To address research and scientific innovation problems, companies may finance doctoral dissertations by means of the CIFRE (Convention Industrielle de Formation par la Recherche: Industrial Convention of Training by Research) agreements. Another benefit for a company is that a doctor is directly operational as soon as he/she has obtained his/her doctoral degree.

Set up by the French National Association for Technical Research (ANRT) since 1981 the CIFRE scheme has allowed the preparation of more than 13,000 doctoral dissertations. It is made up of 7,500 companies, of which almost half are SMEs (43%) and 4,000 research teams in numerous business sectors and scientific fields. (Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Research).

Within the scope of this scheme, a company recruits a doctoral student on the basis of a permanent work contract or a fixed-term contract of 3 years. The company assigns the doctoral student a research project, which will become the dissertation subject, and pays the student a minimum annual salary of €23,484 (gross) (€1,957 per month). In return, the company receives an annual subsidy of €14,000 from the ANRT for three years.

In certain conditions, expenses for recruiting a doctoral student within the scope of a CIFRE doctoral dissertation can be eligible for the research tax credit (CIR).

For more information on the CIFRE scheme

- French National Association for Technical Research (ANRT)
- French Ministry of Higher Education and Research