

Guidelines of the Executive Board

for the awarding of the HSRW PhD Grant
of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

Dated

13 February 2014

As amended on 10 May 2017

Note on translation: This English translation is a service offer of the University and has no legal validity. Only the original German document published in the Official Notices of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is legally valid.

Every effort has been made to render a true and accurate translation. However, in the event of disparity between the German original and this translation, the German text will prevail.

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Preamble

In accordance with these guidelines, the Executive Board, acting on suggestions made by the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (HSRW), shall award research grants for PhD projects (hereinafter “HSRW PhD Grant”). Researchers are eligible to apply for a HSRW PhD Grant if they meet the requirements set forth in these guidelines. These requirements serve to ensure that grants are awarded for PhD research which demonstrates a high degree of originality and contemporary relevance.

The HSRW PhD Grant is intended to provide financial support and promote the professional development of young researchers as well as research staff and fixed-term lecturers (LfbA) at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. The grant is not intended to fund PhD projects which have been running six months or more at the time of application.

1. Call for applications

Calls for grant applications shall be published openly, in particular on the website of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

2. Application deadlines, start of funding period

Application periods shall end at noon on 1 February and 1 August, respectively.

The funding period shall begin on 1 April or 1 October in the current calendar year. If, for personal reasons, a grant must be accepted at a later date, the funding period will be shortened accordingly.

3. Eligibility

Researchers who distinguish themselves through the excellence of their work are eligible to apply. Excellence is demonstrated, as a rule, by a postgraduate degree with honours or other distinction entitling the holder to embark on a doctorate.

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is committed to promoting women in the sciences. As such, the University expressly welcomes and calls for applications from female candidates. In accordance with the Gender Equality Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (Landesgleichstellungsgesetz NRW), in the event of equal suitability, aptitude and professional experience, female candidates will be given preferential consideration over male candidates for vacancies in those areas where women are underrepresented, provided there are no overriding reasons for giving preference to a specific male candidate. In the event of equal suitability, preferential consideration will also be given to disabled candidates or candidates recognised as such by virtue of Section 2 (3) of the German Code of Social Law, Book IX (SGB IX). The Equal Opportunity Officer and Disability Officer must be involved in the selection process.

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences funds the HSRW PhD Grant from its own financial resources. Accordingly, a core requirement for the awarding of the grant is that the proposed PhD research must be conducted at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Grants are approved for no more than three years. An evaluation is conducted every 12 months in order to determine the progress of the project and the extent to which the conditions and obligations in these guidelines have been met to-date. The Executive Board shall then decide on the continuation of funding, acting on suggestions made by the Commission

for Research and Knowledge Transfer. A negative evaluation may result in premature termination of grant funding.

The number of available grants and the extent of funding depend on the availability of financial resources at the time of awarding and on the results of the selection process. The University strives to award two scholarships per year.

4. Selection process

The Selection Committee, which consists of the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer, the Equal Opportunity Officer and the Disability Officer, is responsible for selecting and suggesting to the Executive Board suitable candidates for receiving the HSRW PhD Grant. The Executive Board decides on the actual awarding of the grant. Candidates are selected according to academic criteria. Candidates' eligibility must be established by outstanding achievements in academics or research. In the case of research staff and fixed-term lecturers (LfbA) of the University, applicants may be required to conduct preliminary research into the proposed concept. The proposed research concept must be coordinated with the responsible supervising professor at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Recommendations for funding are ultimately based on the application documents, which must be submitted on time to the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer via the Centre for Research, Innovation and Transfer (ZFIT) at forschung@hochschule-rhein-waal.de, as well as on an optional, face-to-face discussion between the candidate and the Selection Committee.

5. Application requirements

Applications must include the following:

- Official application form for the HSRW PhD Grant
- CV
- Letter of motivation clearly indicating the applicant's excellent achievements which qualify him or her for the grant
- Credentials, in particular undergraduate and postgraduate degrees
- PhD project proposal (max. 16 pages including images), containing a comprehensive technical description, project objectives and information on the following:
 - Current state of research
 - Preliminary research conducted by the applicant
 - Work plan and timetable indicating important milestones and project objectives
 - Planned publications and conference visits
 - Resource planning and budget
- A statement from the supervising professor at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences addressing the project's feasibility in terms of objectives and timetable, and additionally a document confirming the availability of the required resources. Furthermore, the statement of the supervising professor must also document the following points (for more information, see the separate form "Supervising Professor's Statement"):

- Workplace (where the research will work while on campus; letter of confirmation required from the Dean of the involved faculty)
- Assurance of the availability of the required research equipment
- Professional opinion on the proposed work plan and timetable
- Professional opinion on the candidate's personal aptitude and expertise
- Confirmation of supervision from a professor at a cooperating university legally entitled to confer doctorates (i.e. a binding statement on the requirements for receiving the doctorate, including timeframe and the PhD regulations of the involved faculty at the cooperating university)

Applications must be submitted in both hard copy and by email (as a single PDF file) to the Centre for Research, Innovation and Transfer (ZFIT) for forwarding to the chair of the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer.

6. Grant approval

The aim of the HSRW PhD Grant is to provide individual financial support to grant holders at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences in order to encourage and generate high quality research.

Notices of approval or rejection shall be sent to each applicant. There is no legal entitlement to receive a grant.

Grants shall be awarded for a period of three (3) years, with each successive year of funding dependent on an annual report submitted to the Selection Committee for evaluation. Additional obligations for the grant holder are established by Section 10.

7. Formal status of grant holders

The HSRW PhD Grant does not constitute an employment relationship with Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Grants awarded to persons exiting an employment relationship with Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences require special justification (i.e. the proposed PhD project). In addition, there must be a clear delineation between the period of employment and the grant period in that no tasks constituting work for Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences are requested or performed during the grant period. Grants cannot be awarded in order to prolong an employment relationship with the University which would otherwise cease of its own accord.

The HSRW PhD Grant is not subject to any German social security deductions, as it is not considered remuneration within the meaning of Section 14 of the German Code of Social Law, Book IV (SGB IV). Furthermore, the grant is considered tax-exempt by virtue of Section 3, No. 44 of the German Income Tax Act (EStG).

8. Research supervision

Each grant holder is supervised by a professor of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Grant holders work closely with their supervising professor by providing regular updates on the status of their research and receiving extensive feedback and guidance to ensure that the PhD project proceeds according to plan and schedule.

Grant awardees are strongly advised to enrol with Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as PhD candidates.

9. Funding amount

The HSRW PhD Grant is awarded for no more than three years and consists of a monthly stipend of

1,200.00 EURO

paid out at the middle of each month.

10. Obligations of grant holders

By accepting a HSRW PhD Grant, grant holders are obliged to undertake the following:

- Dedicate most of their time to PhD research. Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences assumes that grant holders will work no more than ten (10) hours per week in a separate job subject to social security deductions. In exceptional cases and where justified, special permission can be granted to work up to 19.95 hours per week in a job subject to social security deductions.
- Spend at least half of the funding period in the facilities of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.
- Present an annual progress report (before the appropriate deadline in Section 2), both in writing and orally, which details in particular the interim research findings. The written report must be submitted by email to ZFIT. This report, its oral presentation and an accompanying statement of the supervising professor of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences serve as the basis for the decision to continue funding. Eventual changes to prevailing conditions, the work plan or the timetable must be explained separately in writing and attached to the progress report. The annual progress report must explicitly address the milestones and objectives outlined in the technical description of the project. Failure to achieve proposed milestones or objectives must be explained in a detailed and differentiated manner. Non-compliance with this obligation may result in revocation of the grant.
- Publish the results of research which was funded by the grant, with explicit reference to Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as funding provider.
- Hold a presentation of the PhD project on Research Day of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

The grant holder is further obliged to inform Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences if:

- the PhD project is suspended, altered, cancelled or concludes prematurely, or
- the originally submitted project timetable is in jeopardy.

11. Miscellaneous

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences reserves the right to:

- revoke grant offers in part or in full in accordance with §§ 48 ff. of the Administrative Procedures Act (VwVfG), as amended.
- retroactively revoke grant offers in part or in full for good reason. Good reason exists where the grant holder has used funds for unauthorised purposes or has not fulfilled obligations associated with the grant. In this case, the grant must be paid back in full to Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

- revoke a grant in part or in full in the event that the PhD project does not begin at the agreed-upon schedule.
- revoke a grant in part or in full in the event that the PhD project is suspended, altered or cancelled;
- adjust or supplement these guidelines with future effect.