

REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FACULTY MOBILITY AND SABBATICAL FUND'S RESOURCES

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE

(approved by the Faculty Board of 23 April 2025)

The following regulations include the regulations of UGent relating to the management of the faculty mobility and sabbatical fund's resources. *The additional faculty regulations are added in italics.*

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 Scope

§1 The present regulations are compiled in accordance with the decision of the Board of Governors of 14 February 2014 and 27 March 2018 to set up a faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund under Budget Department IV1 (BOF¹). This Mobility and Sabbatical Fund replaces the existing Faculty Fund II under Budget Department I.

§2 The present regulations govern the allocation key for the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund and dictate how its resources are spent. They do not pertain to Faculty Fund I, which supports the general faculty research policy.

CHAPTER 2: ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER OF THE FACULTY MOBILITY AND SABBATICAL FUND'S RESOURCES

Article 2 Allocation key

§1 The allocation key for the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund across the 11 faculties is determined on the basis of two capacity-based allocation keys:

Part A (mobility fund): the amount available for this part is distributed among the faculties on the basis of a base amount and the proportion of doctoral students and postdoctoral academic staff with a research assignment (in FTE), where the categories of postdoctoral personnel are counted twice (weighting factor 2).

Part B (sabbatical fund): the amount available for this part is distributed among the faculties on the basis of the number of professorial staff members (in FTE) from associate professor, with a minimum appointment rate of 80%.

§2 The following Ghent University statuses are included:

For part A:

- (1) Predoctoral (weighting factor 1): all enrolled doctoral students included in the OASIS database.
- (2) Postdoctoral (weighting factor 2):
 - IWT² – innovation mandates
 - FWO³ – postdoc
 - AAP⁴ – postdoctoral assistants
 - WP⁵ – postdoc
 - Postdoctoral fellows
 - VIB⁶ and IMEC⁷ mandates – postdoc

For part B:

¹ Stands for 'Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds' – Special Research Fund – Trans.

² Agency for Innovation by Science and Technology – Trans.

³ Research Foundation Flanders – Trans.

⁴ Assistant Academic Staff – Trans.

⁵ Academic Staff – Trans.

⁶ Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie – Life Sciences Research Institute – Trans.

⁷ Interuniversitair Micro-Elektronica Centrum – Inter-university Micro-Electronics Centre – Trans.

(3) Professorial staff members:

- Associate professor
- Full professor
- Senior full professor
- Senior full professor (part-time)

§3 With regard to the departments composed of staff of the integrated university college programmes⁸, the following integration staff categories are included with the weighting factors described below:

Postdoctoral (Part A, weighting factor 2):

- OP2 – Postdoctoral assistants
- Postdoctoral staff members

Professorial staff members (Part B)

- Associate professor OP3
- Full professor OP3
- Senior full professor OP3
- Senior full professor (part-time) OP3

§4 Timeframe: for the allocation key of the year “T”, the average is taken of the number of doctoral students, postdoctoral staff and professorial staff on 31/12 of the year “T-2”.

Article 3 Base amount

§1 Per faculty, a base amount of EUR 15,000 is provided in part A. The remaining budget is distributed according to the weighted proportion of predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers (FTE), including researchers belonging to the integration staff.

Part B is calculated in full according to the proportion of professorial staff members according to the prerequisites described in Article 2.

CHAPTER 3: FACULTY COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Article 4 Composition

§1 In accordance with Article 3 §2 of the [Regulations for the management of the resources of the Special Research Fund](#), each faculty, with a view to distributing the faculty research funds, shall establish a Scientific Research Committee which at least consists of the faculty's voting members who sit on the Research Council.

§2 At least for the benefit of spending the funds of the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund, this committee will be extended to include a representation of the AAP/WP.

§3 The composition of the Scientific Research Committee should be representative of the faculty in terms of content.

⁸ At the time of integration in the autumn of 2013, this affects the following departments: BW15, BW16, EA19, EA20, EB10, GE24, LW22, PS03.

§4 The composition of the Scientific Research Committee and any change in composition shall be approved by the Faculty Council.

§5 In accordance with Article 7 §1 of the [Regulations for the management of the resources of the Special Research Fund](#), the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research shall satisfy the gender composition requirements. Gender-balanced means that no more than two-thirds of the voting members belong to the same gender.

Article 5 Faculty regulations

§1 For the implementation of these university-wide regulations, each Faculty Committee for Scientific Research shall draft its own policy principles, procedures and modalities in faculty regulations. These regulations shall comply with the provisions of these university-wide regulations.

§2 The faculty regulations cannot enter into force until they are approved by the Faculty Council and the Research Council. Any proposal to amend the faculty regulations takes effect after approval by the Faculty Council and verification of compliance with the present regulations by the research administration (US1). All changes are reported once a year reported to the Research Council.

CHAPTER 4: FACULTY MOBILITY AND SABBATICAL FUND INITIATIVES

Article 6 General spending guidelines

§1 Resources from the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund are spent following an open call. The Faculty Committee for Scientific Research determines the target groups in accordance with Article 7 and Article 10 of the present regulations, as well as the selection and ranking criteria of the applications. These are stipulated in the call documents.

§2 In order to guarantee transparency in spending, the budget is directly paid from the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund to the beneficiary or else transferred to the budget of the beneficiary or his/her supervisor.

§3 The funds from Part A (Mobility Fund) and Part B (Sabbatical Fund) can be spent on all possible initiatives to support mobility and research sabbaticals.

Article 7 Mandatory mobility initiatives to be set up

§1 The faculty makes its Mobility and Sabbatical Fund available to all researchers. It can be spent on all possible initiatives to support mobility and research sabbaticals.

There should at least be calls for the funding of:

- active participation in conferences abroad, with priority being given to young researchers (predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers), regardless of their funding source. The Faculty Committee for Scientific Research defines what it means by active participation. *There are four calls annually (deadlines for submissions: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1, respectively).*

- a study period, at home or abroad *of minimum 1 month*, in research institutes or in organisations of the public or private sector, with priority being given to young researchers (predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers, *tenure track ZAP*), regardless of their funding source. *In addition, the FEA also opens up this call to all professorial staff members. There are two calls annually (deadlines for submissions: May 1, and November 1, respectively).*
- a stay of foreign researchers (incoming mobility, postdoctoral researchers), whose expertise can add value to the hosting Ghent University research group. *There are two calls annually (deadlines for submissions: May 1, and November 1, respectively).*
- a research sabbatical for professorial staff members, at home or abroad. *There are two calls annually (deadlines for submissions: April 1, and October 1, respectively).*

The faculty can also use the resources from the Mobility and Sabbatical Fund to support certain research-related costs for master's students and administrative and technical staff:

- Master students for research-related international mobility in the framework of e.g. master thesis or internships;
- administrative and technical staff with a research-related job content, such as e.g. laboratory-related positions, research technology-related positions, clinical trial staff, etc...

The FEA also opens up the calls for the funding of active participation in conferences abroad to administrative and technical staff with a research-related job content and affiliated with the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture.

§2 The faculty may choose to arrange other calls to support mobility.

A call is continuously open for support for participation in a doctoral course (summer school, doctoral school, tutorial or series of seminars) outside UGent and with an international character (see Article 8, paragraph 6) by predoctoral researchers.

§3 The resources of the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund can only be used for *sabbatical or mobility related* staffing and operating costs and cannot be used to cover the cost of equipment. Costs related to domestic or international mobility follow the same reimbursement rules of Ghent University as costs for work-related travel, as laid down in the [Regulations concerning compensation, allowances, reimbursement of expenses and social benefits](#).

§4. The faculty supports the general Ghent University policy for research sabbaticals, under the following prerequisites:

1. A sabbatical period is a right in the academic career. This right depends on a feasible implementation, taking into account the prerequisites below.
2. Taking a sabbatical period is easily accessible. A stay abroad may be encouraged but is not mandatory.
3. The administrative burden is minimal (work plan, report). In the case of an external financier, Ghent University's workflow can be tailored accordingly.
4. A sabbatical has a realistic duration, ranging from 1 semester (*= minimum duration of 3 months*) to 1 year. A sabbatical appears to comprise an average period of 6 months.

5. A sabbatical must be financially feasible. For a university-wide policy, the internal resources must complement external funds (see below).
6. A sabbatical must be organisationally feasible. Absence from Ghent University requires proper planning; replacements for educational and service tasks should be arranged in advance in order to guarantee the quality of education for students. The faculty and the department play a crucial facilitating role in this.
7. A sabbatical should be planned properly by the academic and should include a personal work plan that leaves enough room for flexibility and a concrete delegation of responsibilities that will not be taken up during the sabbatical.
8. The priority target group to make use of a research sabbatical is the group of professorial staff members with a minimum of 80% appointment rate, starting from the level of associate professor. This is a prioritisation in the sabbatical policy of Ghent University, but not an exclusion criterion.
9. Ghent University considers a sabbatical of an average of 6 months per cycle of 5 years in the academic career, for those who wish, feasible from a policy point of view if the faculty is sufficiently flexible with the available financial and organisational resources. Even after the adoption of managerial responsibilities as dean, director of studies or department chair for more than two years, a sabbatical should be a right, subject to practical implementation.
10. Each faculty can place its own emphasis in the preparation and implementation of a sabbatical culture, within these prerequisites.

Article 8 Allocation procedures

§1 In the framework of research stays *in Belgium or abroad in research institutes*, for young researchers *and professorial staff members*, the following applies:

1. The faculty shall determine the minimum and maximum periods of stay and the (quality) requirements which the foreign host institution must meet. *The long research stay has a minimum duration of 1 month and a maximum of 12 months.*
2. Researchers can receive support in the form of operating funds which cover (some of) the travel, accommodation and insurance expenses. *For stays abroad, a flat-rate compensation for day-stay expenses is permitted provided that a proof of the period of stay (e.g. rental contract) is submitted, the result of the FWO application (if applicable, see point 3) is submitted, and taking into account the maximum amounts allocated by the CWO. For stays in Belgium, there is no compensation for day-stay expenses and reimbursement of accommodation expenses is subject to justification of the necessity.*
3. *For stays abroad a researcher who meets the criteria to apply for an FWO travel grant for a long stay abroad must first submit an application for funding of the stay by the FWO. The FWO application form always serves as application form for the faculty mobility fund. Even those who do not meet the FWO criteria must complete the FWO application form, but not submit it to FWO. The allocation of a travel grant by the FWO will be deducted by the CWO.*
4. *A long research stay abroad applied for by a professorial staff member must take place in a period for which there is no need for exemption from teaching or service tasks. If there is such a need, a research sabbatical must be applied for.*

§2 In the framework of stays of foreign researchers (incoming mobility, postdoctoral

researchers), the following applies:

1. The faculty shall determine the minimum and maximum periods of the stay of the foreign researchers and the profile which the foreign researchers must meet. *The long research stay has a minimum duration of 1 month and a maximum of 90 days. The priority target group are postdoctoral researchers with at least 2 years of postdoctoral experience, whose expertise has an added value for the receiving FEA research group.*
2. For stays of up to and including 90 days:
 - the foreign researchers shall be registered as visitors at Ghent University and shall be provided a flat-rate monthly subsistence allowance.
 - the visitors will, or will not, have a visa C, short stay (tourist visa). This varies from country to country and must be requested in the country of origin.
 - the flat-rate subsistence allowance cannot exceed the limits laid down in the [Regulations concerning compensation, allowances, reimbursement of expenses and social benefits](#) based on flat-rate daily allowances for staying in Belgium.
 - a visitor's card must be applied for.
3. For stays exceeding 90 days:
 - the researcher shall be appointed as postdoctoral researcher in international mobility.⁹
 - the visitors may, or may not, require a visa D¹⁰ (for stays exceeding three months) or an academic visa (via a guest agreement). This varies from country to country and must be requested in the country of origin.
 - the Department of Personnel and Organisation concludes an agreement with the researchers. The scholarship agreement of these researchers must be drafted before the commencement of the research stay at Ghent University. Postdoctoral researchers with a scholarship are subject to the social security scheme. Due to the statutory DIMONA declaration, a retroactive appointment is not possible.
4. After a brief stay of up to and including 90 days, the foreign researcher cannot start a new stay until six months after the start (entry stamp) of the previous stay.

§3 In the framework of the research sabbatical for professorial staff members, the following applies:

1. The faculty shall determine the (quality) requirements which the host institution must meet for an international stay.
2. A minimum appointment percentage at Ghent University may be one of the criteria for the candidates, in accordance with the priority target group of the university-wide policy. *The priority target group is the group of professorial staff members with a minimum of 80% appointment rate, starting from the level of associate professor up to approximately 5 years before the expected end of the academic career.*
3. Two types of funding may be acquired:¹¹

⁹ See also the [Regulations of Ghent University governing Postdoctoral fellows with a fellowship in the context of international academic mobility](#) (approved by the Board of Governors of 4 March 2022).

¹⁰ It should be noted that this is a type D visa that allows its holder to work/carry out research (and not a type D visa to study).

¹¹ See also the [Regulations concerning compensation, allowances, reimbursement of expenses and social benefits](#) (approved by the Board of Governors on 10 December 2021), in particular for limits on

- Type 1: a contribution to travel and accommodation expenses, either on a flat-rate basis or on the basis of proven expenses. *A flat-rate compensation for day-stay expenses is permitted provided that a proof of the period of stay (e.g. rental contract) is submitted, the result of the FWO application (if applicable, see point 4) is submitted and taking into account the maximum amounts allocated by the CWO.*
 - Type 2: funding for the replacement of the professorial staff member so that the teaching assignment during the research sabbatical is not compromised. The replacement fee is based on the actual personnel cost needed to attract a replacement for carrying out the teaching duties.
4. *In order to be eligible for funding of type 1 the professorial staff member who meets the FWO criteria must first submit an application for a sabbatical bench fee to the FWO. The allocation of a sabbatical bench fee by the FWO will be deducted by the CWO.*
 5. *In case of a research_sabbatical@home it is possible to apply for financial support to invite colleagues in the framework of internationalisation@home. Here the procedures that apply to stays of foreign researchers (see Article 8, paragraph 2) must be followed.*

§4 In the framework of support for intersectoral mobility, the following applies:

1. The Mobility and Sabbatical Fund can be used to facilitate temporary stays of researchers in a different educational or research setting or in an organisation at home or abroad. *The support is limited to intersectoral mobility for a research stay with a minimum duration of 1 month and a maximum of 6 months at a non-academic institute..*
2. The faculty shall determine the target group of this support and the specific modalities for (co)funding, possibly in combination with other initiatives, such as European initiatives or initiatives from the private sector.
3. Within current legislation, only students, including doctoral students, are eligible for a status as 'trainee' during this period. For each traineeship in an educational or research setting or other organisation, a traineeship agreement shall be concluded between Ghent University, the student-trainee and the host organisation. The general rights and duties of trainees may also apply within this framework to support the intersectoral mobility of young researchers. This agreement shall be submitted to the Legal Office and the Techtransfer Department of Ghent University.
4. In the case of doctoral students, the trainee period should contribute to the doctoral research. Any restrictions imposed by a funding institution of the PhD must be respected.
5. People other than (doctoral) students, can, under current legislation, only justify such stays with an employment contract in the host institution. The Mobility and Sabbatical Fund may, however, be used to facilitate such stays.
6. *The aim of the intersectoral stay is to stimulate research valorization.*
7. *For stays abroad, a flat-rate compensation for day-stay expenses is permitted provided that a proof of the period of stay (e.g. rental contract) is submitted, and taking into account the maximum amounts allocated by the CWO. For stays in*

flat-rate subsistence allowances.

Belgium, there is no compensation for day-stay expenses and reimbursement of accommodation expenses is subject to justification of the necessity.

§5 In the framework of the participation in conferences/workshops/symposia abroad, with priority being given to young researchers (doctoral students and postdocs) affiliated with the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, the following applies:

- 1. Financial support from the faculty mobility fund can only be obtained if there is an active contribution in the form of a poster presentation or oral presentation delivered by the beneficiary.*
- 2. If the presentation at a conference is given jointly by two or more researchers, only a single researcher can apply for financial support for this.*
- 3. The support is limited to travel expenses, hotel expenses and the registration fee.*
- 4. The CWO can allocate financial support for at most 1 conference participation per applicant per calendar year.*
- 5. Priority is given to young researchers (doctoral students and postdocs), regardless of their funding source. If there are too many applications, preference will be given to (postdoctoral) assistants.*

§6 In the framework of the participation in a doctoral course (summer school, doctoral school, tutorial or series of seminars) outside UGent and with an international character (e.g. the course takes place abroad or there are foreign lecturers) by predoctoral researchers, the following applies:

- 1. The doctoral course must have a minimum of 15 contact hours and a certificate of participation is required. It must be a specialist course that is relevant to the doctoral research.*
- 2. The predoctoral researchers can receive financial support in the form of operating funds which cover (some of) the travel, accommodation and insurance expenses.*

§7 Applying for external funding. The faculty may require that candidates who meet the criteria of an external funder for a specific grant (e.g., FWO travel grant) first submit an application to this institution. If a researcher cannot submit an admissible application to an external funder, this does not constitute an exclusion criterion for submitting an application to the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund, unless the researcher can no longer submit an admissible application to the external funder due to late submission.

Article 9 Call and publication

§1 The faculty shall announce the various initiatives of the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund, the regulations, the call modalities and call forms on the faculty website and shall ensure transparent communication about the mobility resources.

§2 For each of the initiatives listed in Article 7, the faculty shall issue a call at least annually. The faculty may deviate from this based on policy or budgetary considerations and decide to issue a call only every two years.

§3 The modalities for awarding funding and the minimum conditions for submission (e.g. deadline, target group, selection criteria, period of stay, minimum and maximum amounts) are published in the call.

Article 10 Evaluation and decision

§1 In its selection, the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research cannot exclude *a priori* researchers on the basis of professional characteristics (seniority, funding status, ...), personal features (age, nationality, gender,) or performance-related characteristics (publications,...), unless otherwise indicated in the specific allocation procedures of the present regulations. It may, however, give priority to candidates with specific professional or performance-related characteristics.

§2 In its recommendation, the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research mainly considers the academic value of the proposal, the expected added value of the stay and the specific objective of the call.

§3 The persons concerned must inform the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research of the result of parallel funding applications that have been submitted to other institutions for the same purpose. When funding is awarded, consideration will be given to the amount granted from other financial sources.

§4 The Faculty Committee for Scientific Research can reclaim the allocated budgets if these are not used or used inappropriately. *The beneficiary must use the allocated funding before the indicated end date. If this proves impossible, the beneficiary must report this to the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research as soon as possible, so that the balance can be reclaimed.*

Article 11 Reporting

§1 The Faculty Committee for Scientific Research shall compile an annual report on the spending of the faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund based on a set template.

§2 This report shall be submitted to the Research Council annually. If it is established that a faculty has not spent the allocated funds with a view to meeting the aforementioned objectives, the Research Council may advise not to make the allocated funds available for the subsequent calendar year or make them partly available.

§3 The beneficiary will always report on the spending of the allocated funding as soon as this is requested by the Faculty Committee for Scientific Research.