Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences Talent Fund Scheme

With the Talent Fund the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences seeks to foster international exchanges by encouraging talented PhD candidates to conduct research abroad. In exceptional cases, a course abroad can be funded if the PhD candidate provides evidence that a particular course abroad cannot be taken in the Netherlands and is necessary for the progress of the research.

Eligibility

PhD candidates affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (promovendus or visiting PhD candidate during a secondment).

Application

Only the heads of department may submit applications. Talent Funds are not funded post-hoc, meaning they will not be funded if the proposed research visit is already taking place or has already taken place before the funding decision was made.

An application must include the following:
- Evidence that the scheme applies to this PhD candidate (e.g. a copy of Form 1);
- A statement by both the supervisor (first promotor) and the supervisor abroad that they agree with the visit;
- A motivation as to why the PhD candidate is considered talented;
- A statement that the PhD candidate possesses the skills required to successfully complete the work associated with the stay abroad;
- A detailed description of where the PhD candidate will go and for how long;
- A detailed description of how the visit fits into the PhD project;
- A detailed description of how the PhD candidate’s research fits into the visiting departments research;
- A motivation of what kind of expertise/which skills the PhD candidate will acquire abroad that (s)he cannot acquire in the Netherlands;
- A description of other benefits a stay abroad yield;
- A detailed outline of the expected costs.

• The following expenses may be covered by the scheme: travelling and accommodation expenses, costs for visas and insurance that are not covered by Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam’s collective health insurance, and public transport expenses for second class train travel or Economy Class plane tickets.

• The following expenses will not be covered by the scheme: costs associated with conferences visits. PhD candidates have to pay for conferences using their training course budget.

Deadlines for submission

There are submission rounds at six-month intervals in order to distribute resources evenly across the academic year. **Deadlines: 1 May and 1 November** each year.

Submission

Applications must be submitted by mail to pec.fgb@vu.nl and will be assessed by the PhD Education Committee (PEC). On the application form for the Talent Fund, the information outlined under ‘Application’ must be
provided using no more than 1 sheet of A4 paper (min 10pt font-size). In addition, a letter of recommendation from the candidate’s research institute has to be attached.

Assessment
The PEC will assess the submissions within 6 weeks. Three referees appointed by PEC will assess the submitted applications. The PEC will ultimately decide where the Talent Funds will be allocated. The PEC determines the method of assessment and ranking. Assessment criteria include:

- The quality of the work plan for the research to be carried out abroad;
- The extent to which the research abroad fits into research conducted as part of the doctoral thesis/research activities;
- In the case of a course, the degree to which the course will contribute to the doctoral thesis/research activities;
- The added value of a stay abroad;
- The quality of the PhD candidate (based on grades received during degree programmes, quality of publications, CV and performance/work in the PhD programme);
- The quality of the host institution and/or collaboration with that institution;
- The reasonableness of the expenses claimed;
- Talent funds are awarded no more than twice to one PhD candidate;
- Working visits will last at least four weeks.

The PEC will rank applicants each round based on the quality of the candidates and the quality and relevance of the applications. In the case of clear differences, the PEC will decide to award the available funds to the best applications. If the differences are less clear, the PEC may decide to divide the resources between two or more applications. A percentage of the funds will then be allocated. The PEC will announce the decision on behalf of the board.

Applications that have been denied due to insufficient funds can be resubmitted the following round. Applications that have been denied due to lack of quality may only be resubmitted after adjustments have been made. The above is only possible if the goal of the trip has not yet been achieved by the time PEC announces its decision.

A maximum of €5,000,- can be applied for and reimbursed per person. After the funds have been awarded, an advance of no more than 75% of the allocated amount may be provided.

Budget and budget allocation
The Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences consists of five departments. Every department receives talent funds in an amount proportionate to the number of PhD candidates (based on the number of PhD candidates of the last three years). The percentage of PhD candidates per department is equal to the percentage of the Talent Funds budget that is made available to the department for the next three years.

Half of the annual budget is available per submission round. If less than half of the budget is allocated, the remaining budget will be added to next period’s budget. The secretary of the PEC keeps track of the allocated amounts.

Financial accountability
All financial requests for Talent Funds should include the VU cost reference number 2503006. Requests will not be processed if this number is not included on your form.