



SCUOLA
DI DOTTORATO
UNIPA



Università
degli Studi
di Palermo

TERZA MISSIONE



Area Ricerca e Innovazione

WELCOME PHD DAY

PHD HANDBOOK

PRACTICAL GUIDE PHD STUDENTS AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PALERMO



This handbook has been designed to support you throughout your doctoral journey by providing essential information about rights, duties, opportunities, and the main administrative procedures that you will encounter during your PhD experience.

1. THE PHD PROGRAMME: A FULL-TIME COMMITMENT

A PhD programme requires a full-time and exclusive commitment. Research, training activities, and participation in programme initiatives represent the core of the doctoral experience.

PhD candidates may undertake paid activities, provided that they are consistent with the educational objectives of the programme and authorized in advance by the Doctoral Board, following the positive opinion of the supervisor.

Please note that if the annual income from external paid activities exceeds the amount of the doctoral scholarship, the right to receive the scholarship is forfeited.

2. THE DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP

The annual doctoral scholarship currently amounts to approximately €16,240 gross and is paid monthly, with a one-month delay.

The scholarship:

- is subject to INPS social security contributions;
- is not considered taxable income;
- does not need to be included in the tax return.

In December, two monthly payments are usually issued, while no payment is made in January.

3. INSURANCE COVERAGE AND PROTECTION

All PhD candidates are covered by the University insurance policies, including:

- Third-Party Liability Insurance;
- Workplace Accident Insurance.

For administrative information, candidates may contact Dr. Stella Neri.

4. TUTORING ACTIVITIES

PhD candidates may carry out tutoring activities for bachelor's and master's degree students, subject to authorization by the Doctoral Board.

These activities:

- cannot exceed 40 hours per academic year;
- do not increase the scholarship amount;
- may be remunerated through forms other than the doctoral scholarship.

PhD candidates in the medical area may also undertake paid clinical activities at the University Hospital.

5. SOCIAL SECURITY AND INPS SEPARATE MANAGEMENT SCHEME

Doctoral scholarships are subject to contributions to the INPS Separate Management Scheme.

Registration with the scheme must be completed directly by the PhD candidate.

Social security contributions are divided as follows:

- approximately two thirds paid by the University;
- approximately one third paid by the PhD candidate.

Registration provides access to important welfare protections, including:

- maternity and parental leave;
- DIS-COLL unemployment allowance after the completion of the PhD.

6. MATERNITY LEAVE AND PARENTAL PROTECTION

In the event of pregnancy, PhD candidates must promptly inform:

- the Head of Department;
- the supervisor;
- the Programme Coordinator;
- the PhD Office.

Italian regulations provide for five months of mandatory suspension of activities, usually structured as:

- 2 months before childbirth and 3 months after;

or, where permitted:

- flexible arrangements such as 1+4 or 0+5.

Maternity leave must also be reported to INPS in order to apply for the maternity allowance.

The suspension period and the related scholarship will be recovered at the end of the programme.

7. DIS-COLL UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE

PhD candidates with scholarships who are registered with the INPS Separate Management Scheme may apply for the DIS-COLL unemployment allowance after completing their doctoral programme.

The application must be submitted to INPS within the required deadlines, preferably immediately after receiving the final scholarship payment.

8. SUSPENSION OF THE PROGRAMME

For justified reasons, PhD candidates may request a temporary suspension of the programme for up to six months.

During the suspension:

- the scholarship is not paid;
- educational and research activities are temporarily interrupted.

An unjustified suspension exceeding 30 days results in the permanent interruption of the scholarship.

9. RESEARCH PERIODS ABROAD

Research stays abroad are a fundamental part of doctoral training and may last up to 12 months.

For scholarship holders:

- the scholarship is increased by 50% during the period spent abroad.

For non-scholarship holders:

- a dedicated financial contribution is provided.

To obtain the increase, candidates must:

- submit the appropriate application;
- obtain authorization from the Programme Coordinator (up to 6 months) or the Doctoral Board (beyond 6 months);
- provide documentation certifying the beginning and completion of activities at the host institution.

10. RESEARCH BUDGET

Each PhD candidate is granted an annual research budget equal to 10% of the scholarship amount, corresponding to approximately €1,624 net per year. For National Interest Doctorates (DIN), the budget is increased to 20%.

The budget may be used for:

- research missions and mobility;
- conference participation;
- books, software, devices, and research materials.

Use of the budget must be authorized by the Programme Coordinator.

Equipment purchased through the research budget remains property of the University at the end of the programme.

11. DOUBLE ENROLMENT

Double enrolment is regulated by Italian Law no. 33/2022 and allows, under certain conditions, simultaneous enrolment in multiple academic programmes.

12. PROGRESSION TO THE FOLLOWING YEAR

Each year, PhD candidates are evaluated by the Doctoral Board on the basis of their academic and research activities.

Admission to the following year is granted through an official resolution of the Board and subsequently recorded in the student portal.

13. THE DOCTORAL THESIS

The final thesis is evaluated by at least two external reviewers, one of whom must belong to a university institution.

Reviewers may:

- admit the thesis to public defence;
- request revisions and postpone the defence for up to six months.

The final defence takes place before an examination committee, which approves or rejects the thesis. In cases of particularly outstanding scientific achievement, the committee may unanimously award honours.

The thesis must also be deposited with the National Libraries of Rome and Florence through the University IRIS platform.

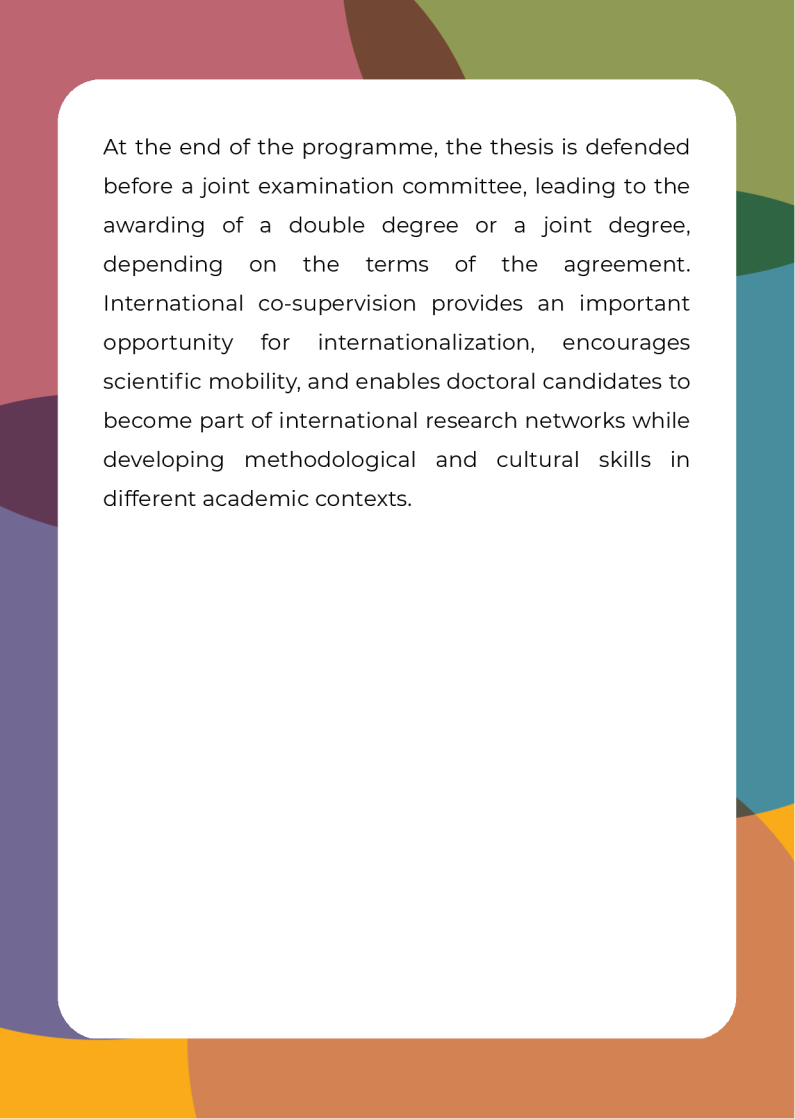
14 DOCTOR EUROPAEUS – ADDITIONAL TITLE

The Doctor Europaeus additional title is an important international recognition awarded to PhD candidates whose doctoral path is characterized by a strong European and international dimension. To obtain this distinction, the doctoral thesis must receive a positive evaluation from at least two professors belonging to universities located in two different European Union countries other than the country where the thesis is defended. Furthermore, at least one member of the final examination committee must belong to a foreign European university.

Part of the thesis defence must also take place in an official European Union language different from the language of the country where the degree is awarded. In addition, a significant portion of the research activity must have been carried out during a research stay of at least three months at a European university or research institution abroad. The Doctor Europaeus title enhances the international profile of the PhD candidate and represents a valuable distinction in both academic and professional careers.

15. INTERNATIONAL CO-SUPERVISION AND DOUBLE DEGREE

International co-supervision agreements allow PhD candidates to carry out their doctoral research under the joint supervision of two universities, one Italian and one foreign. Through a specific agreement established between the institutions, candidates conduct research activities at both universities, dividing their doctoral training period between the two academic environments.



At the end of the programme, the thesis is defended before a joint examination committee, leading to the awarding of a double degree or a joint degree, depending on the terms of the agreement. International co-supervision provides an important opportunity for internationalization, encourages scientific mobility, and enables doctoral candidates to become part of international research networks while developing methodological and cultural skills in different academic contexts.



SCUOLA
DI DOTTORATO
UNIPA



Università
degli Studi
di Palermo

TERZA MISSIONE



Area Ricerca e Innovazione

PHD HANDBOOK

PRACTICAL GUIDE **PHD STUDENTS** AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PALERMO



Complesso monumentale dello Steri, Piazza Marina n. 61, Palermo

unipa.it/strutture/scuoladidottorato/