

DEGREES

INTERNATIONAL JOINT PhD SUPERVISION AND DOUBLE/DUAL PhD DEGREES

As a time to work and think innovatively, studying for a PhD provides candidates with real professional experience, acquired *in* research and *from* research. The development of international joint PhD supervision programmes (*cotutelles internationales de thèse*) – hereafter, ‘PhD cotutelles’ – is part of the internationalization drive undertaken by French Higher Education Institutions. This type of international partnership is based on bilateral scientific collaboration, whereby the expertise of two supervisors enables the PhD student to carry out original research. In the French context, PhD cotutelles are a specific form of joint PhD degree programmes, governed by an agreement that covers all the aspects of the PhD programme, from registration to defence, and the award of one (i.e. a joint PhD degree), or two parchments of equal value (i.e. a double PhD degree).



Research on *Drosophila* mutations.

Definition

A PhD cotutelle encourages the mobility of PhD students by developing scientific cooperation between French and foreign research teams. **Students work under the supervision of a thesis supervisor in both home and partner institutions.** The supervisors agree to act as full tutors to the doctoral student – their skills are thus exercised jointly. **The student must carry out their research in person alternately in both countries, in accordance with the terms and conditions defined in a partnership agreement.** A framework agreement or a specific partnership agreement between institutions aims to delineate clearly the conditions in which the PhD programme is to be undertaken.

Implementation and process

Any given joint PhD supervision ('cotutelle') is governed by a formal inter-institutional agreement between a French university and an international partner university.

The agreement complies with the academic requirements and regulations of the two partner institutions.

Both universities acknowledge the validity of the cotutelle arrangement and of the diploma awarded.

The actual diploma can be awarded in one of two ways:

- > The student receives a **PhD diploma awarded jointly** by the two institutions. The degree issued mentions the discipline(s), e.g. *Doctorat en littérature française* and PhD in French Literature.
- > The student receives **two PhD diplomas**, one from each institution. Each parchment mentions the title of the diploma from each institution, and specifies that the thesis was carried out under a joint supervision, together with the name of the partner institution.

The viva voce exam takes place in a single institution, designated in the cotutelle agreement.

Registration requirements

Prerequisite: A Master's degree (300 ECTS), or equivalent diploma.

- > **Submit a thesis proposal** in collaboration with both PhD supervisors.
- > **Apply for admission** to the French graduate school (*école doctorale*) and the equivalent organization abroad.
- > **A cotutelle agreement must be drawn up by the two supervisors**, and approved by the graduate school (*école doctorale*), in duplicate form.

The agreement can be either a **pre-existing agreement** between the two institutions, or an **agreement concluded for a specific PhD candidate**.

- > It defines the administrative arrangements, such as registration fees, length of stay in the partner institution, training requirements and study modules, funding, *viva voce* exam conditions (e.g. projected date and place, language and *viva voce* exam jury), and the type of diploma awarded.
- > It guarantees that the research falls under intellectual property law (in accordance with Art. L112-2 of the *French Intellectual Property Code*).
- > It defines administrative registration procedures in both universities: mainly, fee payment arrangements (i.e. a fee waiver is granted each year by one university upon proof of payment at the partner university for the year in question), and the conditions under which social security coverage is provided in each country.

In France, applications for an international joint PhD supervision ('cotutelle') are submitted by the PhD supervisor to the Head of the graduate school (*école doctorale*).

The list of French graduate schools (*écoles doctorales*), laboratories and research centres is available on the CampusFrance website:

<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org>



Sample preparation in a laboratory at the Centre d'études insulaires, Moorea, French Polynesia.

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LOCATION OF PhD CANDIDATE

- > For the entire duration of the thesis, the student follows each university's administrative procedure, but pays registration and tuition fees in only one.
- > The cotutelle agreement must identify the social security provider in each country. In addition, accommodation arrangements in the partner institution and the type of funding obtained are detailed in the agreement.
- > The preparation of the thesis takes place alternately in the two countries (with a minimum duration of one year in France). The 'normal' duration of a PhD in France is three years.
- > The publication, promotion and protection of the thesis topic and research results fall under the responsibility of both home and partner graduate schools, in accordance with the procedures specific to each institution.

VIVA VOCE EXAM PROCEDURES

The composition of the viva voce examination committee is subject to prior agreement between partner institutions. An equal proportion of members from each institution, including the two thesis supervisors, is usually required. It is also made of external examiners. The jury's accommodation expenses can be reimbursed or covered by the university where the *viva voce* examination takes place.

CHOSEN LANGUAGE

The cotutelle agreement specifies the language in which the dissertation is to be written. For any language other than French, a lengthy summary must be written in French.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR REGISTRATION

PhD students must register with the graduate school (*école doctorale*) on an annual basis. Each institution has its own procedure, but the following documents are usually required:

- > *Resume*.
- > A copy of relevant diplomas, accompanied by a certified translation.
- > A thesis proposal.
- > Proof of funding commitment (nature and amount) for the entire duration of the thesis.
- > The joint PhD supervision ('cotutelle') agreement signed by both supervisors and both universities, or by the graduate school (for the first year). Templates can be downloaded from institution websites.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

- FRANCE, Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, Arrêté du 6 janvier 2005 relatif à la cotutelle internationale de thèse : www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT00000258089

'COTUTELLE' FUNDING OPTIONS

Funding is not necessarily mandatory to study for a PhD. However, given the length of PhD studies, prospective students are highly advised to secure funding.

French government scholarships
Prospective overseas PhD students in France can find out more about PhD cotutelle supervision programmes from the French Embassy in their home country.

Insofar as the PhD programme is carried out alternately in the two partner countries, the French government may provide partial financial assistance, i.e. solely for the part carried out in France.

In France, grant and scholarship holders have access to social security, and may obtain compensation for travel expenses.

Applications forms for a joint PhD ('cotutelle') supervision with France are provided by the French Embassy in the partner country.

> Types of funding for a joint PhD supervision ('cotutelle')

Different types of funding are available to finance a thesis, for an average duration of three years.

For more information, see:
www.diplomatie.gouv.fr

> Specific scholarship programmes

- The France Excellence Eiffel Scholarship Programme
- Bilateral Joint PhD 'cotutelle' supervision scholarships database: <https://campusbourses.campusfrance.org/#/program/1152>
- Programme doctoral France-Mexicain/ CONACYT: www.conacyt.gob.mx/index.php/becas-y-posgrados
- DAAD - Cotutelle scholarships: www2.daad.de > Finding Scholarships > Research Grants - Bi-nationally Supervised Doctoral Degrees/Cotutelle



Systematic excavations at the Permian site of the Autun Basin, near the commune of Muse, Saône-et-Loire.

The France Excellence Eiffel Scholarship Programme

The France Excellence Eiffel Scholarship Programme, developed and financed by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, is designed to boost the attractiveness of French higher education and research institutions, and to support international profiles of excellence in carrying out their projects in France.

Institutions selecting candidates must commit to enrolling them in the course they have applied for, should they be awarded the Eiffel scholarship.

This programme concerns 7 disciplines:

Science and Technology:

- > Biology and Health
- > Ecological Transition

- > Mathematics and Numeracy
- > Engineering Sciences

Humanities and Social Sciences:

- > French History, Language and Civilization
- > Law and Political Science
- > Economics and Management

The France Excellence Eiffel Scholarship Programme finances mobility for six months up to three years as part of a joint thesis supervision. The Programme is a 'tool of excellence' made available to French Higher Education Institutions, in order to support the attractiveness of research in France.

<https://www.campusfrance.org/en/france-excellence-eiffel-scholarship-program>

Funding is often a prerequisite for admission in a graduate school (*école doctorale*), and must cover the entire three years of the PhD, so as to enable PhD students to devote themselves to research. Different types of visa are issued depending on how the PhD candidate's stay is financed. The graduate school (*école doctorale*) is the main source of funding.

The Campus France scholarship search engine has more than 430 types of PhD funding :

www.campusfrance.org > Researchers > Doctorate > How to finance your Doctorat (PhD)

Graduate schools (*écoles doctorales*) directory:

www.campusfrance.org > Doctorate > Doctoral schools directory

EUROPEAN JOINT DOCTORATES (EJDs)

As part of the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), the *European Joint Doctorates* initiative supports international cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation in PhD training. A joint (or multiple) PhD degree is awarded by all partner institutions. PhD students must be enrolled in a joint degree programme.

EJD provides overseas students with funding, generally for three years in the host country, for doctoral training in a European Higher Education Institution that is a member of a consortium of at least three institutions in three different countries.

One of the schools is designated as the lead coordinator.

Each EJD programme has its own selection criteria, admission procedures and application processing schedules. For information on how to apply, length of stay in the host country, funding and graduation, see the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions website:

<https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/actions/doctoral-networks>

PLEASE NOTE

European Industrial Doctorates are also offered as part as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions. They train doctoral students wishing to develop their skills and transition outside academia, particularly in industry- and business-related sectors.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

- La Recherche en France, *Doctorat, mode d'emploi* (TBA 2024)
www.campusfrance.org > Resource Center > <https://www.campusfrance.org/en/resource/research-in-france-the-doctorate-step-by-step>
- PhD training in France:
www.campusfrance.org > PhD

	Mobility	Registration	Procedures	Dissertation Language	Specific Funding	Diploma Obtained
PhD cotutelle	One French and one overseas research unit	At two universities	At one of the two universities	In the language defined by the agreement Summary in French	For travel and viva exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either a PhD degree awarded jointly by the partner institutions (joint degree) • Or two PhD degrees From each institution (double degree)
Co-supervision	At least one French research unit	In one of the universities	At either one university	Most often in French, but sometimes in English	No	A French PhD
European Joint Doctorates	In partnership with several research units as part of an agreement-governed European consortium	In each of the universities covered by the mobility agreement	At the supervisor's university	Mostly in English, but each consortium has its own terms. Summary in French	Amount specific to each programme	A joint PhD degree (double or multiple) , depending on programme type

IMPORTANT :

The term 'research unit' can refer to either: a research centre, a host research team, a research institute, a laboratory, a joint research unit, a standalone research unit, or a service/research unit attached to a graduate school (école doctorale).

PhD VISA

The type of visa granted depends on the modalities of the stay during the PhD, and is stated in the partnership agreement:

- **'Passeport talent – chercheur' VLS (Talent/Researcher long-stay visa).** For overseas PhD students holding a PhD employment contract in France.
- **Long-stay residence permit visa (VLS-TS) and 'Carte de séjour pluriannuelle (CSP)' multi-year visa.**

This visa is granted to non-salaried PhD students with sufficient self-finance capacity. The multi-year residence permit is issued at the end of the first year of study in France and is valid for 2 to 4 years, depending on the course of study.

PHD EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

If a PhD student is recruited under a PhD employment contract, the international cotutelle agreement must mention this.

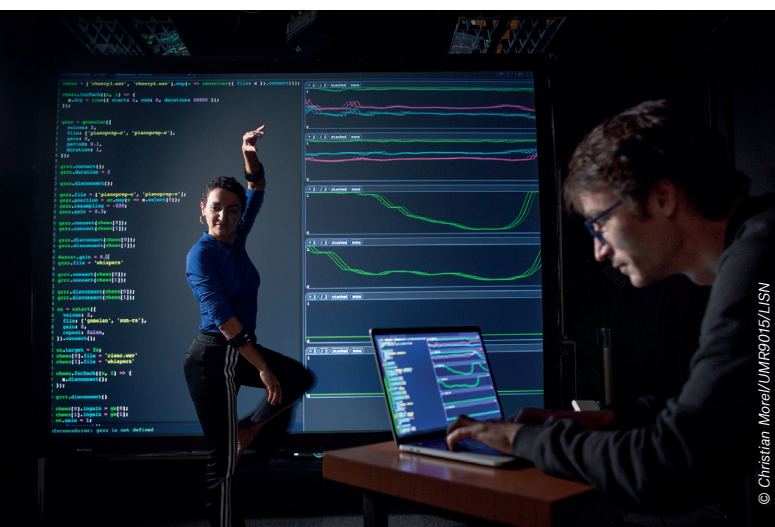
The **public sector PhD employment contract** is open to all PhD students. The three-year contract comes with a guaranteed minimum monthly remuneration in annual instalments, from 2023 to 2026, which will gradually amount to 2,300 euros in 2026. It is drawn up by the graduate school (*école doctorale*) in an identical manner for all research and higher education institutions. This specific type of PhD employment contract provides all the social benefits of a standard employment contract, in compliance with French public law, and enhances the professional research experience associated with doctoral training.

The **private sector PhD employment contract** is available to companies whose main activity is research – greater than or equal to 5/6^{ths} of their total annual working time. The industry should correspond to the PhD candidate's research topic. A partnership agreement is concluded between the employer, the PhD student and the graduate school (*école doctorale*). It defines the material conditions of the research project and the allocation of the time spent with the employer. A fixed-term contract (CDD) with a clearly defined purpose is signed between the employer and the employee holding the PhD diploma no later than 3 years after obtaining the diploma, thus providing additional professional experience, which in turn will facilitate the transition to permanent positions in public or private research organizations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Journal Officiel de la République Française, 2021.
Decree no. 2021-1233 of September 25, 2021 on the private-law PhD contract provided for in article L. 412-3 of the French Research Code.

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000044099561>



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Art and Science Research on the interaction between movement and sound in the context of dance improvisation.

GOOD TO KNOW

Inter-institutional PhD co-supervision

In accordance with the joint PhD degree framework, a student can undertake academic research under the responsibility of two PhD supervisors, whose duties can be carried out:

- ◆ By university professors or teachers of equivalent rank, of French or foreign nationality, who do not report to the Ministry of Higher Education and Research; by staff working in higher education institutions, public research organizations and research foundations, who are qualified to direct research. In such cases, co-supervision agreements can be drawn up between two French universities, two graduate schools (*écoles doctorales*) within the same university, or two research units within the same graduate school (*école doctorale*).
- ◆ By individuals holding a PhD, chosen by the supervisor for their scientific competence, upon referral from the head of the graduate school (*école doctorale*) and approval of the institution's Scientific Advisory Board (*conseil scientifique*). This person is not required to be affiliated with a research unit. They can be of French or foreign nationality.

A joint thesis supervision is:

- ◆ A way of fostering collaboration between HEIs through the expertise of two directors and two research units. PhD students may receive material or financial assistance from host and partner research units and graduate schools. They are also entitled to apply for mobility grants with both host and partner international relations departments.
- ◆ A diploma bearing the names and titles of the two directors involved in the co-supervision.
- ◆ A co-supervision agreement signed by the two supervisors concerned, but only one administrative enrolment. The PhD student is nevertheless attached to two research units and/or two graduate schools (*école doctorale*).
- ◆ A single *viva voce* examination, generally held within the host institution.
- ◆ A PhD dissertation written in French, except in certain graduate schools (*écoles doctorales*) that accept theses written in English, provided a summary in French is proposed.

Useful Links

- **Directory of Graduate Schools**
(*annuaire des écoles doctorales*):
<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org>
- **Funding:**
www.campusfrance.org
> Researchers > Doctorate > How to finance your Doctorat (PhD)
- **CIFRE agreements:**
Conventions industrielles de formation par la recherche on the ANRT website
(in French): www.anrt.asso.fr
> Former > CIFRE
- **PhD students and researchers societies and associations:**
> ADI (*Associazione Dottorandi e Dottori di Ricerca Italiani*):
www.dottorato.it
> *Association Nationale des Docteurs ès Sciences (ANDÈS)*:
www.andes.asso.fr
> *Confédération des Jeunes Chercheurs (CJC)*: <http://cjc.jeunes-chercheurs.org>
> *Eurodoc (European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers)*: www.eurodoc.net
> *Fondation Kastler*:
- www.fnak.fr
> National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS):
www.nagps.org
> National Postdoctoral Association (NAP): www.nationalpostdoc.org
> Precarios, Federation of Young Researchers: www.precarios.org
> THESIS, Doktoranden-Netzwerk E.V.:
www.thesis.de
- **ABG**, Association Bernard Gregory:
www.abg.asso.fr
- **CNRS**, the French National Centre for Scientific Research: www.cnrs.fr
- **EURAXESS**, Researchers in Motion:
<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu>
- **Visa information:** Directory and Addresses of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/the-ministry-and-its-network/directory-and-addresses-of-the-ministry-for-europe-and-foreign-affairs/
- **Réseau national des collèges doctoraux (RNCD)**:
www.rncdfrance.fr/accueil
- **French Ministry for Higher Education and Research:**
www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr
- **French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs:**
www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/
- **Online theses and topics:**
> Catalogue of graduate schools and online theses database and internships:
<https://doctorat.campusfrance.org>
> National Centre for the Reproduction of PhD Theses:
www.diffusiontheses.fr/anrt-catalogue-theses-doctorat.html
> Thèses.fr – Central thesis database:
www.theses.fr/sujets/
> The HAL multidisciplinary open archive: <https://hal.science/>
> *Système Universitaire de Documentation (SUDOC)*, the *Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur* – catalogue of bibliographical records:
www.sudoc.abes.fr

Find the full collection of publications on academic research in the 'Documentation' section of the Campus France website.



Documentation resources

www.campusfrance.org

- > Researchers > Research in France > Overview of French research by field
- > The Campus France Research Profiles

