

CALL FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR STUDY SOJOURNS IN FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES BY TRAINEE RESEARCHERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY (UPV/EHU) AND FOR STUDY SOJOURNS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY BY TRAINEE RESEARCHERS FROM FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES ENGAGED IN A JOINTLY SUPERVISED DOCTORAL THESIS (2020)

The internationalisation of PhD studies and the increasing popularity of international joint supervision of doctoral theses constitute the main pillars of action of the University of the Basque Country's Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies, as stipulated in the UPV/EHU Strategic Plan for Postgraduate Studies.

The aim is to foster excellence in researcher training schemes, by increasing international mobility, establishing international networks and attracting talent.

It also encourages collaboration between thesis supervisors from the UPV/EHU and prestigious researchers from other universities who may contribute new perspectives and approaches to the PhD thesis supervision process.

RULES

1.- LEGAL PROVISIONS AND TOTAL SUM

Article 38.3 of Act 3/2004, of 25 February, on the Basque University System, states that universities may establish their own system of grants, credits and study scholarships.

According to article 16 of the University of the Basque Country Statutes, said University may seek to promote teaching conditions and complementary offers aimed at fostering the personal development of its students, their comprehensive training, collaboration in R&D activities within the university itself, entities set up by it or entities in which it has a shareholding, complementary practical training, social inclusion and access to the labour market. To this end, therefore, the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) shall establish a broad-ranging system of grants and scholarships.

The sum earmarked for this call for grant applications is €60,000, charged to the budget of the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies.

This sum may be modified in accordance with the total sum of the grants requested and the availability of funds in the budget.

If the total amount available is not used, any surplus shall be earmarked for actions aimed at fostering the internationalisation of UPV/EHU postgraduate degrees.

2.- AIM OF THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

This call for applications aims to award:

- 4 grants for study sojourns in foreign universities by students from the UPV/EHU; and
- 5 grants for students from foreign universities, with the aim of facilitating jointly supervised doctoral theses within the framework of UPV/EHU Doctoral Programmes.

The grants are designed to enable maximum stays of 9 months.

3.- GRANT TYPES

Students may apply for a type A or type B grant, depending on their situation (i.e. whether or not they have a contract).

TYPE A. - Grants awarded to PhD students without a contract

Grants are designed to cover a maximum stay of 9 months, with a total sum of €800 a month. If the stay is shorter, then the proportional part of the grant will be paid according. Travel expenses are paid in accordance with the distance travelled:

From 100 to 499 km: €200

From 500 to 1,999 km: €300

From 2,000 to 2,999 km: €350

From 3,000 to 3,999 km: €500

From 4,000 to 7,999 km: €900

8,000 km or more: €1,200

TYPE B. - Grants awarded to PhD students with a contract

A single, complementary grant of €3,500 may be awarded to trainee researchers for a 9-month stay. If the stay is shorter, the proportional part thereof shall be awarded, providing it is compatible with the PhD student's contract.

In the event of one of the grants (either outgoing or incoming) not being awarded, it shall be transferred to another applicant in accordance with the order established in the waiting list.

In the event of some grants not being awarded, more than one grant may be awarded to the same doctoral programme.

4.- REQUISITES THAT MUST BE FULFILLED BY ALL APPLICANTS

Any trainee researcher from the UPV/EHU or any foreign university which has signed a Joint Supervision agreement with the UPV/EHU or has had said agreement approved by the UPV/EHU Postgraduate Commission and its counterpart at the other university, is eligible to apply for this grant.

Applicants must be enrolled on a PhD course at the UPV/EHU and the foreign university prior to the end of the deadline for submitting applications.

5.- SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

5.1 **Submission period.** Applications may be submitted from 24 February 2020, the date upon which this call for applications is published on the website indicated in section 6, up until 31 March, 2020.

5.2. **Address.** Applications should be sent with all the necessary documents to the UPV/EHU's Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies, at the following address:

SECCIÓN DE MÁSTER Y DOCTORADO
(UNIDAD DE CONVOCATORIAS Y AYUDAS)
AULARIO II
CAMPUS UNIVERSITARIO
48940 – LEIOA (BIZKAIA)

Applications may also be submitted to any of the UPV/EHU General Register offices, which are specified in Appendix I of the UPV/EHU Governing Board Agreement of 16 May, 2012, approving the Organisation and Operating Rules of the General Register and the Creation of an Electronic Register for the UPV/EHU (Basque Country Official Gazette of 18 June, 2012), or where appropriate, article 16.4 of Act 39/2015 on the Common Administrative Procedure for Public Administrations.

5.3 Documents.

- a) Application form (document 1).
- b) National ID card/Passport.
- c) Curriculum Vitae.
- d) Academic Record Certificate for acceptance onto the PhD course. This is not required if the degree was studied at the UPV/EHU after 1988.
- e) Photocopy of the enrolment slip from the two universities.
- f) The specific joint supervision agreement between the foreign university and the UPV/EHU, or alternatively, a document attesting to the date upon which said agreement was approved by the UPV/EHU Postgraduate Commission and its counterpart at the foreign university (i.e. the commission responsible for approving the agreement).
- g) Working plan for the study sojourn at the foreign university or the UPV/EHU, along with a declaration of interest for the stay in relation to the research work being carried out for the PhD, signed by the PhD student and his or her supervisor at the foreign university and the UPV/EHU.
- h) Curriculum Vitae of the supervisors from the two universities.

6.- NOTIFICATION AND PUBLICATION

All documents and information regarding this Call for Grant Applications, as well as notification of the decisions made, shall be published on the following website:

<http://www.ehu.eus/en/web/estudiosdeposgrado-graduondokoikasketak/doktorego-bekak-etaguntzak>

Applicants should also provide an e-mail address on their application forms. This address will be used for individual communications and to notify applicants (among other things) of the deadline for correcting their application in the event of failure to submit all the necessary documents, as outlined in section 5.

7.- ASSESSING GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Grant Department shall send the applications received to the heads of the doctoral programmes at the UPV/EHU. The Academic Commissions of the various doctoral programmes will then assess the applications on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) Academic record (50%)
- b) Curriculum Vitae (20%)
- c) The Working Plan for the proposed sojourn at the foreign university or the UPV/EHU, respectively (30%)

Based on the above criteria, the Academic Commission of each programme shall assess the applications. They shall then notify the UPV/EHU Postgraduate Commission of the name of the candidates they propose for receiving each type of grant, if applications were received for both.

Once the successful applications have been selected, they are sent to the Master's and Doctoral Section (Grants Department) for submission to a Mixed Commission made up by two members of the UPV/EHU Postgraduate Commission and one member of the Master's and Doctorate School.

The Mixed Commission shall assess the applications selected previously by the Academic Commissions of the doctoral programmes in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) The Curriculum Vitae of the two supervisors from the two universities (50%)
- b) The num. of international theses defended in the doctoral programme over the last five years (10%).
- c) The num. of PhD students on the doctoral programme who have engaged in foreign study sojourns over the last five years (10%).
- d) The location of the applicant's university of origin in international rankings, preferably the Shanghai Ranking (30%).

8.- AWARDING THE GRANTS

The Mixed Commission shall assess the applications and issue a report to the UPV/EHU Postgraduate Commission for approval.

9.- DECISION

In accordance with point 1, num. 1.3 of the Resolution dated 25 January 2017, issued by the Vice Chancellor of the University of the Basque Country regarding the structure and layout of the operating areas of its governing team and the delegation of authority, grants shall be awarded by means of a Decision issued by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies shall make the final decision and publish the result within a maximum period of 60 working days from the deadline for application submission. Decisions shall be published on the university's website, as outlined in section 5.3 of this call for grant applications. For the purposes of this call for applications, August is considered a non-working month.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor's decision may be contested by means of the following appeals:

- a) A voluntary **appeal for reconsideration**, authorised by article 123 of Act 39/2015 of 1 October. This appeal must be lodged with the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Basque Country within 1 month from the day following receipt of notification. Said appeal shall be deemed to have been dismissed if the appellant receives no notification within 1 month from the date the appeal was lodged, with no notification of the express resolution being required in this case.
- b) A direct **contentious administrative appeal** lodged with the Administrative Appeals Court in Bilbao, within the space of 2 months following the day after the decision is published on the website indicated in section 5.3, in accordance with that stipulated in article 6.4 of Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December on Universities, and in articles 8.3 and 14.1, rule one, of the current Law governing Administrative Jurisdiction, dated 13 July 1998.

10.- CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GRANTS AND RULES FOR GRANTEES

10.1 When the grant is awarded, the grantee must present the following documents:

- a) The specific joint supervision agreement between the UPV/EHU and the foreign university, in the event that this agreement was not submitted during the initial application.
- b) A legal statement attesting that the grantee knows of no circumstance that deems them ineligible for receiving the grant (document 2).
- c) Individual declaration of acceptance of both the grant itself and the conditions and obligations for receipt outlined in the call for applications (document 3).
- d) Bank details: bank name, branch and account number into which the money should be paid, along with the BIC/SWIFT number (document 4.1 y 4.2).

e) A certificate issued by the Organisation/Faculty/Centre/Institute responsible for the sojourn attesting to the start of research activities (document A) (this must be requested by the grantee).

f) Once the sojourn has been completed, the grantee should request another certificate from the Organisation/Faculty/Centre/Institute responsible for the sojourn attesting to the completion of the research activities (document B).

10.2. All students under 28 years of age who are enrolled on an official course are covered by school insurance.

The UPV/EHU also has its own accident insurance (*Seguro EHU Ihasle Asegurua*) which covers all students enrolled at the university throughout Spain.

10.3 The awarding of the grant implies no contractual relationship between the grantee and the UPV/EHU.

10.4 By accepting this grant, the grantee undertakes to dedicate 35 hours a week to the activities outlined in the Working Plan. Said activities shall be overseen by the thesis supervisor from the UPV/EHU or the thesis supervisor at the foreign university, as appropriate.

10.5 The sum of type A grants shall be used to cover travel costs and living expenses during the 9-month period (or, under exceptional circumstances, a shorter period), according to the terms stipulated in rule 3.

Researchers who have a predoctoral training contract must undertake to check whether it is compatible with the grant being awarded, with the University of the Basque Country accepting no responsibility in the event of the grantee violating the terms and conditions of said contract.

10.6 TYPE A) The grant shall be paid in two instalments. The first (80% of the awarded sum) shall be paid upon the grantee's arrival at the foreign university or the UPV/EHU and the second (the remaining 20%) three months later, once the grantee has begun their research work.

TYPE B) The complementary grant for trainee researchers, established in accordance with the terms outlined in rule 3, will be paid in a single instalment.

To enable the payment of both instalments the grantee must have submitted the documents specified in point 10.1, with the exception of the document referred to in section 10.1 f), which must be submitted once the sojourn has been completed.

The trip must be made within one calendar year of the awarding of the grant, otherwise the proffered sum will be withdrawn.

10.7 Being a grantee does not exempt students from paying the public prices established for official or university-specific degree courses.

10.8 Grantees must have guaranteed access to the University's General Services and be permitted to use all the infrastructures and material pertaining to the research group of which they form part. They shall also have guaranteed access to and use of the research resources belonging to the Department, or where appropriate the Centre in which the group carries out its research activities, under the conditions established in each separate case.

10.9 Students may have their status as grantees withdrawn for the following reasons:

- a) Relinquishment.
- b) Revocation due to failure to comply with obligations or due to a change in the conditions taken into account during the awarding process.
- c) Unforeseen incompatibility.

The occurrence of circumstances b) or c) will result in the processing of a case file, during which an audience will be held with the interested party in accordance with that stipulated in Act 39/2015, of 1 October, governing the Common Administrative Procedure for Public Administrations.

10.10 Students who have previously been awarded a grant of either type are not eligible for a second grant.

11.- LEGAL SYSTEM

Anything not specified in the rules of this call for grant applications shall be governed by the General Subsidies Act 38/2013, of 17 November and Royal Decree 887/2006, of 21 July, which approves its regulations; Title VI of Legislative Decree 1/1997, of 11 November, on Subsidies; Decree 698/1991, of 17 December; current Management Regulations for Doctoral Degrees offered by the University of the Basque Country; and Act 39/2015, of 1 October, governing the Common Administrative Procedure for Public Administrations.

12.- APPEALS

A voluntary appeal for reconsideration may be lodged with the Vice-Chancellor against the decision to accept or reject a grant application, within one month following the date on which the decision is published on the website indicated in section 6. Alternatively, a contentious administrative appeal may be lodged directly with the administrative appeals court within a period of two months from said date.

Leioa, 21 February, 2020