

Rules for the Agricultural University of Iceland Doctoral Fund

Rules for Agricultural University of Iceland Doctoral Fund grants to doctoral students studying at the Agricultural University of Iceland

Approved by the University Council, 4 December 2018

Article 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Agricultural University of Iceland Doctoral Fund is to: i) strengthen the Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI) as an international research university; ii) further increase knowledge in the fields of environmental science and natural resources and agricultural sciences in Iceland; and iii) enable talented students to pursue doctoral programmes at the University.

The Rules for the AUI Doctoral Fund are in addition to the Rules for Doctoral Programmes at the Agricultural University of Iceland, 17 March 2017, which otherwise apply to beneficiaries of the Fund.

Article 2. Administration of the Doctoral Fund

Awards from the Agricultural University of Iceland Doctoral Fund are in the form of support for full-time doctoral research positions at the University. There should at any time be a minimum of two positions for doctoral research students, one in each of the University's main academic disciplines authorised by the Ministry of Education to offer doctoral programmes: i) Environmental Sciences and ii) Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences.

The Rector and the Executive Committee of AUI are authorised to increase the number of doctoral research positions supported by the AUI Doctoral Fund, for example through contracts with third parties to cover the cost of such positions within the disciplines of Environmental Sciences (subcategories: natural and environmental sciences; forest science; landscape planning and architecture; and restoration ecology) and/or Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (subcategories: agricultural science and equine science).

Each year for which it is foreseen that the AUI Doctoral Fund will allocate new doctoral research positions, the Rector appoints an AUI Doctoral Fund selection committee, consisting of two qualified academic experts, one from each professional field in the University. They, together with the Rector, are responsible for advertising, providing information, receiving and processing applications and allocating grants (see Article 4).

The Rector and the Executive Committee of AUI handle the day-to-day administration of the Fund. The AUI Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for supervision and follow-up of the doctoral projects that are carried out at the cost of the Doctoral Fund: cf. Rules for Doctoral Programmes at AUI.

Article 3. Applicants

Those eligible to apply to the Fund after the selection committee has advertised the available positions (see further Article 4) are:

- a) Students who fulfil the entry requirements for a doctoral programme, together with qualified supervisors.
- b) Faculty members or senior researchers at AUI. They need to meet the requirements for supervisors set out in the Rules for Doctoral Programmes at AUI.

Article 4. Applications and role of the selection committee

New positions supported by the AUI Doctoral Fund shall be advertised not later than one month before the stated closing date for application. It is permitted to only advertise a single position in one of the University's fields of expertise, provided that the position in the other field is already filled.

New doctoral programme positions financed in collaboration with a third party may have narrower conditions concerning the field of expertise or other things, and may be advertised separately.

Applications to the Fund can be of two types:

A) A student and supervisor apply jointly to the Fund, with suggestions for the composition of a suitable doctoral programme committee for the project (see later and the Rules for Doctoral Programmes at AU).

B) A supervisor applies for a doctoral programme position without a student, but with suggestions for the composition of a suitable doctoral programme committee for the project.

Applications must include:

- a description of the research project, its aims and scientific value
- the student's CV and publications (type A), supervisor's name and suggestions for a doctoral programme committee
- the student's study plan (type A), a brief report on the facilities for the study and other material to support the application, e.g. references.

Applications may be in Icelandic or English.

Particular attention is drawn to AU's opportunity for collaboration with other universities, at home or abroad, when the doctoral programme committees are established. Joint doctoral degrees with other universities are also desirable, in which case registration shall usually be first completed at AU and then at the Icelandic/foreign university. In this way it can be ensured that doctoral programmes are of the highest professional standard and attract new knowledge into Iceland.

When the application period has closed and applications have been received, the selection committee appoints two or more independent reviewers to evaluate applications before the actual processing by the committee begins. Care shall be taken that an independent reviewer is a specialist in the academic discipline of the application, does not have an application to the Fund at the same time and meets general requirements regarding eligibility.

In evaluating applications, factors for consideration shall include the following:

- the scientific value of the proposed research project
- the importance of increasing knowledge in the relevant field in Iceland (and UAI where appropriate)
- how well the project meets the stipulations set forth in the advertisement
- how the project relates to the supervisor's academic field
- the professional standing of the project's doctoral programme committee
- the performance of the student in previous university programmes (type A)
- the study plan (type A)
- the adequacy of facilities in the department and in collaborating organisations
- how well the application is executed.

The selection committee chooses from submitted applications based on the received comments from independent reviewers.

If a supervisor is offered a grant independent of a particular student (type B) then the research position shall be advertised through official channels. A supervisor has a maximum of six months to select a student. At the end of that period, the offer of a grant expires. In addition, the AUI Graduate Studies Committee assesses if a student selected by a supervisor meets the requirements of the Rules for Doctoral Programmes at AUI.

On completion of the allocation procedure, it shall be publicly announced which projects received grants. After the allocation, the AUI Doctoral Fund selection committee shall notify the AUI University Council of the applications received and the appointment of doctoral students.

Article 5. Duties of recipients

Grant recipients shall engage in full-time doctoral studies and not engage in any other work during the grant period. The Faculty may assign a grant recipient a task in the field of teaching or research, or agree that he/she takes on such a task for another party, provided that the whole task does not exceed 20% of a full-time job and that it also adds to the student's skill in the relevant field. To encourage participation of doctoral students in teaching at the University, the maximum appointment period for a doctoral position is set at four years, or one year longer than the minimum time to complete a doctoral programme.

Article 6. Appointment procedure

The Rector appoints to doctoral programme positions, as for other academic positions within the University. The positions are temporary (see Article 5) and are awarded for one year at a time, with the condition that the supervisor and doctoral student demonstrate normal progress of the project (see Article 7). For salary and benefits see Pay Level 12 for natural scientists holding a BSc or higher degree: *Félag íslenskra náttúrufræðinga* (663-012).

The AUI Doctoral Fund finances a doctoral student's salary, but it is not intended to meet the cost of the research itself. However, doctoral students and supervisors may submit to the Rector a well-reasoned application for necessary additional research costs, up to a maximum of 500,000 IKR per year, based on 2018 price levels.

Article 7. Doctoral programme progress

A supervisor and doctoral student in receipt of a grant from the AUI Doctoral Fund shall submit annually (before 15 November) a joint progress report to the Graduate Studies Committee, in which they account for the state of the programme. Submission of the progress report is the responsibility of the supervisor and student. A satisfactory progress report is a prerequisite for grant renewal, one year at a time.

If a student completes a doctoral programme in less than four years, he/she is permitted to engage in academic work for AUI until the end of the fourth year, with the support of the Fund, unless he/she begins other paid work.

The salary for the last three months of the fourth year of the grant shall be conditional on the student's doctoral thesis having been approved for defence by the AUI Supervisor of Graduate Studies and the University of Iceland's Graduate School (see the AUI Rules on Doctoral Programmes).

Article 8. Acknowledgement and promotion of the project

A supervisor and doctoral student shall acknowledge the Fund and AUI in written works that are related to the grant from the Fund.

Revisions to these Rules shall be confirmed by the University Council and formal notification given when the Fund is advertised.