

APPROVED
Senate of Riga Stradiņš University
Minutes No. 2-S-1/6/2025
10.06.2025

Riga Stradiņš University
Regulation on the Selection, Implementation and Monitoring of DOCTORAL grants

1. General conditions

1. The Regulation on Selection, Implementation and Monitoring of Doctoral Research Grants (hereinafter referred to as the Regulation) has been prepared on the basis of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 811 of 19th December 2023 on the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 1.1.1.8. “Doctoral Grants” and the project “Doctoral Grants of Riga Stradiņš University” No. 1.1.1.8/1/24/I/005 (hereinafter referred to as the Project).
2. Doctoral grant candidates are students of doctoral study programmes of Riga Stradiņš University (hereinafter – RSU) and candidates for the Doctorate of Science degree at RSU and LASE (hereinafter - Doctoral Student).
3. Project partner – a scientific institution or another higher education institution that ensures the Doctoral Student’s involvement in studies or scientific research work (hereinafter – project partner).
4. The Regulation define the procedure for the Doctoral Student to apply for a Doctoral Grant at RSU or at the project partner.
5. Doctoral grant is a targeted funding to be obtained in a competitive procedure for the doctoral student's research related to the successful development of the doctoral study process, doctoral thesis or doctoral theoretical research and artistic creativity at RSU of at the project partner.
6. Doctoral students whose thesis topic contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the Latvian Smart Specialisation Strategy and the development of specialisation areas are eligible for the Doctoral grant:
 - 6.1.Knowledge-intensive bioeconomy;
 - 6.2.Biomedicine, medical technologies and bio-pharmacy;
 - 6.3.Smart materials, technologies and engineering systems;
 - 6.4.Smart energy and mobility;
 - 6.5.Information and communication technologies;
 - 6.6.Doctoral students in social sciences and humanities whose thesis topics are interdisciplinary and contribute to the development of the specialisation areas mentioned in the Latvian Smart Specialisation Strategy.
7. Doctoral grant is implemented on the basis of an employment contract, in accordance with the unit cost methodology agreed by the Ministry of Education and Science, up to a maximum of 50% of the full-time workload for work at RSU or project partner.

8. Doctoral grant consists of:
 - 8.1. remuneration of the doctoral student for carrying out studies or scientific research work at RSU or at the project partner for 50% of the full-time workload is EUR 1300.00 per month, including the employer's compulsory state social insurance contributions.
 - 8.2. Research costs for doctoral student are EUR 500.00 per month or EUR 6000.00 for the full term of 12 months:
 - 8.2.1. Costs of purchasing research materials, technology rights and outsourcing;
 - 8.2.2. Training costs;
 - 8.2.3. Networking costs, including travel, conference participation fees and costs of participation in outreach events, and publicity costs for the research.
9. Research costs are determined as unit costs in accordance with the methodology for calculating and applying standard unit costs developed by the Ministry of Education and Science, which stipulates that the unit cost of a doctoral student's research is one calendar month worked by the doctoral student at 50% of full-time employment, and the unit rate is EUR 500 per month. If the workload is less than 50%, the unit rate is not applied and the costs are not allocated.
10. A doctoral student cannot apply for funds to cover research costs if their workload in the project is less than 50% of full-time employment.
11. When implementing a doctoral grant, the doctoral student is involved in other research and development work related to the topic of their doctoral thesis at RSU or at the cooperation partner, or is employed in other work related to doctoral studies, ensuring an additional workload of at least 25% of a full-time workload.
12. The doctoral student agrees on the additional 25% workload at RSU or with the cooperation partner with the relevant structural unit or project scientific supervisor and provides information on the planned involvement when submitting the application.
13. The minimum term of the doctoral grant is 12 full months.
14. If the project funding allows, the term of the Doctoral Grant Implementation Agreement may be extended for those Doctoral Students who have fulfilled the Work Plan/Work Assignment specified in the first Doctoral Grant Implementation Agreement and if, at the time of signing the first Doctoral Grant Agreement, the Doctoral Student did not comply with Clause 21.2 of the Regulations.
15. In order to extend the doctoral grant agreement, the doctoral student shall submit a final report (Appendix No. 6 to the Regulations), together with the work plan/work assignment (Appendix No. 2 to the Regulations), for the next grant term.
16. To monitor the implementation of doctoral grants and make decisions, RSU shall establish a project council (hereinafter referred to as PC), which shall be approved by order of the RSU Rector. The work of the PC and the implementation of doctoral grants shall be coordinated by the Project Administrative Manager appointed by order of the Rector.
17. Doctoral grants and all related activities are implemented in accordance with the principles of complete equality and fairness, regardless of gender, race, religion, age or other personal characteristics. No discrimination or unequal treatment is permitted.
18. By the end of the doctoral grant, the PC shall decide whether to extend the term of the doctoral grant, assessing the work done in accordance with the final report (Annex No. 6 to the Regulations) and the Work Plan/Work Assignment (Annex No. 2 to the Regulations).

19. In the event of a negative evaluation by the PC, the Doctoral Student shall be entitled to contest it within 5 (five) working days of receiving the decision by submitting a complaint to the Rector.
20. The Rector shall review the complaint within 4 (four) weeks of its receipt and decide, informing the complainant in writing. The Rector's decision may be appealed in accordance with the procedure set out in the RSU Constitution.

2. Conditions of application and competition procedure

21. The following persons may apply for a Doctoral grant:
 - 21.1. Doctoral students whose doctoral thesis topic complies with Clause 6 of the Regulations and who are successfully studying in RSU-accredited doctoral study programmes in paid or state-funded places, either full-time or part-time.
 - 21.2. Candidates for a scientific degree who have successfully completed the theoretical part of RSU or LSPA doctoral study programmes but have not yet defended their doctoral thesis and have not submitted documents for the organisation of the discussion of their doctoral thesis to the RSU Doctoral Department or the Doctoral Council, and who can prepare their doctoral thesis and submit documents for the organisation of the discussion to the RSU Doctoral Department within 12 months.
22. A doctoral student may not simultaneously receive a doctoral grant and state budget remuneration in accordance with an employment contract concluded for the performance of academic work to achieve study results in accordance with the state higher education standard (in accordance with the first part of Article 47.1 of the Higher Education Law). A doctoral student may only receive one type of funding at a time, either a doctoral grant or state budget remuneration for performing academic work as a doctoral student.
23. If a state budget doctoral student with whom an employment contract has been concluded in accordance with the first part of Article 47.1 of the Higher Education Law obtains a doctoral grant through a competition, the doctoral student may be awarded a doctoral grant after the doctoral student has terminated the employment contract for the performance of academic work to achieve study results in accordance with the state higher education standard (in accordance with the employment of doctoral students in state budget-funded study places as specified in the first part of Article 47.1 of the Higher Education Law). In this case, the risk of double funding is eliminated, as the doctoral student receives only a doctoral grant and will not receive state budget remuneration during the implementation of the doctoral grant.
 - 23.1. By terminating the employment contract, the doctoral student does not lose their budget place, as it has been obtained through a competition, and after the conclusion of the doctoral grant employment contract, the doctoral student will be subject to the exception specified in the fourth subparagraph of the third part of Article 47.1 of the AL.
 - 23.2. If a state budget doctoral student with whom an employment contract has not yet been concluded in accordance with the first part of Article 47.1 of the AL obtains a doctoral grant through a competition, then, upon concluding an employment contract within the framework of the Project, the doctoral student will be subject to the exception specified in the fourth subparagraph of the first part of Article 47.1, third part, fourth subparagraph of the AL shall apply to the state-funded doctoral student, thus the doctoral student will not be able to conclude an employment contract for academic work to achieve study results in accordance with the state higher education standard, and he or she will not be paid remuneration from the state budget, but at the same time will retain the state-funded study place obtained through a competition.
24. Doctoral students who have published or received journal approval for publication within the last four years (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025) are eligible to apply for a doctoral grant. for at least one

(1) full-length scientific publication on the topic of their doctoral thesis, which is indexed in the databases listed in Appendix No. 3 to the Regulations.

25. Doctoral students have the opportunity to receive support from the Doctoral Grant after participating in the third round of the 8.2.2. SAM project or the second round of the 5.2.1.1.i. second round project, if the tasks included in the contract with the doctoral student differ (support is not provided for the same work), and the obligations of the previous projects have been fulfilled:¹

25.1. The doctoral student has received support for at least 12 months in the aforementioned projects.

25.2. The doctoral student has fulfilled all the obligations included in the work assignment in accordance with the final report.

26. Doctoral grants are not awarded:

26.1. To doctoral students whose doctoral thesis topics do not comply with Clause 6 and its sub-clauses of the Regulations.

26.2. To doctoral students who have academic debts.

26.3. To doctoral students who are on academic leave, unless the academic leave will end when the doctoral grant work begins.

26.4. Doctoral students implementing a doctoral grant in the second round of the 5.2.1.1.i. project or, at the time of the announcement of the results of this doctoral grant competition, still have a valid doctoral grant agreement concluded in the second round of the 5.2.1.1.i. project.

26.5. The doctoral student has not fulfilled their obligations in the third round of the SAM project or the second round of the ANM project 5.2.1.1.i.

26.6. The doctoral student whose total score in the submitted grant implementation application for the Work Plan/Work Task and publications is less than 5 points.

26.7. A doctoral student whose submitted Work Plan/Work Task Plan is poorly developed, with significant shortcomings, and is awarded 0 points in the PC assessment;

26.8. A candidate for a scientific doctoral degree who does not provide for the fulfilment of sub-clause 21.2 of clause 21 of the Regulations as an achievable result in the plan.

26.9. A candidate for a scientific doctoral degree who has commenced the doctoral process or applied to the RSU Doctoral Department for the organisation of a doctoral thesis discussion.

27. Information about the announcement of the competition and the procedure for submitting documents:

27.1. is published on the RSU website www.rsu.lv and on the Cooperation Partner's website.

27.2. with the support of the Doctoral Department, an informative e-mail about the competition is sent to doctoral students, candidates for a scientific doctoral degree and doctoral programme directors.

27.3. the deadline for submitting documents shall be no less than 10 working days from the date of publication of the competition announcement on the RSU website and the Project Partner's website.

28. When applying for a doctoral grant competition, doctoral students shall submit their applications to the Development and Project Department (hereinafter referred to as APD) in paper format or in electronic format signed with a secure electronic signature and time stamp doktorantugrantsapd@rsu.lv :

¹ Applications will be evaluated based on the work accomplished in the third round of the SAM project in accordance with the submitted final report and the Work Plan/Work Task submitted in the Doctoral Grant application. The PC will assess whether the work mentioned in the Work Plan/Work Task submitted in this Doctoral Grant is complementary and consistent, and whether, by approving the application for the implementation of the Doctoral Grant, the same activities or unfulfilled commitments from the previous EU fund planning period will not be financed.

- 28.1. Application (Appendix No. 1);
 - 28.2. A detailed work plan/work assignment for 12 months (Appendix No. 2), in which the doctoral student and the supervisor(s) of the doctoral thesis confirm with their signatures the accuracy and correctness of the information provided and assume responsibility for the implementation of the plan in the event of approval of the doctoral grant;
 - 28.3. CV together with a list of scientific publications, indicating the title of the publication, DOI and the name of the database in which it is indexed;
 - 28.4. Copies of the supporting documents specified in the evaluation criteria table (Appendix No. 3). If the doctoral student is employed by a cooperation partner, a certificate of employment must be submitted as proof of employment;
 - 28.5. An estimate of planned research expenses (Appendix No. 4), prepared on the basis of the unit cost methodology developed by the Ministry of Education and Science and the research expenses specified therein;
 - 28.6. Degree applicants must submit a confirmation from their thesis supervisor that a period of 12 months is required for the preparation of the thesis (Appendix No. 5);
 - 28.7. If a doctoral student has received support in the third round of the 8.2.2. SAM project and/or the second round of the 5.2.1.1.i. ANM second round project, then the Work Plan/Work Assignment submitted for the previous competition, the Final Report, and an explanation of complementarity and demarcation must be submitted together with the documents.
29. Competition applications are evaluated in three rounds, according to administrative and qualitative criteria:
- 29.1. In the first round, the APD administratively evaluates the compliance of the submitted documents with the competition requirements. Applications that meet all administrative criteria are forwarded for further consideration, i.e. i. if any of the documents specified in clause 28 of the regulations are not attached to the application, it is considered that such a document is missing and the application is rejected, notifying the grant applicant thereof.
 - 29.2. In the second round, the PC, which performs the functions of the Doctoral Grant Award and Monitoring Committee, evaluates the compliance of the documents submitted by doctoral students with clause 6 of the Regulations and its sub-clauses, the application plans submitted by doctoral students, and decides on the results of the competition.
30. If the competition applications receive the same number of points, the application that has received more points for publications shall be approved for the implementation of the grant, but if the number of points for publications is the same, the one that has received a higher rating for the submitted plan shall be approved.
31. If the number of doctoral grant applications submitted is insufficient, the PC may decide to announce a new competition.
32. The results of the competition shall be announced by sending information to the e-mail address indicated in the Application for a Doctoral Grant.
33. Procedure for contesting the results of the competition:
- 33.1. Within five working days from the date of sending the results to the e-mail address indicated in the application for a doctoral grant, the doctoral student has the right to submit a complaint to the RSU Rector, justifying their opinion with explanations and evidence.
 - 33.2. The Rector shall review the complaint within four (4) weeks of receipt and decide, which shall be communicated in writing to the complainant. The Rector's decision may be appealed in accordance with the procedure set out in the RSU Constitution.

3. Conditions of implementation

34. Doctoral grants are implemented in accordance with:
- 34.1. Cabinet of Ministers regulations,
 - 34.2. Regulations,
 - 34.3. Methodology for calculating and applying standard unit costs to cover doctoral research costs under the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 1.1.1. the specific support objective 'Strengthening research and innovation capacity and introducing advanced technologies into the common R&D system' 1.1.1.8. for the implementation of the measure 'Doctoral grants',
 - 34.4. Guidelines for the implementation and monitoring of the horizontal principle 'Equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights' (IDF, IRPVP, PMIF) (2021-2027).
35. Within one month after the approval of the competition results, RSU or the Project Partner shall conclude:
- 35.1. an employment contract for scientific research work with the Doctoral Student for 12 months;
 - 35.2. an agreement on the implementation of the Doctoral Grant.
36. The submitted Work Plan/Work Assignment (Appendix No. 2), upon conclusion of the employment contract for the implementation of the Doctoral Grant, shall be submitted to the project supervising authority as a work assignment for a period of 12 months.
37. The doctoral students work is supervised by the RSU Doctoral Department and the doctoral thesis supervisor in accordance with the procedures set out in the RSU Study Regulations III Doctoral Study Regulations, the Doctoral Department Regulations, other RSU internal regulatory acts and external regulatory acts. The doctoral student implements the plan submitted in the grant application, keeping track of the work performed and the time worked, and is responsible for achieving the planned results.
38. Target to be achieved by 31 December 2029:
- 38.1. National indicator – Number of doctoral students who have received support from the European Regional Development Fund for studies or scientific research work at the project applicant's or project cooperation partner's institution – at least 39, of whom at least 25% have obtained a doctoral degree in science;
 - 38.2. Result indicator – research jobs created in the supported structures – 9.75 (in terms of full-time equivalent).
39. During the implementation of the project, RIS3 indicators are accumulated in each of the RIS3 areas:
- 39.1. internal research and development staff (number);
 - 39.2. publications in Web of Science and SCOPUS (number).
40. When applying for a doctoral grant, the doctoral student undertakes to work for 12 months without any long-term planned absences and to complete the tasks planned in the doctoral grant plan (Appendix No. 2). They also undertake to submit a final report on the doctoral grant (Appendix No. 6). All planned long-term absences must be reported when submitting the application.
41. If the Doctoral Student has discontinued work on the Project due to objective circumstances (e.g., long-term temporary incapacity, pregnancy and maternity leave, childcare or paternity leave) without fulfilling the condition of at least 12 months of employment, or if the total actual employment time in the project (if there have been interruptions in the doctoral student's

involvement and the contract has been extended one or more times) has not reached 12 months, but the doctoral student's planned tasks and results have been achieved at that point, the implementation of the doctoral grant is eligible and approved.

42. If a doctoral student discontinues their studies without completing the doctoral study programme, the employment contract shall be terminated starting from the month following the discontinuation of studies. The doctoral student must submit a written report to the PC on the work done until the interruption of studies and inform the administrative manager of the doctoral grant in writing.
43. If a doctoral student has discontinued their studies or discontinued work on a doctoral grant at their own request, a 12-month employment contract may be concluded with the doctoral student who has received the next highest score in the competition. The decision to conclude the contract shall be taken and approved by the PC.
44. The doctoral student is allocated funding for research costs of EUR 500 per month for the implementation of the grant, including the purchase of materials necessary for research, technology rights protection and outsourcing costs, training costs, and networking activities, including business trips, conference participation fees and costs of participation in informational events. The amount of eligible research costs is determined and the costs are allocated in accordance with the methodology for calculating and applying standard unit costs for covering doctoral research costs under the European Union's cohesion policy programme for 2021-2027.
– 2027 Cohesion Policy Programme 1.1.1. Specific support objective ‘Strengthening research and innovation capacity and introducing advanced technologies into the common R&D system’ 1.1.1.8. Measure ‘Doctoral grants’ implementation:
 - 44.1. Applies to a full calendar month already worked in accordance with the working time record sheet,
 - 44.2. It is possible to apply for an advance payment of up to EUR 1,500.00 (for 3 months), in accordance with the grant implementation workload and research funding amount,
 - 44.3. Before the planned purchase, the Project Administrative Manager must be contacted to agree on the items and the amount for which the purchase is planned.
45. The doctoral student shall ensure compliance with communication and visual identity requirements in all materials (publications, conference presentations, etc.) prepared with grant support, indicating the logo and written reference to RSU or the Cooperation Partner and the source of funding in Latvian or English, in accordance with the ‘EU Funds 2021-2027 and Recovery Fund Communication and Design Guidelines’. The logo and reference will be available to all grant recipients.

4. Work performance monitoring and reporting on results

46. The doctoral students work is supervised by the doctoral thesis supervisor, who approves the monthly work time sheets and content reports submitted to the project administrative manager.
47. Every six months after the conclusion of the employment contract, the doctoral student submits a report on research costs specified in the methodology for one unit for the research, training and networking activities carried out by the doctoral student.
48. The Project Council shall evaluate the Doctoral Student's report on the work done after 6 months and the Final Report.
49. In the event of complications/obstacles or unforeseen circumstances arising during the implementation of the doctoral grant, the doctoral grant applicant, the doctoral thesis supervisor

and/or the head of the structural unit shall inform the Project Administrative Manager and the situation shall be reviewed by the PC.

50. If the doctoral student fails to perform the tasks specified in the employment contract, the doctoral thesis supervisor and/or the head of the structural unit shall inform the project administrative manager thereof, and the information shall be forwarded to the PC, which shall review the doctoral students work and decide whether the doctoral student will continue to work on the implementation of the doctoral grant.
51. No later than two weeks before the expiry of the employment contract, the doctoral student shall submit a final report to the Project Administrative Manager on the work accomplished in the project, which shall be approved by the signatures of the doctoral thesis supervisor(s).
52. The doctoral students work during the grant implementation period shall be evaluated by the PC.

5. Monitoring of Doctoral grants

53. The implementation of doctoral grants, in accordance with the procedures set out in RSU Study Regulations III Doctoral Study Regulations, Doctoral Department Regulations, other RSU internal regulatory acts and external regulatory acts, is supervised by the RSU Doctoral Department, in accordance with the responsibility of the doctoral thesis supervisors for the implementation of the doctoral students work. The implementation of grants within the framework of the project is evaluated by the PC and coordinated by the Project Administrative Manager, who is approved by order of the RSU Rector.
54. The composition of the PC is approved by order of the RSU Rector. The PC shall include experts in the field of science, as recommended by the RSU Vice-Rector for Science and the Dean of the RSU Doctoral Department, and a representative of the Cooperation Partner. Experts in the field of science must meet the following requirements:
 - 54.1. have been granted the rights of an expert by the Latvian Council of Science;
 - 54.2. not be the supervisor of any doctoral student who has applied for the Doctoral Grant Competition.
 - 54.3. have confirmed with their signature that they will observe the confidentiality of the grant application evaluation and that there is no conflict of interest.
55. The duties of the PC are:
 - 55.1. to familiarise themselves with the applications received;
 - 55.2. to assess the compliance of the doctoral thesis topics with the provisions of Clause 6 of the Regulations;
 - 55.3. to decide on the evaluation of the Work Plan/Work Assignment of the received application;
 - 55.4. to decide on the awarding of doctoral grants;
 - 55.5. to evaluate the reports on the work performed by the doctoral student;
 - 55.6. to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the implementation of grants;
 - 55.7. to follow up on the implementation of the tasks planned by the grant recipients.
56. PC meetings shall be convened by the Project Administrative Manager as necessary. The PC has decision-making power if at least 2/3 of its members participate, and decisions are made by a simple majority vote. If the votes are evenly divided, the chair of the PC has the casting vote.
57. PC meetings are protocolled by the Project Administrative Manager.

6. Processing of personal data

58. The processing of personal data in the Doctoral grants process is carried out for the purpose of assessing the applicant's compliance with the requirements of the Regulation, for the conclusion of the agreement, for evaluation, reporting and other administrative purposes.
59. The legal basis for the processing of personal data is Article 6(1)(a), (b), (c) and (f) of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).
60. The following personal data are processed in the process of awarding a doctoral grant:
- 60.1. name, surname, personal identification number, telephone number, email address;
 - 60.2. publications, CV information, education information, and other information required for the award and implementation of the PhD grant;
 - 60.3. study programme, title of the thesis, supervisor of the thesis;
 - 60.4. institution, position.
61. The personal data submitted is accessible to RSU and RSU LASE staff involved in the Doctoral Grant process, including members of the Board. Personal data may be disclosed to investigative and judicial authorities, as well as to the authorities supervising and controlling RSU activities and the Project, to the extent and in accordance with the procedure established by the regulatory enactments.
62. The personal data submitted are stored in accordance with the established retention period and the RSU and RSU LASE file nomenclature.
63. By applying for the Doctoral grant, the applicant confirms his/her consent to the processing of personal data to the extent and in the manner set out in the Regulations.

Annexes:

- 1. Doctoral grant application (Annex 1)
- 2. Doctoral grant work plan (Annex 2)
- 3. Evaluation criteria for Doctoral grant applications (Annex 3)
- 4. Doctoral grant estimate (Annex 4)
- 5. Doctoral grant dissertation deadline statement (Annex 5)
- 6. Doctoral Research Grant Final Report Form (Annex 6)

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