

Awarding Guidelines

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

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This English translation is offered for information purposes only.

Every effort has been made to render a true and authentic translation. Only the original German-language version published in the Official Notices of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is, however, legally binding.

In the event of discrepancy or doubt between the German original and this English translation, the German version takes precedence.

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Preamble

The Executive Board of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, acting on suggestions of the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (HSRW), shall award research grants for PhD projects (“HSRW PhD Grant”) on the basis of these guidelines. Researchers are eligible to apply for a HSRW PhD Grant if they meet the requirements defined in these guidelines. These requirements ensure that grants are awarded for PhD research demonstrating a high degree of originality and contemporary relevance.

The HSRW PhD Grant is intended to provide financial support and promote the professional development of early-career researchers, including research staff (“WiMis”) and fixed-term lecturers (“LfbA”) employed 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 are public and announced in particular on the website of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

2. Application Deadlines, Begin of Funding Period

Applications must be submitted in designated application phases ending at noon on 1 March and 1 September, respectively.

Funding periods begin on 1 May or 1 November of the current calendar year. If a grant must be accepted at a later date for personal reasons, the funding period will be shortened accordingly.

3. Eligibility

Researchers who distinguish themselves through the excellence of their work are eligible to apply. As a rule, this is demonstrated by a graduate degree with an excellent academic record that entitles the holder to begin a doctorate.

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is committed to the advancement of women in the sciences. Female researchers are expressly welcomed and encouraged to apply. Pursuant to 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 in areas where women are under-represented, unless reasons specific to an individual (male) candidate tilt the balance. In the event of equal suitability, preferential consideration will also be given to candidates with a severe disability or equivalent persons as defined by Section 2 (3), Volume IX of the German Code of Social Law, Book IX (SGB IX). The Equal Opportunity Officer and the Disability Information 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 a period of no more than three years. A follow-up evaluation is conducted every 12 months to verify the progress of the project and the extent to which the

conditions and obligations in these guidelines have been met. The Executive Board shall then decide whether to continue funding based on the suggestion of the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer. A negative evaluation may result in grant termination.

The availability of grants and funding amounts depends on the University's available financial resources at the time of awarding and on the results of the selection process. The aim is to award two scholarships per year.

4. Selection Process

The Selection Committee, which includes the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer, the Equal Opportunity Officer and the Disability Information Officer, is responsible for selecting and suggesting to the Executive Board suitable candidates for 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 academic or research achievements. In addition, applicants who are research staff or fixed-term lecturers at the University may be required to demonstrate that they have conducted preliminary research for their proposal. Proposals must be coordinated with and approved by a supervising professor at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Candidates are recommended to the Executive Board on the basis of their applications, which must be submitted online (see Section 5). In some cases, an additional, face-to-face discussion with the Selection Committee may be required.

5. Application Process

Applications must include the following:

- Official application form
- CV
- Letter of motivation which clearly indicates the applicant's excellent achievements qualifying him or her for grant funding
- Diplomas and transcripts, particularly at the graduate level
- PhD project proposal (maximum 10 pages including images), containing a full technical description, project objectives and information on the following:
 - Current state of research on this front
 - The applicant's preliminary research
 - Work plan and timetable covering important milestones and project objectives
 - Planned publications and conference visits
 - Budget and resource plan
- A statement from the supervising professor at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences addressing the feasibility of the project's objectives and timetable, and additionally a document confirming the availability of the required resources. This statement from the supervising professor must also document the following points (for more information, see the separate form "PhD Grant Statement"):
 - Office (where the researcher will be on campus; verifying letter from the faculty with the Dean's confirmation is required)

- 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
- Written confirmation of supervision from a professor at the cooperating university (i.e. a "Universität" in Germany entitled to confer doctorates) which will be awarding the PhD (binding information on the requirements for conferral of the doctorate, including time frame, PhD regulations of the faculty at the cooperating university).

Application documents must be submitted online (as a single PDF file) to the Centre for Research, Innovation and Transfer (ZFIT). In addition, the following documents must be submitted, in writing, to ZFIT: (1) the official application form, (2) the statement from the supervising professor at HSRW and (3) the accompanying letter from the faculty with the Dean's confirmation. ZFIT will check submitted applications for completeness and forward them to the chair of the Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer.

6. Grant Approval

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

Applicants shall be notified of the approval or rejection of their application in writing. There is no legal entitlement to receive the HSRW PhD Grant.

The HSRW PhD Grant is awarded for a period of three (3) years, with each successive year of funding dependent on an annual report submitted to the Selection Committee. Additional obligations for grant holders 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 who are exiting an employment relationship with Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences require special justification (i.e. a doctorate). In this case, there must be a clear delineation between the employment and grant periods such that no work for Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is requested or performed during the grant period. Grants cannot be awarded 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 social security obligations, as it is not considered a wage within the meaning of Section 14 of Book IV of the German Code of Social Law (SGB IV). The HSRW PhD Grant is considered tax-exempt by virtue of Section 3, No. 44 of the German Income Tax Act (EStG).

8. Supervision

Each grant holder must be supervised by a professor of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Grant holders work closely with their supervising professor by providing regular research updates and receiving extensive feedback and guidance to ensure that the holder's doctoral studies proceed according to plan and schedule.

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

9. Funding

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

1,200.00 EURO

that is transferred 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 and justified cases, grant holders may request (in writing to ZFIT) special permission 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 on campus at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.
- Present, in writing and orally, an annual progress report (before the relevant deadline in Section 2) detailing, 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 made possible by grant funding, with explicit reference to Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as the funding provider.
- Present the PhD project in a talk held 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 concluded prematurely, or
- the originally submitted project timetable is in jeopardy.

11. Miscellaneous

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

- revoke grant approval in part or in full in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (VwVfG), as amended, from Section 48 onwards.
- retroactively revoke grant approval 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 the University.

- revoke a grant in part or in full in the event that the PhD project does not begin at the agreed-upon point in time.
- revoke a grant in part or in full in the event that the PhD project is suspended, altered or cancelled.
- amend or adapt these guidelines with future effect.