

KEY INFORMATION TO NEW EDMX DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

Welcome to EDMX. We thank you to take note of the following main points:

Goal of the PhD

The goal of a PhD is to develop skills that qualify you as an independent scientist. You are expected to develop independence, initiative, and critical thinking, and to work constructively, productively and proactively with your thesis director and fellow researchers. In order to accomplish these aims, you should develop and start to lead your own research project and participate in courses and external events to broaden your scientific knowledge and enhance your skills. As will be explained in more detail below, the EDMX will assist you in this process and follow up on your development.

PhD Curriculum

The normal duration of a PhD at EPFL is four years. During this time, you are expected to lead your own research project to success, participate in courses, contribute to teaching assistance, and pass certain examinations and annual reports including your final PhD defense.

- **First Year and Candidacy Examination**

During the first year of your PhD, you are asked to acquire the background knowledge and skills required to independently lead your research project. You will have to take courses to acquire a minimum of 4 credits, attend the mandatory Master course “**MSE-470 “Seminar series on advances in materials” (exam with 2 MS ECTS is optional)**”, prepare a Research Plan, and finally pass the Candidacy Examination, before you are definitely admitted to the EDMX program.

- **Second and Third Year Reporting**

In subsequent years, you will be asked to prepare annual reports and present them to your thesis director and the expert of your candidacy examination and eventually also with the jury president.

- **Final Year and private PhD Defense**

After successfully completing your research project and provided you fulfill certain eligibility criteria (classes, teaching assistance), you will defend your PhD thesis in front of a jury composed of a jury president, your thesis supervisor(s), an EPFL-based expert, and two external scientific experts.

- After submission of the final manuscript, a public PhD defense follows.

Mentoring

Each doctoral program has a pool of professors and MERs who are willing to serve as mentors.

Mentors offer advice and support to Doctoral Candidates in the context of their training. They are the first person of reference for the Doctoral Candidates any time in case of problems with the thesis director or the laboratory. As part of the annual report, mentors meet with the Doctoral Candidates to discuss the progress of their work and their well-being in the laboratory at least once a year.

Within 3 months after enrolment, the doctoral program assigns a mentor from its pool to each doctoral candidate. The Doctoral Candidate can change his/her mentor in consultation with the program director.

The mentor remains anonymous with respect to the thesis director. The Doctoral Candidate can decide if he/she would like to keep this anonymity or not.

EDMX PhD representatives

Doctoral Candidate's representatives are the liaison persons with Doctoral Candidates they represent to the program committee meetings and the doctoral commission meetings - chaired by the Vice-President for Education and gathering all doctoral program directors. They are also encouraged to organize social & scientific events within their doctoral program. In EDMX, there are Gaia De Angelis and Kyle Haas.

EDMX Research Day

Every year, the EDMX representatives organize the EDMX Research Day to promote the excellent research of our Doctoral Candidates in front of the faculty members. Every Doctoral Candidate from the second year will present a poster and Doctoral Candidates may be nominated by their thesis director for an oral presentation on their research activities. Aperos and awards will further enhance that event.

We remain at your disposal for any further information you may need.

Kind regards

Chrystelle Demierre and Anne Kolly
Administrative assistants EDMX