Financing your doctoral training

Doctoral studies can be financed in many ways. This section describes some of the main ones. For more information, do not hesitate to contact your doctoral school.

> View pending offers

The Doctoral Contract

Since the decree of April 23rd 2009, the doctoral contract is the legal frame of reference in terms of recruiting doctoral students. This contract, concluded for a period of three years, provides all the social guaranties of a genuine employment contract, in accordance with French Public Law. A minimum monthly salary allows the doctoral student to devote him/herself full-time to research work: €1,684.93 (gross) if the doctoral student is only carrying out his/her research work; €2,024.70 (gross) if he/she performs additional activities, such as teaching.

The doctoral contract is offered to students coming both from public institutions of higher education and from research organisations. Every year, doctoral studies are financed by those organisations (CEA, CNRS, Inserm, Inria, Inrae, etc.).

> Decree of April 23rd 2009 concerning contractual doctoral students from public institutions of higher education or research organisations

CIFRE doctoral dissertation

Created by the French National Association for Technical Research (Association Nationale de la Recherche Technique [ANRT]), CIFRE (Convention Industrielle de Formation par la Recherche: Industrial Convention of Training by Research) allows doctoral students attached to a research laboratory to work on their dissertation and to be financed by a private company at the same time. The company hires the doctoral student on a permanent basis, or for a fixed period of 3 years. It will provide the doctoral student with a research project, which will become the dissertation subject, and a minimum monthly salary of €1,957 (gross) (i.e. €23,484 per annum) In return, the company will receive from the ANRT a €14,000 annual grant for 3 years.

> More information on the CIFRE doctoral dissertation

Research contracts

Laboratories may finance doctoral dissertations based on the resources they have obtained by concluding research contracts with one (or more) partners from the private sector. The partner will then assign to the university concerned research services defined according to the laboratory's recognised area of expertise. He will then finance its services, including personnel expenses. In other words: the potential hiring of a doctoral student.

Generally, this kind of financing is mentioned in the dissertation subject proposal.

French government grants

Every year, the French government offers grants for students who wish to pursue all or part of their graduate studies in France, in higher education institutions authorised to issue a state diploma. For doctoral studies, preference is given to joint dissertation supervision or “cotutelles”.

> More information on French government grants

Other funding sources

Many foundations, associations, and private/public institutions can finance doctoral student research work in subjects concerning them.

For example, the Rhône-Alpes Region allocates doctoral research grants every year. Its 8 Academic Research Communities (Communautés Académiques de Recherche [ARC]) also finance doctoral dissertations in subjects corresponding to their specialities.

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