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## Your doctoral studies at ITM

Are you ready to make an original contribution to science? Then you've probably already considered pursuing a research-based PhD. The Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) guides graduates along the path to becoming independent researchers in one of its many different scientific fields. ITM offers doctoral training in **medicine, health sciences, medical anthropology** and more, in collaboration with leading universities in Belgium and abroad.

## New future scientists every year

ITM currently supervises more than one hundred doctoral students. Half of them come from developing countries and follow a sandwich programme. In those cases, the majority of the research work is done in their homeland guided by a local supervisor. The remainder is done at ITM. Half of the PhD students are based at ITM and work as junior researcher. Some of the PhD students are mobile within specific PhD training networks, like [EUROLEISH.NET, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie – Innovative Training Network](#) on the neglected infectious disease leishmaniasis (sandfly disease).

Every year, recent graduates and experienced professionals apply at ITM for a doctoral position. These positions are limited, and as such, we ask you to:

- Discuss the research possibilities with the [professor of your area of expertise](#).
- Consult the [ITM research vacancies](#).
- Ask the [ITM research coordinator](#) your general questions about doctoral studies.

## Doctorate via research and academic work

Doctoral programmes usually last three to four years and consist of two components:

### Core: Research

- In ITM and/or on location.
- With publications in international peer-reviewed journals.
- Under guidance of a supervisor from ITM and the university supervisor.

### Support: Training programme

- Completed in collaboration with the relevant university.
- Generally aligned with the themes from your research thesis.
- With the possibility for partial or complete recognition of prior learning, depending on acquired competences.

## Your path to the title of 'doctor' (PhD)

ITM offers different study trajectories to allow you to complete your doctorate in medical sciences or a different area of expertise.

### ITM sandwich doctoral programme (for international doctoral candidates from low and middle income countries)

- Main requirement: fieldwork in your home land, guided and overseen by a local supervisor.
- Remaining time: research activities pursued at ITM.
- [Annual call](#) for scholarships via the ITM-DGD framework agreement which finances a number of sandwich scholarships for doctoral projects being pursued by ITM alumni.

### ITM Assistant Academic Track

- Main requirement: prepare a PhD thesis and to assist your professor in other academic duties including education and scientific services delivery
- ITM employee (labour contract)
- Call for proposals every two years with vacancies published

### ITM junior researcher

- Main requirement: conduct research in the context of a specific research project/projects
- ITM employee (labour contract)
- Consult the [ITM research vacancies](#).

### ITM PhD hosting programme for university fellows or self-supporting students

- Fellows with a scholarship from the Research Fund – Flanders ([FWO](#); *Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek* in Dutch), Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship ([VLAIO](#); *Agentschap Innoveren en Ondernemen* in Dutch), or other agencies who wish to pursue their doctoral research activities in collaboration with ITM.

## Admission to doctoral programmes

To be admitted to the ITM doctoral programmes, you generally need to meet the following criteria:

- You fulfill the academic **admission criteria**. The academic selection criteria of the PhD awarding university a priori apply. Request these from your university professor.
- You have the necessary **language skills** – especially important when your native language is different to the language of your thesis. Candidates who are non-native English speakers or who have not already successfully completed higher education in English, must be able to prove their language proficiency with a certificate from a recognized institution (required level: TOEFL paper-based 580, computer-based 230, Internet-based 88 or IELTS 6.5. (ITM Toefl Code 7727)).
- You have found suitable **supervision and guidance** for your research. A supervisor at the ITM, at the university that will award the PhD diploma and at your home institute in case of sandwich PhD track should declare their commitment to supervise your research.
- You know the details and demands of your formal **doctoral training programme**.
- Your **research proposal** has been approved by the ITM PhD Committee and the collaborating university.
- You are sure of the **financing** of your training costs, your workplace agreement and your research costs.
- You have accepted the **regulations** of the ITM and your degree awarding institution:
  - Scholarship regulations
  - Regulations for Research and PhD courses at ITM

## Start your PhD now

- Discuss the PhD opportunities with the [ITM professor of your area of expertise](#).
- Contact the research coordinator at ITM to discuss your plans.

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