

Personal Budget PhD candidates – Faculty of Law

February 2026

Introduction

PhD candidates' personal budget from the Faculty of Law is a contribution towards research-related costs. It consists of different components: 1) compensation for the costs related to the PhD ceremony and 2) a personal budget for the costs related to conduction PhD research. This notification informs PhD candidates about current spending possibilities of the personal budget.

Contribution towards the costs associated with the PhD ceremony

a. Printing costs for the dissertation.

As a faculty contribution to the printing costs of the dissertation, an amount of up to €1,000 is reserved. This contribution is to subsidise the printing costs of the dissertation. Costs for translations, editing, printing costs for invitations, business cards, or costs of layout that have not been done by the publisher and will not be reimbursed.

In addition to the specific budget mentioned above, all PhD candidates (including external PhD candidates) at VU Amsterdam will also receive an (additional) contribution towards the printing costs of the dissertation to the amount of € 500,-. In order to be eligible for this, a PhD candidate must first sign a licensing contract with the University Library for making a digital version of the dissertation available.

The amount of €500 is in addition to any claims for a faculty contribution to the printing costs of the dissertation. This €500 will be deducted from the total amount of the printing costs. The publisher/printer will send the invoice to the PhD candidate, who will pay the invoice. The PhD candidate can claim the actual costs, up to a maximum of €1,000 if the license agreement is not signed and up to a maximum of €1,500 if it is signed.

b. Doctorate celebration.

The costs of the doctorate celebration can sometimes be considerable. That is why the faculty contributes up to €500 towards the costs of the reception. The PhD candidate pays the bill themselves and can then claim the actual costs of the reception up to a maximum of €500. This contribution is only available to PhD candidates who are employed by the faculty. PhD candidates who are not employed by the faculty (external PhD candidates, scholarship PhD candidates) and who need a contribution towards these costs can submit a request to the head of department.

The personal budget

In addition to the contribution towards the costs of the PhD ceremony, some PhD candidates also have a personal budget, or bench fee. This amount is intended to cover the material costs of the PhD trajectory and research. The amount can be spent on items such as books, courses, domestic travel and attending conferences abroad.

This budget is not available to PhD candidates who are not employed by the faculty. Costs for books, courses and conference attendance are for the external PhD candidate's own account.

For PhD candidates who are employed by VU Amsterdam (UNL category 1a (employed PhD candidate) or 1b (employee in PhD track)), the personal budget varies depending on the funding stream from which the PhD appointment is paid: first, second or third funding stream employee PhD candidate or lecturer-researcher.

First funding stream employee PhD candidates and lecturer-researcher

For PhD candidates appointed by the Faculty of Law under the first funding stream and for lecturer-researchers who have an agreement to pursue a PhD and are registered in Hora Finita, the faculty makes a total amount of €5,000 available for expenses incurred during the PhD programme. This budget is available for as long as the PhD candidate is employed by the faculty as a PhD candidate or lecturer-researcher. This budget is no longer available after the end of the employment contract.

The supervisor and PhD candidate will decide together how the personal budget will be spent; permission from the faculty board is not required. There are no structural funds available if a budget higher than €5,000 is needed: an ad hoc solution must always be sought with the head of department.

Accountability

Expenditure from the personal budgets of PhD candidates and lecturer-researchers is approved by the research office. Only doctoral candidates/lecturer-researchers themselves can claim expenses using the corresponding WBS number.

Second and third funding stream PhD candidates

PhD candidates appointed under the second funding stream (NWO) or third funding stream (ERC, other funding bodies) may claim these material costs on the specific project. Clear agreements must be made between the supervisor and PhD candidate at the start of the employment contract. The graduate school monitors these agreements. The faculty assumes that these PhD candidates can also claim a minimum of €5,000 per person for travel expenses, participation in conferences, literature, etc. Claims can often only be made during the term of the project, so please take this into account in the budget and expenditure.

Budget

In order to encourage sound and efficient spending, we ask PhD candidates to draw up a budget for the expenditure of their personal budget at the start of the trajectory. In addition to the expectation that this will have a positive effect on efficient spending, drawing up a budget also allows for a timely assessment of any additional expenses. At the start of the PhD trajectory, agreements can already be made about any higher costs that may arise.

The spending and budgeting of the PhD fund is also part of the progress meetings with the graduate school.

How to claim expenses?

Employee PhD students and lecturer-researchers

All employed PhD candidates and lecturer-researchers can claim their research expenses via an online expense claim form at services.vu.nl – HR – Human Resources – Declarations and Travel costs.

A WBS number must also be entered on the expense claim form:

Cost Object Type: (PJ) Project WBS Element

Cost Object ID:

(H/141112.009) Mater.lasten OZ reg.: Printing costs and doctorate celebration

(H/141900.018) Promovendi Materieel: PhD candidates' fund for primary funding stream
PhD candidates and lecturer-researchers with an agreement to conduct PhD research.

PhD candidates not employed by the VU

PhD candidates not employed by the VU can claim the printing costs of their dissertation using the form on this [VU webpage](#).

Note: VU reference* H/141112.009 must be entered in the field on the claim form. The invoice for the printing costs of the dissertation must also be attached.