarship ( ARES or ULB) is awarded to the candidate**

#### **Explanation of the various expenses**

- **The monthly living allowance** covers the various personal expenses related to the researcher's stay. The number of months funded in Belgium cannot exceed 24 months for a whole thesis of 4 years (30 months over 5 years in the case of finalisation of a thesis). For example, the following is possible:
  - *Example 1: request 6 months in Belgium for 4 consecutive years.*
  - *Example 2: request 4 months in Belgium in the first year, 4 months in the second, 8 months in the third, and 8 months in the fourth.*
- **Exceptional expenses related to visa applications:** in the context of their trip, scholarship holders may incur a number of obligatory expenses in order to obtain their visa. **If these expenses exceed €200, the scholarship holder may be reimbursed the difference on the basis of actual expenses (and per diem) and receipts** (calculation formula: reimbursement = actual expenses - €200).
- **Supervision fees** are flat-rate and calculated on a pro rata basis according to the number of days. They cover the time and expenses incurred by the unit of the supervisor who is supervising the PhD student in Belgium. They are paid to this unit on the basis of a claim declaration. These amounts are a maximum; the supervisors are free to charge less or not to charge supervision fees.
- **Research costs** are the operational costs related to the specific needs of the research to be carried out by the researcher. For the unit hosting the researcher, they may be consumables, analysis costs (the purchase of equipment to be kept in the research unit is not allowed). For the researcher, they may be the cost of a PC, documentation, attending a conference, field expenses or an additional plane ticket. These costs must be scheduled, approved by ARES and supported by documentary evidence. The sum is paid to the unit of the supervisor who is supervising the PhD student in Belgium.
- **The local research grant** consists of a single sum covering all costs related to the scholarship. This grant only applies if the researcher is not receiving a salary or grant for their stay at the home university.

<sup>5</sup> Amount for 2023 that will be indexed in 2024;

<sup>6</sup> Tuition fees are €835 for the first year then €35;



## 2.2 Postdoctoral fellowships

Postdoctoral fellowship amounts	
	ARES scholarship
Living allowance	€2.000
Air travel expenses	Max. 1.250 €
Taxi to and from the airport	Max. 100 €
Exceptional expenses	on the basis of receipts
Supervision fees	max. €300/month
Research costs	max. €400/month

- **The monthly living allowance** covers the various personal expenses related to the researcher's stay. The number of months funded in Belgium cannot exceed 6 months.
- **Exceptional expenses related to visa applications:** in the context of their trip, scholarship holders may incur a number of obligatory expenses in order to obtain their visa. **If these expenses exceed €200, the scholarship holder may be reimbursed the difference on the basis of actual expenses (and per diem) and receipts** (calculation formula: reimbursement = actual expenses - €200).
- **Supervision fees** are flat-rate and calculated on a pro rata basis according to the number of days. They cover the time and expenses incurred by the unit of the supervisor who is supervising the PhD student in Belgium. They are paid to this unit on the basis of a claim declaration. These amounts are a maximum; the supervisors are free to charge less or not to charge supervision fees.
- **Research costs** are the operational costs related to the specific needs of the research to be carried out by the researcher. For the unit hosting the researcher, they may be consumables, analysis costs (the purchase of equipment to be kept in the research unit is not allowed). For the researcher, they may be the cost of a PC, documentation, attending a conference, field expenses or an additional plane ticket. These costs must be scheduled, approved by ARES and supported by documentary evidence. The sum is paid to the unit of the supervisor who is supervising the PhD student in Belgium.

### 3. Selection procedure for doctoral scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships

#### 3.1. Selection criteria

- a) The scientific quality of the research project (40%);
- b) The scientific value of the candidate (40%);
- c) The research environment at ULB and at the home university, the quality of the partnership between the supervisors as well as the contribution to strengthening the capacities of partner establishments (20%).

If any of the criteria are deemed insufficient, the pool of experts mentioned below will remove the application from the list of fundable applications.

#### 3.2. Composition of the panel

3 pools of experts will be formed by the International Office in consultation with the Cooperation Advisor:

- science and technology;
- health;
- human and social sciences.

Each pool is made up of:

- a cross-disciplinary expert who coordinates the pool and assesses all the application files;
- 4/5 people for the specialised scientific expertise, who divide the files between themselves according to their speciality.

#### 3.3. Call for applications and receipt of applications

- The call for applications, including the invitation to an information session, is issued by the International Office via its various communication channels;
- Applications must be sent to the International Office no later than 11.59 pm on 28 January 2024.

#### 3.4. Selection of applications

1. The admissibility and completeness of applications are analysed by the International Office. If the application is not complete and/or not admissible, the International Office informs the applicant that the application file will not be considered.
2. The files are then distributed among the three pools by the International Office and, in consultation with each cross-disciplinary expert, to the specialised scientific expert of their pool.
3. Each file is analysed by a specialised scientific expert on the basis of a criteria grid (see criteria and their weighting above). For each proposal analysed, the specialised scientific experts complete the criteria grid, awarding an overall score and adding comments on their assessment. The specialised scientific experts also complete an assessment sheet which will be communicated to the candidates.
4. On the basis of the analysis by the specialised scientific experts, the cross-disciplinary experts analyse all the applications in their pool and propose a single assessment for each file (A+, A, A-, B...) along with a classification which they then submit for final approval to the specialised scientific experts in their pool.

CATEGORIES	GRADES	
A	A+	Exceptional
	A	Excellent
	A-	Very good
B	B+	Good
	B	Average
	B-	Poor
C	C	Inadequate

5. If one or more specialised scientific experts do not agree with the single assessment of an application file, they request a meeting with the cross-disciplinary expert and, if the disagreement persists, they may write a note which will be sent with the classification to the ULB International Credit Classification Committee (CCCI).
6. If the classification results of the various areas do not meet the cascade measure, the International Office establishes a new classification by putting forward the applications from women that are deemed to be of sufficient quality (according to the binary treatment approach), which may allow the cascade measure to be met.
7. The classification established by each pool and the remarks by the specialised scientific experts are sent to the CCCI. The Cooperation Advisor may, if necessary, add comments on criterion "c" and on institutional strategies (presence of RPD/TPS at the home university, existence of a special partnership, etc.).
8. On the basis of the classifications established by the three pools and their assessments, the CCCI meets in the company of the three cross-disciplinary experts and establishes the final classification.
9. The CCCI decides on the division of funding between the various candidates (ARES scholarship or ULB scholarship). The International Office sends the ARES selection to the ARES Cooperation Directorate
10. The International Office lets the candidate know whether or not their application file has been selected, and sends them the assessment sheet.

### 3.5. Conflicts of interest

ULB is particularly attentive to the transparency of the whole process and the absence of conflicts of interest. This is why it asks each candidate for expert status or CCCI membership to declare if they are in a situation of conflict of interest with any of the proposals analysed due to being in any of the following situations:

01. They are a (joint) supervisor (of a PhD, postdoctorate) or member of a candidate's thesis committee;
02. They have an active collaboration with a stakeholder in any of the presented projects (for example, having co-authored a publication with one of the stakeholders in the last 3 years, having participated in the last 3 years in a common research project, having co-authored or co-edited a book, having participated in writing an application);
03. They have (or have had during the previous 3 years) direct hierarchical links with a stakeholder in any of the projects presented in their pool, whether at the university or outside of it.

Cross-disciplinary experts and CCCI members who find themselves in case 01 are asked to withdraw from the assessment process.

Experts and members of the CCCI who find themselves in case 02 or 03 are invited to declare this to the International Service.

Each expert or CCCI member is also invited to declare to the International Office any other situation of conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest for professional or personal reasons (family and private relationships, friendship or enmity, etc.). This information (other situation of conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest) will be assessed by the Vice-Rector for External Relations who will decide, if necessary, whether to keep the expert in the assessment process or not to involve the expert in the application in question. In order to ensure the necessary transparency, the CCCI will be notified of all this information.

**If you have any questions, please refer to our [FAQ](#).**  
**If you have not found the answer to your question, please contact us at**  
**[financements.international@ulb.be](mailto:financements.international@ulb.be)**

## 4. Appendices

**List of countries eligible for ULB cooperation grants**

Algeria	Guyana	Papua New Guinea
Angola	Haiti	Peru
Anguilla	Honduras	Philippines
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Rwanda
Belize	Iraq	Solomon Islands
Benin	Iran	Samoa
Bhutan	Jamaica	São Tomé and Príncipe
Bolivia	Jordan	Senegal
Botswana	Kenya	Seychelles
Burkina Faso	Kiribati	Sierra Leone
Burundi	Laos	Somalia
Cambodia	Lesotho	Sudan
Cameroon	Lebanon	South Sudan
Cape Verde	Liberia	Sri Lanka
Central African Republic	Libya	Saint Lucia
West Bank and Gaza Strip	Madagascar	Saint Helena
Colombia	Malaysia	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Comoros	Malawi	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Congo, Rep.	Maldives	Suriname
Congo, Dem. Rep.	Mali	Swaziland
Cook Islands	Morocco	Syria
Ivory Coast	Marshall Islands	Tanzania
Cuba	Mauritius	Chad
Djibouti	Mauritania	Thailand
Dominican Rep.	Micronesia, Federated States	Timor-Leste
Dominica	Montserrat	Togo
Egypt	Mozambique	Tokelau
El Salvador	Myanmar	Tonga
Ecuador	Namibia	Tunisia
Eritrea	Nauru	Tuvalu
Ethiopia	Nepal	Vanuatu
Gabon	Nicaragua	Venezuela
Gambia	Niger	Vietnam
Ghana	Nigeria	Wallis and Futuna
Grenada	Niue	Yemen
Guatemala	Uganda	Zambia
Guinea	Pakistan	Zimbabwe
Equatorial Guinea	Palau	
Guinea-Bissau	Panama	

**List of countries eligible for ARES cooperation grants**

South Africa	Guinea	Philippines
Bolivia	Haiti	Peru
Burkina Faso	Indonesia	Rwanda
Burundi	Kenya	Democratic Republic of Congo
Benin	Madagascar	Senegal
Cambodia	Morocco	Tanzania
Cameroon	Mozambique	Tunisia
Cuba	Niger	Vietnam
Ecuador	Nepal	Zimbabwe
Ethiopia	Uganda	