



# Doing your PhD in the Netherlands

## Why do your PhD in the Netherlands?



1. **The Netherlands has a large variety of research fields.**
2. **There are 14 research universities where you can apply for a PhD.**
3. **World-class research: 10 Dutch research universities are ranked in the top 200 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022.**
4. **In the Netherlands, PhD candidates and their supervisors work in close collaboration.**
5. **The Netherlands provides mostly paid employment contracts for PhD candidates.**
6. **A Dutch PhD is highly regarded.**

### What is it like to do a PhD in The Netherlands?

Doing a PhD involves conducting original research and writing a dissertation in a minimum of four years. Once the research is complete, the supervisor judges whether the dissertation is ready for oral defence and publication. Next, a committee of professors is appointed to read and approve the dissertation and to question the candidate during a public oral defence. The dissertation will be published and parts of it will often be used as articles in international journals. In general, Dutch dissertations are held in high esteem, since they live up to the highest academic standards.

### Where are PhDs offered?

In the Netherlands, research is conducted at research universities, research institutes and companies. Only the 14 research universities can award PhDs. However, since research institutes generally work in close collaboration with these universities, they can also provide positions to PhD candidates. You can find an overview of the Dutch research universities at [www.studyinnl.org/dutch-education/research-universities](http://www.studyinnl.org/dutch-education/research-universities).

Most PhD positions are advertised on job boards and networking platforms, such as [www.academictransfer.com](http://www.academictransfer.com) and [www.euraxess.nl](http://www.euraxess.nl), but also in scientific journals and on notice boards at other institutions. If you see a PhD position that interests you, contact the institution directly about the application procedure.

### Research schools and graduate schools

All PhD candidates join a graduate school or research school. Research schools are partnerships between multiple research universities and research institutes, while graduate schools are organisational units within universities. Both provide an inspirational research environment, offering tailor-made study programmes, masterclasses, seminars and conferences.

# The practical side of doing your PhD



## Admission requirements

PhD positions in the Netherlands are of high quality. Therefore, candidates have to meet high standards. It is important that candidates begin their research with a solid background in the theory and methods of their field as well as a recognised master's degree. Satisfactory knowledge of English is another requirement. Proof of English language skills will be required before work on the dissertation can begin. With these considerations in mind, the individual institution will determine whether to admit a candidate.

## Tuition fees

Some Dutch institutions charge tuition fees for enrolment and supervision. Each institution has its own way of charging for the cost of supervision and access to laboratories and other facilities. Fees also vary from one discipline to the next, depending on aspects such as whether or not expensive equipment is required.

## Euraxess

At [www.euraxess.nl](http://www.euraxess.nl) you can find all sorts of practical information for researchers (including PhD candidates) who are looking to come to the Netherlands. You can read about immigration procedures, social security, taxation, health insurance, etc. If you need an entry visa, you are advised to contact your institution to find out what to do in your particular situation. After your PhD, you are eligible for an 'orientation year' permit, during which you can look for a job in the Netherlands. Visit [www.studyinnl.org/after-your-studies/working-after-your-studies](http://www.studyinnl.org/after-your-studies/working-after-your-studies) for more information.

# Funding your PhD position



In the Netherlands, there are generally three ways to fund your PhD position:

## I. Employed by an institution

Of the total number of PhD candidates in the Netherlands, the majority have an employment contract with the institution where they conduct their research.

## II. Fellowship or grant

About 1 in 6 PhD candidates in the Netherlands are not employed by the institution, but fund their PhD position through a fellowship or grant. If you want to use this option, there are two things you need to arrange:

1. Find yourself a fellowship or grant at [www.euraxess.nl/fellowships-grants](http://www.euraxess.nl/fellowships-grants) or at [www.studyinnl.org/scholarships](http://www.studyinnl.org/scholarships).
2. Find yourself a supervisor at an institution willing to support you. You can direct your inquiry to the central information office, which can provide information about the opportunities available at the research university or institute in question. The best way to find a supervisor - with a leading reputation - is through international networks in your field. Your own professors and their networks can be a good source of information.

## III. Sponsored by your employer

Sometimes it is possible to obtain a PhD next to a part-time or full-time job. If you (and your employer) are interested in this option, contact the institution of your choice for more information.

