



UZH Doc.Mobility: Guidelines

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1 General

1.1 Preliminary Remark

These guidelines are only valid for the call in spring 2024 (submission deadline 1st March 2024).

If you have any questions regarding writing and submitting the application, please contact the UZH Grants Office at support@research.uzh.ch

1.2 Principle

With the "UZH Doc.Mobility" funding program, the University of Zurich (UZH) enables its doctoral students to spend a research period abroad in order to acquire more in-depth scientific knowledge, to make progress with their doctoral thesis and to expand and strengthen their international network.

"UZH Doc.Mobility" is awarded as a scholarship. Recipients receive a lump sum to cover living and travel expenses and, in exceptional cases, a contribution towards tuition fees. They administer their fellowship themselves and are generally not employed at the UZH for the duration of the fellowship. Payment of the scholarship in several installments is possible and can help to avoid unfavorable taxation of the scholarship.

1.3 Duration and Employment Level

A mobility fellowship is awarded for a minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months.

No applications for extension may be submitted. This also applies if less than twelve months have been granted for an already approved application.

As a rule, grantees work at least 80% for the approved research project. A lower employment level is possible upon justified request. This request has to be submitted in writing together with the other application documents.

1.4 Start of the Fellowship

Applicants indicate on the application form when they would like to start the fellowship. The starting date of the fellowship is the first day of the month in which the supported research stay begins. The end date is the last day of the month in which the research stay takes place.

The earliest possible start of the fellowship is four months after the submission deadline. In the case of a research stay in the USA, experience shows that, due to visa formalities, the start of the stay abroad is possible at the earliest five months after the submission deadline.

The mobility fellowship must start no later than sixteen months after the date of the submission deadline.

A postponement of the originally planned start date is possible, provided that the deadlines specified are met. The UZH Grants Office must be informed of the postponement immediately. An updated confirmation letter from the host institution with the new start and end dates of the mobility fellowship must be submitted before the start of the fellowship.

The mobility fellowships cannot be awarded retroactively.

1.5 Additional funds

Applicants indicate in the application form whether they have applied for funds at any other funding body for the period of the planned stay abroad and whether they have already raised funds at any other funding body for the period of the planned stay abroad. In the case of raising funds at other funding bodies after the deadline of "UZH Doc.Mobility", the applicants are obliged to inform the UZH Grants Office. If the additional funds exceed CHF 15,000 per year, the UZH Grants Office will consider whether a reduction of the "UZH Doc.Mobility" grant is appropriate.

1.6 Research Location Abroad

The mobility fellowship finances the doctoral student's research stay at a host institution abroad. It is possible to split the fellowship between two host sites.

The place of research must be different from the place of education (BA and MA studies). An exception may be granted on request which has to be submitted in writing together with the other application documents.

Applicants who are pursuing a doctorate within the framework of a "Cotutelle de Thèse" (doctorate with simultaneous graduation from two universities) may not choose the Cotutelle partner university as their UZH Doc.Mobility host institution.

1.7 Resubmission

Applicants whose application has been rejected may submit a maximum of one further application for an "UZH Doc.Mobility" grant, irrespective of the thematic focus of the project, provided that the personal and formal requirements are met.

2 Formal Requirements

2.1 Personal Requirements

Applications for mobility fellowships may be submitted by doctoral students from all of UZH's faculties who meet the following requirements:

- a. At the time of the submission deadline, they have been enrolled as doctoral students (also applies to MD-PhD candidates) for at least twelve months. Candidates may be exempted from this requirement in specific cases for valid reasons. Requests for exemption must be submitted in writing together with the application.
- b. They are not pursuing a doctorate as part of a project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)¹.
- c. They confirm in writing their intention to continue their doctorate at UZH after the mobility fellowship and to complete their doctorate at UZH. This declaration of intent is part of the career plan (see section 5.3.2 of these guidelines).

2.2 Objective Requirements

Applications must be submitted in electronic form via the myUZHGGrants application platform (www.myuzhgrants.uzh.ch) by the submission deadline at the latest and be in accordance with these guidelines. Applications received too late cannot be considered.

The required documents (see section 5.3 of these guidelines) and the letters of reference are integral parts of the application. They must be submitted by the submission deadline at the latest.

Applicants who wish to request an exception must submit a written request by the submission deadline at the latest (see section 5.4 of these guidelines).

The application may be submitted in German or English. In well-justified cases, other languages (e.g. French, Italian) are also permitted.

The UZH Research Committee may decide not to consider an application if it does not meet the formal requirements (such as the specifications on the maximum number of pages of the required documents).

3 Application Procedure

3.1 Submission Deadline

Deadlines are 1 March and 1 September. The deadline is 17:00 Swiss local time. If the submission deadline is a Saturday, Sunday or a national holiday, the deadline is 17:00 on the next working day.

3.2 Evaluation and Decision

Provided that the applications meet the formal requirements, they will be scientifically reviewed by the UZH Research Committee. The Committee may involve other experts from the faculties in the evaluation of the applications. For each application, at least two independent expert opinions are prepared. In order to clarify open questions in a direct exchange, the evaluation process includes a short (virtual) conversation between (at least) one of the two evaluators and the applicant.

The following assessment criteria are applied:

- a. the scientific quality, originality and topicality of the research project to be carried out during the research abroad;
- b. the likelihood of the applicants successfully completing the planned project during the research stay;
- c. the scientific achievements of the applicant to date;
- d. the personal aptitude of the applicants for successfully completing their doctoral studies as well as their actual chances of obtaining the doctorate following the mobility fellowship and
- e. the quality of the intended research location, i.e. the working conditions, possibilities for professional supervision and further education, and the expected added value of the stay abroad for project and career.

3.3 Notification of the Decision

The decisions of the UZH Research Committee will be communicated to the applicants with a formal decision no later than three months after the submission deadline.

The website of UZH Doc. Mobility contains a list of all previous scholarship holders and their chosen host institution. The list is updated a few days after the official communication of the decisions to the applicants. It serves the self-organized exchange between former and future scholarship holders.

4 Eligible Costs

4.1 Grant for Subsistence Costs

With the mobility fellowship, the UZH awards grantees with a grant for subsistence costs at the research location. The grants are defined according to the rates applicable in the year the grant is awarded. The list with the current rates is published together with the call for applications in January.

Grantees with children receive a child allowance in addition to the subsistence costs. Child allowances contributed by third parties are deducted.

Applicants who wish to benefit from this allowance must submit the form "Confirmation Child Allowances" together with the application.

4.2 Travel Allowance

In addition to the grant for subsistence costs, grantees receive a travel allowance for the essential outward and return journey between the research location and Zurich. Information on the amount of the travel allowance is published together with the call for applications in January.

In accordance with the UZH Sustainability Policy², travel within Europe is expected to be undertaken by train or bus. Any additional costs arising from this are taken into account when determining the travel allowance.

4.3 Tuition Fees

A grant towards the tuition fees at the host institution will be provided if the applicant can prove that the host institution has rejected a request for such fees to be waived. A corresponding proof ("Confirmation Tuition Fees") must be submitted in writing together with the other application documents. The proof must be written as a signed letter on official letterhead of the responsible office of the host institution (an email is not sufficient). The amount requested must be entered in the application form.

5 Information on the Submission Procedure

5.1 Electronic Application

Applications are submitted via the myUZHGraunts platform (www.myuzhgrants.uzh.ch), where applicants log in with their UZH short name and WebPass password.³

The submission of an application takes place in three steps:

- i) Creating an application, register and inviting referees.
- ii) Editing the application, uploading the documents, checking the status of the reference letters.
- iii) Final submission of application.

Detailed information on how to submit an application can be found in the following sections of these guidelines. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application early and to contact the UZH Grants Office in case of content-related or technical difficulties. Applications submitted too late cannot be considered.

5.2 Inviting Referees

The applicants invite two referees to write a confidential reference letter. One of the two letters of reference must be written by the main supervisor of the dissertation. In their letter, the referees shall comment on the applicant's academic qualifications as well as on the research project and the planned research stay abroad.

The referees are registered by the applicants via the application platform myUZHGraunts ("Reference person: New" button) and invited to write the reference letter ("Invite" and "Send E-mail" buttons).

The referees will receive an email with a link to upload their letter directly to the application platform myUZHGraunts. The applicants track the status of the reference letters and, if necessary, send up to two reminder emails to the referees via the "Remind" button. (As soon as a reference letter has been uploaded, the color of the button with the name of the referee changes from grey to green.)

Reference persons already registered can be deleted and replaced as long as they have not yet submitted their reference letter.

In order for an application to be submitted finally and on time, the letters of reference must be uploaded before the submission deadline. Applicants are responsible for informing the referees in advance and, if necessary, reminding them in good time. A delay in submission due to lack of references will not be accepted.

5.3 Required Documents

5.3.1 Technical Requirements

Only PDF files will be accepted (please no .doc, .jpg, .tiff, etc.). There is a limit of 15 MB per document. Do not upload password-protected documents.

5.3.2 Mandatory Documents

Research Plan

The research plan is the central part of the application. Here, the planned research work is described in detail. The research plan should provide information about the dissertation project as a whole as well as specifically about the research work that will be carried out at the host institution abroad. The research plan should clearly indicate which research work has already been completed, which research work is planned and which of the planned research work will be carried out abroad.

The entire research plan must **not exceed 10 pages** (title, title page, table of contents, illustrations, spreadsheets and formulae included, but excluding the bibliography) and must be written in a font size of at least 10 points and a line spacing of 1.5 as a minimum.

The research plan may be written in German or English. In well-justified cases, other languages (e.g., French, Italian) are also permitted.

The research plan needs to be structured as follows:

i) Summary

The summary (maximum 2,500 characters incl. spaces) consists of a short description of the planned research work with information on how it fits into the context of the current state of research in the field. Please state the aims and questions of the dissertation project and describe the research methods used. Outline the expected results and their impact on the field and explain the extent to which the planned stay abroad will generate added value to the dissertation project as a whole.

ii) Current State of Research in the Field

Describe in this section your research project in the context of the current state of knowledge in the field, with reference to the most important publications. Explain which previous findings are the starting point of the dissertation project and point out which research gap is to be closed with the project. Relate your research project to and distinguish it from relevant current research in Switzerland and abroad. Present the preliminary work that has already been done and explain how the stay at the host institution abroad is important for the next steps.

iii) Planned Research

Building on the explanations in the section "State of Research", detail here the aims, questions and methods of the planned research work abroad. Present in detail the methods used to investigate the research questions. Clarify why the chosen methods are best suited to achieve the defined goals. It should be clear from the presentation where existing methods are used and where new methods are developed. Characterize existing sources and datasets and describe the data collection strategy; state whether you collect own data and how the data is processed and analyzed. Identify possible risks and difficulties in the implementation of the research (for example, access to certain datasets) and outline ways of dealing with these risks.

iv) Relevance and Impact

Please describe the scientific relevance and expected impacts of your project for your discipline(s) and for science as a whole (research and education/teaching). Please mention the form in which you wish to publish your research results (articles in scientific journals, monographs, conference proceedings,

etc.). If applicable, please indicate whether and to what extent the proposed project will have a broader impact beyond academia and what this impact will be.

v) Reason(s) for the Choice of the Research Institution Abroad

Explain the choice of the host institution abroad. Describe the expected environment abroad (network, supervisors, infrastructure) and explain the extent to which the stay promises added value for the planned research work, for the dissertation project in general, and for your personal career.

vi) Schedule and Milestones

The timetable provides information on the most important milestones from the beginning to the completion of the entire dissertation (e.g., by means of a table or a Gantt chart). Please design it in such a way that it is clear which work has already been completed, which work is still pending, and which part of the research work will be carried out at the host institution abroad.

vii) Bibliography

List the sources of all concluded and/or ongoing work referred to in the research plan. The bibliography is not included in the maximum number of pages (10).

Curriculum Vitae

The curriculum vitae must **not exceed 2 pages** and shall be set in at least font size 10. It must be written in the language of the research plan. All dates must be given in years and months.

Please include the following sections:

- i) Personal information, including the researcher ID (e.g. OrcID, ResearcherID, Google Scholar ID)
- ii) Education: In addition to the detailed information about your education (courses completed, degrees obtained), please mention the start of your doctorate and the name of the supervisors of your PhD and your Master's theses.
- iii) Previous and current employment relevant to your scientific activity

If applicable, please add the following sections:

- iv) Teaching and supervision of students
- v) Organization of conferences, summer-schools, discussions, etc.
- vi) Activities in knowledge transfer
- vii) Prizes, awards, fellowships
- viii) Special skills (e.g., language skills, digital competences)
- ix) Career breaks (provide justification for events that might have influenced or delayed research and publication activities such as long absences due to illness, family commitments, etc.)

Other sections relevant to the application may be added if necessary.

Scientific Output

This document contains the following sections:

- i) Published work (published, in print or accepted)
- ii) Unpublished work
- iii) Contributions to international conferences (presentations, posters, etc.)

If necessary, additional sections on further research achievements (prototypes, databases, etc.) can be added.

The applicant's name in the list of authors and the year of publication must be highlighted. The abbreviation of the list of authors by "et. al." is not permitted. If possible, provide a link to each publication. If no publications or other research results are available yet, a document with a corresponding note can be submitted.

Career Plan

The career plan must **not exceed one page** (a minimum of 10-point font size and line spacing of 1.5). Past career achievements should be described briefly, while more emphasis should be put on the medium and long-term career goals. In addition, please confirm the intention to continue the dissertation at UZH after the mobility fellowship and to obtain the doctorate here.

Confirmation of Host Institution

The confirmation letter must bear the official letterhead of the host institution and a signature of the head of the institution or of the host professor (an email is not sufficient). The confirmation has to state clearly that the applicant is supervised and integrated in the research environment and that all the necessary infrastructure is available for the duration of the fellowship. The start and end dates of the fellowship must be mentioned.

If your project carried out at the host institution abroad is subject to official approval and/or ethical examination, it must be confirmed in the letter that all legal and ethical regulations in the country of the host institution are being observed.

Copies of Diploma

Please enclose a copy of your Bachelor's and Master's degree as well as transcripts of your academic record (ToRs).

Matriculation as PhD Student

The document "Confirmation of Matriculation" consists of a scan of the confirmation of matriculation as a doctoral candidate at the UZH. The date of the first enrolment for the doctorate (start of the doctorate) must be shown on the confirmation.⁴

5.4 Additional Documents (if Applicable)

Revision statement

Applicants submitting their proposal for the second time upload a separate "Revision Statement" in addition to the revised research plan. In this document they respond to the reservations raised in the decision letter of the first submission and comment on significant changes or additions in the revised research plan. The statement must be written in the language of the research plan and must **not exceed 2 pages**.

Confirmations

Applicants claiming child allowances submit the form "Confirmation Child Allowances" (see section 4.1 above). The form is available for download on the "UZH Doc.Mobility" website.⁵

Applicants who wish to apply for a grant towards the tuition fees they have to pay at the host institution shall submit, together with the other application documents, a document proving that the host institution has not complied with a request for a waiver ("Confirmation Tuition Fees", see section 4.3 above).

Applications for exemption

These guidelines state in several places that an exception to a specific regulation can be granted upon request. Applicants who wish to make use of this possibility should upload an application for exemption together with the other application documents. Exception requests consist of a letter in which the applicant briefly describes the relevant situation and explains why an exception should be granted. The letter is addressed to the UZH Research Committee and signed by the applicant.

Cover letter

If desired, applicants may upload a cover letter to accompany their application.

Other

Additional letters of reference uploaded on the application platform under "Further Documents" cannot be considered. They will be deleted by the UZH Grants Office before the application is forwarded to the Research Committee.

5.5 Required Information in the Application Form

For purposes of administration and calculation of the grant, the electronic application form on myUZHGrants asks for various details about the applicant, the host institution abroad, any research funding already applied for or approved, and any ethical regulations that must be taken into account in the implementation of the project.

Fields that are mandatory to fill in are marked with a red asterisk.

In the "Environment UZH" tab on the application platform, applicants must indicate their faculty. Please choose the faculty to which the institute, seminar or clinic where you are pursuing your dissertation project (irrespective of the faculty at which you are enrolled) belongs. If the institute in question is a dual institute (an institute that is assigned to two faculties), please choose the faculty to which the main supervisor of the dissertation belongs.

5.6 Final Submission of the Application

Until the final submission, applicants may adjust their application, modify or delete uploaded documents, and replace already registered referees with new reference persons (provided the reference letter has not yet been uploaded).

Before the final submission, the entire application (excluding the confidential reference letters) can be downloaded via the "Check PDF" button and checked for any presentation errors or missing documents. When submitting their application, applicants confirm that they have taken note of these guidelines, that their application is complete and that all the information provided in it is correct, and that they have written the application independently and in compliance with the principles of scientific integrity. The final submission of the completed application must be made via the "Submit" button by the submission deadline at the latest. The final submission is only possible when all necessary information has been filled in, all mandatory required documents have been uploaded, and both letters of reference have been submitted. Applications that have not been finally submitted or have not been submitted on time cannot be considered. An extension of the submission deadline due to technical difficulties or server overload is excluded. It is therefore advisable to submit the application in good time.

5.7 Confirmation of Receipt

After the preliminary review of the formalities by the UZH Grants Office, the applicants receive a confirmation of receipt by email (no later than 3 weeks after the submission deadline).

6 Rights and Obligations of Grantees

6.1 Grant Release and Expiry

The approved grants are released at the grantees' request. The funds are transferred in Swiss francs to a bank or postal account in Switzerland one month before the fellowship starts at the earliest.

If grantees do not commence the fellowship on time in accordance with section 1.4 of these guidelines, the grant is forfeited.

6.2 Insurance

The fellowship does not include insurance for the grantees and their dependents. Grantees are responsible for all insurances themselves.

6.3 Maternity, Paternity, Illness and Accident

Female grantees are entitled to four months of paid maternity leave during the period of the mobility fellowship.

Male grantees are entitled to two weeks of paid paternity leave during the period of the mobility fellowship.

In the event of illness or accident during the mobility fellowship, the contribution and the duration of the fellowship may be increased appropriately upon request provided that the scientific objectives pursued with the research stay could not otherwise be achieved. In this instance, the fellowship may be extended by a maximum of one year.

6.4 Changes to the Research Plan or Change of the Research Location

Once the mobility fellowship has been granted, significant changes to the research plan may only be made if the UZH Research Committee has expressly approved a justified application.

If the research stay cannot take place at the planned location for important reasons, the UZH Grants Office must be contacted immediately. A change of the research location is only possible if the Research Committee has expressly approved a justified application.

6.5 Renouncement or Early Termination

Grantees who terminate their research stay prematurely must inform the UZH Grants Office immediately in writing, stating the reasons. They must reimburse the UZH *pro rata temporis* for the living expenses already transferred.

Grantees who do not take up the fellowship must inform the UZH Grants Office immediately in writing. If the fellowship has already been transferred, the entire amount awarded must be refunded to the UZH.

6.6 Reporting

The grantees submit a short report reflecting on the research stay abroad no later than six weeks after the end of the funding period. The guidelines for writing the report are available on the "UZH Doc.Mobility" website.

¹ The SNSF supports doctoral students who are employed as part of a research project funded by the SNSF and who would like to spend a research period abroad with "mobility grants in projects". See [snsf.ch](https://www.snsf.ch) > Funding > Supplementary Measures -> Mobility Grants in Projects.

² <https://www.sustainability.uzh.ch/en/sustainability-at-uzh/Sustainability-Policy.html>

³ <https://www.zi.uzh.ch/de/support/identitaet-zugang/manage-password.html>

⁴ Please do not hand in the "Proof-of-Matriculation Voucher", but the "Confirmation of Matriculation". For a sample of the required document see <https://www.uzh.ch/cmsssl/en/studies/application/entry/registration.html>

⁵ www.research.uzh.ch/en.html > Find and apply for grants and fellowships > PhD Students > UZH Doc.Mobility