

Regulations for the EPFL PhD Excellence Programme

1 Governance / General

1.1 Purpose

- ¹ These regulations specify the conditions, the call and selection process for the EPFL PhD Excellence Programme (hereafter programme).

1.2 Programme description

- ¹ The programme is funded by philanthropic donors and aims to facilitate the transition of doctoral students from academia to the non-academic sector and to prepare doctoral students for their future, not only as first-class scientists, but also as engaged and active members of society and leaders of tomorrow. This will be achieved by equipping them with the necessary transversal and leadership skills as well as by offering them a unique opportunity to connect with non-academic leaders (including alumni-ae) and to build a network of contacts with industry and institutions.

1.3 Programme Management

- ¹ The programme is managed by the Doctoral School (hereafter EDOC), including the admissions process and delivery of the programme.

2 Admission to the EPFL PhD Excellence Programme

2.1 Eligibility

- ¹ The Programme is limited to doctoral candidates enrolled in a doctoral programme at the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (hereafter EPFL).
- ² Doctoral candidates from any doctoral programme at EPFL may apply provided they are not already following a customised curriculum (such as fellows of EPFLInnovators and EPFLglobalLeaders, or candidates under an inter-institutional agreement).

- ³ The doctoral candidate must have been admitted to the preparation of the thesisⁱ by the time they commence the mandatory training ([art. 3.2.](#)).
- ⁴ The doctoral candidate must have the written approval of their thesis director to participate in the programme.

2.2 Application

- ¹ There will be one deadline per year for the submission of applications. The deadline will be published on the [programme's website](#).
- ² Complete applications must be submitted to EDOC in electronic format via the dedicated [Google Form](#) by the submission deadline.
- ³ EDOC checks the eligibility of candidates and coordinates the selection process.
- ⁴ Doctoral candidates may apply for the programme only once.
- ⁵ EDOC will not consider applications that are incomplete, do not meet the admission requirements or are submitted after the deadline.

2.3 Composition of the application file

- ¹ Applications must contain the following documents:
 - a) a CV of two pages maximum;
 - b) the transcript of Doctoral School credits to date;
 - c) a motivation letter indicating relevant extracurricular activities, if any;
 - d) research publications or patents, if applicable;
 - e) a letter of support by thesis director (using [template](#) provided)
 - f) reference letter from outside academia (e.g. from an internship, or extracurricular activity), if applicable
- ² Applicants are responsible for the accuracy and veracity of the information contained in the documents they submit.
- ³ The EDOC may ask the applicants for any additional information and documents considered useful and pertinent to its decision on the application.

2.4 Selection

- ¹ Applications that meet the formal requirements will be considered by an ad-hoc admissions committee.
- ² The admissions committee is composed of
 - a) a representative of EDOC
 - b) an EPFL professor or senior scientist (maître d'enseignement et de recherche)
 - c) an invited professor or expert from a non-academic sector
 - d) a representative of Mediacom

ⁱ According to Art.8.- "Acceptance for thesis preparation"- of the [Ordinance on the doctorate conferred by the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne](#)

- e) a representative of the Technology Transfer Office
- ³ The evaluation criteria are as follows:
 - a) the level of excellence of the academic achievements of the applicant at the time of the application: academic results and progress in the thesis
 - b) motivation and evidence of the personal commitment of the applicant to pursue a career in the non-academic sector and to contribute to wider society
- ⁴ The admissions committee will rank the written applications based on the evaluation criteria and will invite the top-ranked applicants for an interview.

2.5 Admission

- ¹ The admissions committee accepts or rejects applications based on the evaluation of the written application and, if applicable, the outcome of the interview.
- ² The decision of the admissions committee is final.
- ³ EDOC communicates the decision of the admissions committee to the applicants in writing.
- ⁴ Applicants whose application is accepted by the admissions committee are admitted to the programme subject to [art 2.1 paragraph 3](#).

3 Structure of the EPFL PhD Excellence Programme

3.1 Membership in the EPFL PhD Excellence Programme

- ¹ By accepting a place in the programme, doctoral candidates oblige themselves to complete the mandatory training specified in [art. 3.2](#) as well as to respond to surveys for 5 years after completion of the programme.
- ² Failure to complete the mandatory training leads to loss of membership in the programme.
- ³ Preliminary termination of doctoral studies at EPFL leads to a loss of membership in the programme.

3.2 Mandatory Training

- ¹ The elements of the mandatory training are:
 - a) leadership training of approximately 120 hours.
 - b) training in effective communication of approximately 12 hours.
 - c) transferable skills courses selected from the course list of at least 6 ECTS. The courses are listed on the [programme's website](#). Doctoral candidates must choose at least one course per subject area. Please note that in some doctoral programmes several of these courses also meet the study plan requirements.
 - d) attendance at networking events of approximately 40 hours.

- ² Mandatory training elements a, and b, listed above, must be completed during the first year of the programme, while elements c, and d, will take place throughout the programme.

3.3 Certificate

- ¹ Participants of the programme will be awarded a certificate upon completion of the following requirements:
 - a) proof of having attended and completed the mandatory training elements as specified in [art. 3.2](#)
 - b) a presentation in front of the participants of the programme.

4 Other provisions

4.1 Renouncement or early termination

- ¹ Doctoral candidates who would like to terminate their participation in the programme prematurely must inform the [EDOC](#) immediately in writing stating the reasons.

4.2 Appeals

- ¹ Appeals are only possible in case of procedural issues within 30 days of the notification of the decision concerned.

4.3 Adoption entry into force

- ¹ The present regulations are approved by the Associate Vice Presidency for Postgraduate Education (AVP-PGE) on 10 January 2022.
- ² They shall enter into force on 10 January 2022.