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The Compendium of Knowledge for PhD Students from Abroad



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I. Introduction

Dear Friends,

We are delighted that you have decided to start your education in Poland. To make it easier for you to get acclimatised and to acquire the most important information, we have prepared a Compendium of Knowledge for PhD Students from Abroad.

The Compendium of Knowledge for PhD Students from Abroad aims to explain the most important aspects related to the education of PhD students from abroad in Poland. It is divided into several essential parts. At the beginning, issues related to PhD education are discussed. The authors point out issues connected with PhD students' rights and duties, as well as their finances. The principles of the procedure for awarding the doctoral degree are analysed in detail. The guide also contains information about scientific grants, doctoral student council and PhD students' organisations, the Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates, Eurodoc, the PhD Students' Ombudsman, local and doctoral associations, and The Young Scientists Council. Those interested will also find information relating to the preparation of a doctoral dissertation in extramural mode and the implementation doctorate.

Enjoy your reading!





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II. Doctoral schools – individual research plan and mid-term evaluation

Foreigners may undertake and complete studies, education at doctoral schools, post-graduate studies, specialist education and other forms of education, and participate in scientific activity or teaching, on the basis of the following:

- international agreements, pursuant to the rules specified therein,
- agreements concluded with foreign entities by higher education institutions, pursuant to the rules specified therein,
- decision of the minister,
- the decision of the director Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange with regard to its scholarship holders,
- the decision of the director of the National Science Centre to allocate financial resources for basic research in the form of a research project, internship or scholarship, selected for funding through competition,
- the administrative decision of the rector, the director of the Institute of Polish Academy of Sciences, the director of a research institute or the director of an international institute.

Currently, doctoral education shall prepare them for obtaining a degree of doctor and take place at a doctoral school. The doctoral school shall be an organised form of education in at least two of the disciplines. Entities authorised to operate a doctoral school are indicated in Article 198 of The Law on Higher Education and Science. The education shall be carried out on the basis of doctoral training and an individual research plan. It shall last from 6 to 8 semesters. The doctoral training may provide for internships in the form of teaching or participation in the teaching of classes, not exceeding 60 teaching hours per year.





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PhD students, in consultation with the PhD student supervisor(s), shall draw up an individual research plan including in particular a schedule for the preparation of the doctoral dissertation and they shall submit it to the entity operating the doctoral school within 12 months of the date of the commencement of education. If an assistant supervisor is appointed, the plan shall be presented after the provision of opinion by that supervisor. The implementation of the plan shall be subject to mid-term evaluation in the middle of the period of education defined in the curriculum, and in the case of education lasting 6 semesters – during the fourth semester. Mid-term evaluation shall be conducted by a committee composed of three members, including at least one person holding the degree of doktor habilitowany or the title of professor in the discipline in which the dissertation is being prepared, employed outside the entity operating the doctoral school. The supervisor and assistant supervisor shall not be members of the committee. The mid-term evaluation shall end with a positive or negative result. The result of the evaluation, together with the justification, shall be public. In preparation for the mid-term evaluation, it is useful to familiarise oneself with the legislation applicable to your entity.

The regulations of the doctoral school shall establish the organisation of education to the extent not regulated by The Law on Higher Education and Science. The regulations shall be adopted by the senate or scientific council at least five months before the beginning of the academic year. **It is good practice to review the regulation of the doctoral school before joining the doctoral school or at the beginning of the education.**

The Law on Higher Education and Science does not specify the modes (full-time and part-time) of doctoral studies. Currently, doctoral education takes place in doctoral schools and is free of charge. Doctoral studies started before the academic year 2019/2020 are currently being terminated. They shall be provided no longer than until 31 December 2023.





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III. University diplomas, degrees, and degrees in art

A diploma issued by an authorised higher education institution operating in the higher education system of a Member State of the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) or the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) - parties to the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement, certifying the completion of:

- three-year studies or first-cycle programmes lasting at least 3 years - confirms in the Republic of Poland the education at the level of first-cycle programmes,
- second-cycle studies - confirms in the Republic of Poland the education at the level of second-cycle programmes,
- at least four years of long-cycle programmes - confirms in the Republic of Poland the education at the level of second-cycle programmes if it is deemed equal to a second-cycle graduation diploma in the country of issue.

If a diploma confirming the completion of studies abroad enables the application for the award of the doctoral degree in the state of whose higher education system is operated by in which operates the higher education institution which issued the diploma, it shall entitle its holder in the Republic of Poland to apply for the award of the degree of doctor.

A diploma confirming the completion of studies issued by a foreign higher education institution shall not confirm the education at a given level of studies in the Republic of Poland or entitle its holder to the above mentioned entitlements if the institution which issued it or the institution where education was provided does not operate in the higher education system of any country or within the meaning of the internal law of the state whose higher education system the institution operates in, was not an accredited higher education institution at the date of the award of the diploma or was implementing a curriculum without accreditation. Furthermore, this is also the case if a curriculum or part thereof was not implemented in accordance with the regulations of the country in which education was provided.





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A diploma certifying the completion of studies abroad may be recognised as equivalent to the relevant Polish diploma and professional title on the basis of an international agreement specifying equivalence, or in the absence thereof, by means of a recognition procedure. A person whose diploma has been recognised as equivalent to the Polish diploma and professional title may use the relevant Polish professional title.

Completion of studies at a certain level by a foreigner who has obtained the status of refugee or subsidiary protection, or a foreigner who has a stay permit granted in connection with the circumstance referred to in Art. 159 sec. 1 point 1(c) or (d) of the Act of 12 December 2013 on Foreigners (because he/she was granted refugee status or subsidiary protection), who does not hold a graduation diploma, may be confirmed by means of a procedure to confirm completion of studies at a given level. Details in this regard are contained in Article 327 of the Law on Higher Education and Science.

A scientific degree and a degree in art awarded by an authorised institution operating in a Member State of the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) or the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) - parties to the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement shall be equivalent to the relevant scientific degree or a degree in art referred to in the Law on Higher Education and Science.

The degree of doctor awarded by the European University Institute, in accordance with the Convention setting up the European University Institute concluded in Florence on 19 April 1972, shall be equivalent to that of the degree of doctor.

A scientific degree and a degree in art awarded by another institution may be considered equivalent to the relevant Polish degree on the basis of an international agreement, or, in the absence thereof, by way of a recognition procedure. Details in this regard are contained in Article 328 of the Law on Higher Education and Science.





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IV. Rights and obligations of PhD students

Employees of higher education institutions, PhD students and students shall constitute a community of the higher education institution. Consequently, these persons have certain rights and obligations. The rights and obligations of PhD students derive from The Law on Higher Education and Science and the regulations of the doctoral schools. The rights and obligations arising from the Act are described below.

PhD students shall have the right to have their academic staff evaluated in terms of the performance of their educational duties. To this end, the higher education institution should make it possible to do so at least once a year.

A PhD student shall be entitled to rest breaks of up to 8 weeks per year.

In the case of a PhD student who has obtained the degree of doctor as a result of graduation from a doctoral school, the period of education at that school, not exceeding four years, shall be included in the period of work on which employee entitlements depend.

In the case of a PhD student who has not completed education at a doctoral school due to taking up of employment as an academic teacher or researcher or discontinuation of education for doctoral students in a given discipline - the period of education at this school, not exceeding 4 years, shall be included in the period of work on which employee entitlements depend, provided that they have obtained a degree of doctor.

A PhD student may apply for accommodation in a student dormitory of the higher education institution or catering in the student canteen of the higher education institution or accommodation for a spouse or a child in a student dormitory of the higher education institution under the conditions and in the mode laid down in the regulations concerning student benefits. The child of a doctoral student shall be entitled to use the company day-care centre and children's club.

PhD students up to the age of 35 are entitled to a 51% reduction for travel on public collective transport by rail in passenger, fast and express trains. PhD students are also entitled to other discounts. A statutory discount is granted, for example, for entry to state museums. Many institutions and organisations have special offers for PhD students, which are worth taking advantage of.





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A local government unit may grant PhD students reductions in the fees for public municipal transport.

PhD students shall also have the right to form doctoral student organisations in the entity operating a doctoral school.

An employee who is not an academic teacher or researcher shall be entitled, at their request to a leave to prepare a doctoral dissertation or to prepare for the defence of a doctoral dissertation, granted in a period agreed with the employer, amounting to 28 days, which are working days for that employee within the meaning of separate regulations. In addition, such a worker shall be entitled to an exemption from work to defend their doctoral dissertation. It shall also be provided at his request. For the period of leave and exemption from work, the employee shall be entitled to remuneration calculated in the same manner as for the holiday leave.

The duties of a PhD student in doctoral school include - following the curriculum and the individual research plan, submitting the doctoral dissertation within the deadline specified in the individual research plan, and receiving professional practice in the form of teaching or participating in the teaching of classes, insofar as these are provided for in the curriculum.

PhD students shall be subject to disciplinary liability for any breach of the regulations applicable at the institution running the doctoral school and for any act which offends the dignity of the doctoral student. The provisions on the disciplinary responsibility of students as indicated in The Law on Higher Education and Science shall apply accordingly.

A PhD student is removed from the register of PhD students in the cases indicated in the The Law on Higher Education and Science, which include:

- a negative result of the mid-term evaluation,
- failure to submit a doctoral dissertation within the deadline specified in the individual research plan,
- opting out of further education.

Moreover, PhD student may be removed from the register of doctoral students in case of:

- unsatisfactory progress in the preparation of their doctoral dissertation,
- failure to comply with their obligations, which include following the regulations of the doctoral school and following the curriculum and individual research plan.





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Removal from the register of doctoral students shall be effected by way of an administrative decision. The decision shall be subject to a motion for reconsideration.

PhD students studying at doctoral schools may not be employed as academic teachers or researchers. The aforementioned shall not apply to the employment of a doctoral student:

- for the purpose of implementation of the research project announced by NAWA, NCBiR, NCN or an international competition for the realization of a research project and a research or teaching project financed with funds from the budget of the European Union or by any other entity awarding a grant,
- after a mid-term evaluation with a positive result, except that in the case of employment for more than half of the full-time equivalent, the scholarship shall amount to 40% of the monthly scholarship received after the month in which the mid-term evaluation was carried out (57% of the professor's salary),
- who is not entitled to a doctoral scholarship.

Employing a foreigner in higher education institutions specified by the The Law on Higher Education and Science to perform tasks related to training and conducting scientific activity shall take place without the obligation to obtain a permit and consent of the employment authority. This person shall be subject to the mandatory social security and health insurance, and shall enjoy the rights under the rules applicable to Polish citizens who are in an employment relationship.

PhD students studying at doctoral schools may work under civil law contracts.

In the event of cessation of conducting doctoral education in a given discipline, the entity operating the doctoral school shall ensure that doctoral students preparing their doctoral dissertation in that discipline may continue their education at another doctoral school in that discipline. In the absence of a doctoral school providing education in a given discipline, the entity operating a doctoral school where education has been discontinued shall bear the costs of the proceedings for the award of a degree of doctor in extramural mode.

Where a public higher education institution is wound up, the liquidator should ensure that PhD students are able to continue their education.





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V. PhD students' finances

PhD students who study at doctoral schools receive a doctoral scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to those who do not hold a doctoral degree. The total period of receiving the doctoral scholarship at doctoral schools shall not exceed 4 years. It should be pointed out that this period does not include the period of suspension of education and the period of education at the doctoral school in the case referred to in Art. 206 sec. 2 The Law on Higher Education and Science.

The amount of the scholarship depends on the amount of the minimum monthly remuneration of a professor in a public higher education institution, as specified in other legislation.

The amount of a monthly doctoral scholarship shall be at least:

- 37% of a professor's salary – up to the month in which the mid-term evaluation was conducted - i.e. 2,371.70 PLN gross (approx. 2,104.65 PLN net);
- 57% of a professor's salary – after the month in which the mid-term evaluation was conducted - i.e. PLN 3,653.70 gross (approx. PLN 3,242.29 net).

The amount of the doctoral scholarship may depend on the student's achievements. However, it may not be less than that indicated above.

A doctoral scholarship shall not be awarded to a PhD student who receives remuneration of at least 150% of the amount of the doctoral scholarship to which they are entitled pursuant to Article 209, section 4 of the Law on Higher Education and Science in respect of their employment in connection with the implementation of a research project referred to in Article 119, section 2, subsections 2 and 3 of the Law on Higher Education and Science by the entity providing the doctoral school in which the PhD student is educated, during the period of that employment.

A PhD student who has a disability certificate, a certificate on the degree of disability, or a certificate referred to in Art. 5 and Art. 62 of the Act of 27 August 1997 on Vocational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons shall receive a doctoral scholarship in the amount increased by 30% of the amount received before the mid-term evaluation.





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The minister may grant a foreigner a scholarship, fund or co-finance the costs of educational services and a lump sum for the costs of travel, living and accommodation. The financial resources are paid through the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange.

It is worth pointing out that PhD students at doctoral schools are subject to compulsory insurance - retirement insurance, disability income insurance and accident insurance. Sickness insurance is voluntary and is taken out upon the application of a PhD student. They are covered by insurance in the period of receiving a doctoral scholarship.

Foreign PhD students from outside the EU are insured in Poland by concluding a voluntary health insurance contract with the branch of the National Health Fund (NFZ) competent for their place of residence, and they pay their own monthly health insurance premiums, unless they have a Card of the Pole or a certificate of Polish origin. In this case, the obligation to pay the health insurance premiums rests with the university where they study. A person interested in such insurance must apply to the voivodeship branch of the NFZ to be covered by the voluntary health insurance. It is necessary to present the following documents: a passport together with a document confirming legal stay in Poland (a visa, a residence card) a document confirming PhD student status (a PhD student card or a certificate from the university). Cover under the voluntary health insurance takes effect on the date specified in the contract concluded with the NFZ and ceases on the date of termination of the contract or after one month of continuous arrears in the payment of contributions. PhD students are exempt from paying additional fees for signing a voluntary insurance agreement. They only pay the premium due.

PhD students, as well as members of their families who are citizens of EU member states or member states of the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) may use health care services on the territory of Poland if they have health insurance in the general insurance system of an EU or EFTA country. In this respect, you should have documents entitling you to use health care services. Remember to have a valid European Health Insurance Card.

A PhD student who submits their doctoral dissertation earlier than the date of completion of education provided for in the curriculum shall receive the doctoral scholarship until the date of expiry of the deadline for the completion of education, but not longer than for six months. However, you should be aware of the maximum duration of the doctoral scholarship.





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PhD students may also receive scholarships from local government units and natural persons or legal persons that are not state or local government legal persons.

In addition, the university may establish its own fund for research scholarships for staff and PhD students.

PhD students can also apply for the Minister's scholarships for outstanding young scientists.





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VI. Procedure for the award of the doctoral degree

The right to award a degree of doctor in the discipline shall be vested in a higher education institution, institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, research institute or international institute in the discipline in which it has a scientific category A+, A or B+. The degree of doctor may also be awarded jointly by higher education institutions, institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, research institutes or international institutes in the discipline in which each of them has a scientific category A+, A or B+, including foreign entities authorised to award a degree of doctor in the scope of discipline in which the degree is awarded. The rules of cooperation shall be laid down in a written agreement.

In proceedings for the conferment of a degree, to the extent not regulated by the Law on Higher Education and Science, the provisions of the Code of Administrative Procedure shall apply accordingly.

A degree of doctor shall be awarded to an individual who:

1. Holds a master's degree or a master of engineering degree or an equivalent degree, or has the diploma referred to in Art. 326 sec. 2 point 2 or Art. 327 sec. 2 the Law on Higher Education and Science, entitling them to apply for the award of a degree of doctor in the country in the education system of which the higher education institution which issued it operates. It should be noted that in exceptional cases, justified by the highest quality of scientific achievements, the degree of doctor may be conferred on a person who does not meet these requirements, who is a graduate of a first-cycle programme or a student who has completed the third year of a long-cycle programme. Such a person, upon being awarded the doctoral degree, simultaneously obtains a higher education degree.

2. Achieved the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework, where the learning outcomes in terms of the knowledge of a modern foreign language are confirmed by a certificate or diploma confirming the knowledge of that language at B2 level or higher.





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● 3. Has at least:

1) 1 scientific article published in a scientific journal or in conference proceedings which, in the year of publication of the article in its final form, were included in a ministerial list, or

2) 1 scientific monograph issued by a publishing house which, in the year of publication of the monograph in its final form, was included on a ministerial list or a chapter in such a monograph, or

3) a work of art of considerable importance.

4. Presented and defended a doctoral dissertation.

The scientific supervision of the preparation of a doctoral dissertation shall be exercised by the supervisor or supervisors or by the supervisor and assistant supervisor. In accordance with the requirements the doctoral dissertation demonstrates the candidate's general theoretical knowledge in a discipline (or disciplines) and the ability to conduct research or artistic work independently. The subject matter of the doctoral dissertation shall be an original solution to a scientific problem or in terms of the application of results of own scientific research in the economic or social sphere, or an original artistic achievement. It should also be pointed out that the doctoral dissertation may be:

- a written dissertation, including a scientific monograph,
- a collection of published and thematically related scientific articles,
- design, construction, technological, implementation or artistic work,
- independent and separate part of a collective work.

The doctoral dissertation shall include an abstract in English, whereas a doctoral dissertation prepared in a foreign language – an abstract in Polish. In the case when the dissertation is not in written form, its description in Polish and English shall be attached.

The entity awarding a degree of doctor shall make a written doctoral dissertation, together with a summary, or a description of a dissertation which is not a written dissertation, as well as reviews, available in the Bulletin of Public Information on its website - no later than 30 days before the scheduled date of dissertation defence. In the case of a doctoral dissertation the subject of which is confidential, only reviews shall be made available, with the exception of such confidential content. The doctoral dissertation, which is a written work, is checked by the doctoral subject using the Uniform Anti-Plagiarism System.





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5. Met other requirements set by the entity awarding a degree of doctor.

The proceedings for the award of a degree of doctor shall be initiated at the request of a person who satisfies the requirements set out in points 1-3. The application shall be accompanied by a doctoral dissertation with a positive opinion of the supervisor or supervisors.

In the proceedings for the award of the degree of doctor, 3 reviewers shall be appointed from among persons who are not employees of the entity awarding a degree of doctor and the higher education institution, institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, research institute, international institute, Łukasiewicz Research Network or Łukasiewicz Network institute, in which the person applying for the degree of doctor is employed. Reviewers are required to review the dissertation within 2 months of its provision. Detailed requirements for promoters and reviewers are set out in the The Law on Higher Education and Science. In order to be allowed to defend a doctoral dissertation, a person must receive positive reviews from at least two reviewers and meet the requirements referred to in Art. 186 sec. 1 point 5 The Law on Higher Education and Science. The decision on refusal to allow a person to defend their dissertation shall be subject to a complaint to the Council of Scientific Excellence.

The proceedings for the award of a degree of doctor may be conducted by a commission appointed by the body conducting the proceedings for the award of the degree of doctor.

The senate or scientific council shall determine the mode of awarding a degree of doktor, in particular:

- the manner of appointment and change of the supervisor, supervisors or assistant supervisor,
- the rules for determining the amount of the fee for the proceedings for the award of a degree of doctor in extramural mode as well as for granting exemption from this fee,
- the mode of submission of the doctoral dissertation,
- the mode of appointment of the commission,
- the manner of appointment of reviewers,
- the method of verification of learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework in the case of persons applying for a degree of doctor in extramural mode,
- the manner of verification that the requirement concerning the body of work has been met, in the case of multi-authored publications





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The senate or scientific council may specify the own requirements or additional conditions for acceptance for defence

The defence of the doctoral dissertation may be conducted outside the seat of the doctoral training institution using electronic means of communication ensuring in particular:

- real-time transmission of the defence between its participants,
 - multilateral real-time communication in which the participants of the defence may speak during the course of the defence
- while observing the necessary security rules.

As regards the costs of proceedings for the award of a doctoral degree, it should be pointed out that no fee is charged to an applicant for a doctoral degree who has completed training at a doctoral school. In the case of an academic teacher or researcher, the costs of the proceedings shall be borne by the higher education institution, institute of Polish Academy of Sciences, research institute or international institute employing them. In other cases, a procedure fee shall be paid. In justified cases, the rector, the director of an institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the director of a research institute or the director of an international institute may waive the fee in whole or in part.

A person who has been awarded a doctoral shall receive, respectively, a doctoral diploma as well as a copy of that diploma. Upon request, a copy of the diploma shall be issued in English, French, Spanish, German, Russian or Latin.

At the request of the person concerned, doctoral diplomas and postdoctoral diplomas, as well as their duplicates and copies, intended for legal exchange abroad, shall be certified by: the director of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange – in the case of degrees awarded by higher education institutions; the President of the Polish Academy of Sciences – in the case of degrees awarded by the institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences and by international institutes; the minister supervising the research institute – in the case of degrees awarded by research institutes. Certification shall be subject to fees.

The decision on the refusal to award the degree of doctor may be appealed to the Council of Scientific Excellence within 30 days of the delivery of the decision.





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VII. Programs and grants contest

PhD students are entitled to apply for scientific and research grants. In particular, the programmes of the National Agency for Academic Exchange (pl. NAWA), National Science Centre (pl. NCN) and National Centre for Research and Development (pl. NCBiR) should be noted.

1. National Agency for Academic Exchange

NAWA was set up to coordinate state activities driving the process of internationalization of Polish academic and research institutions. The mission of NAWA is to foster the development of Poland in the area of science and higher education.

1) The Bekker Programme

The aim of the Programme is to increase international mobility of scientists and academic teachers employed at Polish universities and scientific units by enabling them to conduct research or to teach in renowned foreign centres around the world. Trips lasting from 3 to 12 months will allow them to stay in acclaimed scientific centres, establish long-term cooperation with them and implement projects together with prominent foreign scientists. The Programme will create an opportunity for younger scientists to complete valuable post-doctoral scholarships.

Details

2) POLONISTA – scholarship and fellowship programme

The objective of the Program is to promote Polish language in the world by enabling foreigners interested in Polish language and Polish culture to study or carry out research projects in Poland. The program is addressed to students of Polish philology, Polish studies or Polish programs implemented among others as part of Slavic studies (in the field of Polish language, Polish culture and knowledge about Poland) as well as to scientists from foreign universities and scientific institutions.

Details





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3) NAWA Urgency Grants

The objective of the NAWA Urgency Grants programme is to support the international cooperation of research teams or the international mobility of researchers in response to sudden, important unforeseen social, civilisation and natural events with global or regional implications. The implementation of projects under the programme will enable researchers to collect data, acquire new knowledge, investigate the effects and significance of an extreme event as soon as possible after its occurrence.

Details

4) NAWA Preludium BIS

The objective of the programme is to support international mobility of doctoral students by enabling them to complete fellowships related to participation in research projects under the National Science Centre in Poland PRELUDIUM BIS 1 call for proposals.

Details

Research in Poland is a campaign aimed at presenting to the international scientific community the achievements of Polish science and promoting Poland as an attractive country for conducting research and developing a scientific career.

Research in Poland

Other Programmes

2. The National Centre for Research and Development

The National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) is an executive agency.

NCBR is a center for supporting and developing innovative technological and social solutions, creating an ecosystem of knowledge of, and information about, innovation. It organises and implements undertakings contributing to the civilization growth of the country.

Information about NCBiR competitions



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3. The National Science Centre

The National Science Centre supports basic research by funding **research projects** carried out by **individual researchers and research teams**, both on the domestic and international level, as well as **doctoral fellowships** and **post-doctoral internships**. NCN announces calls for proposals four times a year. The NCN grantee must be employed at a Polish host institution. Additional conditions applicable to each call are set forth by the Council of the NCN.

1) **PRELUDIUM BIS** is a competition addressed to entities running doctoral schools. The purpose of the competition is to support doctoral training in doctoral schools and financing of research projects carried out by doctoral students as part of their doctoral dissertations.

[Details](#)

2) **OPUS** is a funding opportunity intended for a wide range of applicants. The research proposal submitted under this scheme may include the purchase or construction of research equipment.

[Details](#)

[Information about competitions of NCN](#)





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VIII. PhD students' council and doctoral organisations

PhD students' council provides opinions on many legal acts related to PhD students' schools and studies. These include the criteria for periodic appraisal for particular groups of employees and types of posts, as well as the procedure and the entity carrying out this appraisal, or the programme in the doctoral school.

The regulations shall require agreement with the doctoral student council. If, within 3 months of the adoption of the regulations, the senate or the scientific council and the PhD student council fail to reach an agreement on their content, the regulations shall enter into force by way of a resolution of the senate or the scientific council, adopted by a majority of at least 2/3 of the votes of the statutory members of these bodies.

PhD students shall be members of the collective bodies of higher education institutions and institutes. Students and doctoral students shall constitute not less than 20% of the membership of the senate of a public university-type higher education institution. The numbers of students and doctoral students shall be proportional to their total numbers in both groups in a given higher education institution, with each of the two groups being represented by at least one representative. The procedure for election and the duration of membership of the senate shall be laid down in the PhD student council regulations. Having representatives is very important given the fact that the tasks of the senate include, among others, establishing the curricula of doctoral schools.

PhD students also form part of the electoral college in a public higher education institution. As is the case with representation in the senate, students and doctoral students shall account for at least 20% of the membership of this body. The numbers of students and doctoral students shall be proportional to their total numbers in both groups in a given higher education institution, with each of these groups being represented by at least one representative. The procedure for the appointment of PhD students to the electoral college and the duration of their membership thereof shall be laid down in the PhD student council.

PhD students also have a very important role to play in the appointment of a manager whose responsibilities include doctoral student affairs. The appointment of such a person shall require the agreement of the PhD student council. Failure on the part of the doctoral student self-government to take a position within the period laid down in the statutes shall be deemed to be agreement.





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As far as the activities of PhD student organisations are concerned, it is important to have financial resources to implement scientific and research projects and to integrate the academic community. In accordance with the Act regulating the area of higher education and science, a higher education institution may allocate funds for the implementation of the activities of doctoral student organisations operating in the institution and associations bringing together exclusively students or students, doctoral students and staff of the institution. These entities shall submit a report to the higher education institution on the use of the funds received in a given academic year.

PhD student councils and doctoral student organisations organise many interesting academic and cultural initiatives. It is worth finding out what is going on in your institution.





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IX Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates

Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates (KRD) shall be a national representative and an expression of the will of the doctoral student community. The KRD has the right to express opinions and present proposals in matters concerning all doctoral students, including the right to express opinions on normative acts concerning doctoral students.

In its statutory activities, the KRD shall in particular have the right to:

1. represent and promote the doctoral student community and its educational, social, economic and cultural needs,
2. voice opinions and present proposals in matters relating to all doctoral students, including opinions on draft legislation,
3. protect the rights and interests of doctoral students at home and Polish doctoral students abroad,
4. take care to improve the quality of doctoral students' education,
5. support and promote PhD Students council,
6. create and promote attitudes among doctoral students aimed at active cooperation in the development of civil society,
7. identify and eliminate barriers to the scientific, cultural and sports development of doctoral students,
8. enhancing the knowledge, skills and social competences of doctoral students through informational, scientific and cultural activities in the field of higher education and science, education, training and physical culture,
9. supporting the mobility of doctoral students,
10. conducting activities promoting science.

Detailed information can be found at - www.krd.edu.pl





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X. PhD Student Ombudsman

There is a PhD Student Ombudsman attached to the National Representation of PhD Candidates. According to the information provided by this organisation, it is a body which guards PhD students' rights, investigates signals of suspected violations of doctoral students' rights and intervenes when such violations occur.

The Ombudsman's activities include, among others, undertaking mediation and explanatory actions in individual cases, monitoring and supporting the observance of PhD students' rights, preparing and issuing reports and recommendations on problems related to the observance of PhD students' rights, and organising information campaigns. It should be noted that legal assistance from the PhD Students' Rights Ombudsman is free of charge.

The PhD Student Ombudsman organises regular online consultation.

Currently, the position of PhD Student Ombudsman is held by Wojciech Kiełbasiński, M.Sc.

Contact - rzecznik@krd.edu.pl

XI. Local and sectoral associations of PhD students

There are local and sectoral associations for PhD students in Poland.

Among the sectoral associations, the following should be highlighted:

- Doktoranckie Forum Uniwersytetów Polskich – DFUP,
- Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Doktorantów Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego – OPD AWF,
- Porozumienie Doktorantów Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych – PDNHiS,
- Porozumienie Doktorantów Uczelni Rolniczych – PDUR,
- Porozumienie Doktorantów Uczelni Technicznych – PDUT,
- Rada Samorządu Doktorantów Polskiej Akademii Nauk – RSD PAN,
- Doktoranckie Forum Uczelni Medycznych – DFUM.





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Local doctoral associations are:

- Lubelskie Porozumienie Doktorantów,
- Łódzkie Porozumienie Doktorantów,
- Porozumienie Doktorantów Uczelni Krakowskich – PDUK.
- Porozumienie Doktorantów Uczelni Wrocławskich – PDUW,
- Poznańskie Porozumienie Doktorantów – PPD,
- Śląskie Porozumienie Doktorantów- ŚPD,
- Trójmiejskie Porozumienie Doktorantów- TPD,
- Warszawskie Porozumienie Doktorantów – WPD;
- Kujawsko-Pomorskie Porozumienie Doktorantów - K-PPD.

More information – <https://krd.edu.pl/o-nas/porozumienia/>

XII. Eurodoc

Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers, is a grassroots federation of national associations of early career researchers (ECRs) from European countries. Eurodoc was founded in 2002 and then established in 2005 as a non-profit, international volunteer organization based in Brussels. Representatives of Eurodoc engage with all major stakeholders in research and innovation in Europe. Eurodoc primarily focuses and advocates for doctoral candidates and junior researchers, that is, researchers at R1 and R2 stages.

Currently, the President of Eurodoc is a Polish PhD student Agnieszka Żyra, M.Sc. from the Cracow University of Technology.





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XIII. The Young Scientists Council

The Young Scientists Council is an advisory body to the Minister of Science and Higher Education. It was established by the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the basis of the ordinance.

Tasks:

- Identifying existing and future barriers to young career development;
- Preparing recommendations for career support tools for young researchers;
- Bringing young scientists closer to learning funding mechanisms;
- Fostering young scientists' contacts with representatives of the business community and institutions implementing innovative learning solutions;
- Implementation of the provisions of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in Scientific Units.

More information - <http://rmn.org.pl/>

XIV. Non-governmental organisations supporting PhD students

In Poland, many competitions and projects are organised by non-governmental organisations. They support young scientists in their development by offering substantive and financial support.

The Polish-U.S. Fulbright Commission is an educational foundation, which administers the Fulbright Program in Poland. We also run an EducationUSA Advising Center, where Polish students can receive information and advice about studies in the U.S. The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program of the U.S. government.

[You can read more about grants](#)

TopMinds is a mentoring programme that opens the door to an international career for young Polish scientists. It invites students and doctoral students who stand out in the scientific field, full of passion and ambition, focused not only on success in academia, but also continuous development.

[You can read more about program](#)





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XV. Extramural PhD

According to the Law on Higher Education and Science, it is possible to prepare a doctoral dissertation also in an extramural PhD.

A person who applies for obtaining the amount of the fee may not, however, exceed the costs of the proceedings, including in particular the costs of the remuneration of the supervisor or assistant supervisor and reviewers. As indicated above in the case of an academic teacher or researcher, the costs of the proceedings shall be borne by the higher education institution, institute of Polish Academy of Sciences, research institute or international institute employing them.

Moreover, in justified cases, the rector, the director of an institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the director of a research institute or the director of an international institute may waive the fee in whole or in part.

XVI. Implementing doctorate

An alternative pathway to obtain a doctoral degree is the implementation doctorate.

From the academic year 2017/2018 the Ministry of Education and Science has established a programme called "Implementation doctorate".

The subject of the programme is the creation of conditions for the development of cooperation of entities of the higher education system and science with the socio-economic environment, carried out within doctoral schools and consisting in educating doctoral students in cooperation with entrepreneurs or other entities employing them.





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The programme consists of two modules:

Implementation Doctorate I - which supports the preparation of doctoral theses by doctoral students conducting scientific activity in a field other than the one specified below, the results of which may be applied in the activity of entities employing PhD students.

Implementation doctorate II - artificial intelligence - which supports the preparation of doctoral theses by doctoral students conducting scientific activity within the scope of the use of artificial intelligence in technological or social processes, including those related to cyber security, the results of which may be applied in the activity of entities employing PhD students.

Among the benefits for the doctoral student of participating in the programme are:

- double remuneration - a stipend from the Ministry of Education and Science and a salary for working in a given company,
- higher earnings in the future,
- greater content-related support.

It is also very beneficial for entities from the socio-economic environment and units providing education.

[More information can be found at this link](#)



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XVI. Summary

The Compendium of Knowledge for PhD Students from Abroad explains the most important issues concerning the education of foreign PhD students in Poland.

We also encourage you to use the information contained in the tabs on our website:

- News, where you will find information on doctoral student issues related to both academic and personal development.
- Grants, where the current grant competitions are published, aimed at those who are beginning their scientific careers, as well as those who already have more experience in conducting research projects.
- Conferences, where a list of conferences organised in Poland is presented in a clear way (arranged by scientific fields).
- Internship offers, where you will find a list of current internship recruitments arranged by scientific discipline.
- Future Doctoral Students, with information for students in their final years of studies who plan to start their scientific careers at doctoral schools.
- Announcements, where the contents of announcements of importance to doctoral students and final-year students are published.
- FAQs, where the most frequently asked questions are published, along with answers.





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The Doctoral Student's Guide was developed on the basis of:

- The Act of July 20, 2018 - Law on Higher Education and Science,
- The Act of July 3, 2018 Introducing the Act - Law on Higher Education and Science,
- Social and health insurance for PhD students - a guide from the Social Insurance Institution,
- Announcement by the Minister of Education and Science of 16 April 2021 on the establishment of the "Implementation PhD" programme and the call for applications,
- Communication from the Rector of the Technical University of Łódź on the procedure for the payment of a doctoral scholarship and reporting to social insurance and health insurance for doctoral students enrolled at the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School of the Technical University of Łódź,
- Guide to the System of Higher Education and Science,
- Information from the website www.krd.edu.pl,
- Information from the website www.nauka.gov.pl,
- Information from the website www.rmnm.org.pl,
- Information from the website www.ncn.gov.pl,
- Information from the website www.nawa.gov.pl/en/,
- Information from the website www.gov.pl/web/ncbr,
- Information from the website www.eurodoc.net,
- Information from the website www.pacjent.gov.pl/jak-ubezpieczyc-studenta-i-doktoranta,

The compendium uses the Law on Higher Education and Science translated into English (<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-i-nauka/konstytucja-dla-nauki-w-jezyku-angielskim>).

The publication was realised within the project "eDoktorant 2.0" organised by the Scientia Thorunensia Foundation from the funds of the Ministry of Education and Science as part of the public task "Organising and animating activities for the academic community in 2021.



