STRUCTURE OF DOCTORAL STUDIES

Doctoral studies are based on an individual research project and directed by the supervisor of the dissertation. You will be supervised by professors and experts of international renown.

It is possible to do doctoral research in a wide range of subjects throughout the different faculties at UNIGE, which provide an international and competitive environment for your research.

Doctoral schools
UNIGE has also developed doctoral schools, often in partnership with other universities in the region. They offer doctoral students supplementary training and research opportunities.

The activities available foster the development of disciplinary, methodological and cross-disciplinary skills, as well as other competencies which are essential to researchers’ professional training.

Participation in a doctoral school programme is not compulsory and is not required to obtain the doctorate.

Length of study
The duration of doctoral studies is 6 to 10 semesters.

Discipline and language
All the disciplines taught at the University of Geneva offer a doctoral degree. The doctoral student can choose the language in which s/he wishes to write the dissertation, with the agreement of his/her supervisor.

How to apply

Important deadline
Applications for enrolment, including additional documentation required for online enrolment, must be mailed by the end of April at the latest to the Admission Office.

Procedure of admission
Find and contact a professor to supervise the dissertation or apply for one of the assistantships advertised on the UNIGE website.

Apply online through the UNIGE website once the professor has been contacted.

To be eligible for doctoral studies, candidates must:
• meet the enrolment conditions of UNIGE
• hold a Master’s degree or equivalent diploma which is recognised by UNIGE

Submit your doctoral proposal to the professor and get her/his written agreement. The proposal must also be submitted to the Faculty’s College of professors for final agreement.

Complete the application for enrolment and submit your complete dossier to the Students’ Administrative Space.

N.B. The procedure may differ depending on the faculty concerned.

JOIN DOCTORAL DEGREE

The joint doctoral degree allows a doctoral candidate to earn a degree from two separate institutions by defending one single dissertation.

The dissertation is supervised by two thesis directors, one from each institution, which thereby undertake to award a single doctoral degree on the basis of one dissertation. The diploma so awarded indicates that it has been granted as a double doctorate by «The partner institution» and the UNIGE.

FUNDING

Assistantship positions
The faculties offer paid assistantship positions. Doctoral candidates may apply if their dissertation projects correspond to the discipline for which a position is offered.

Excellence Fellowships
Candidates who are recipients of a scholarship or grant offered by an external organisation may qualify for simplified enrolment through the International Relations office and may be exempted from certain fees.

Swiss Government Scholarships
The Confederation offers university research scholarships and artistic scholarships to foreign students.

Prizes-Grants-Subsidies
The University has a number of permanent funds which are used to give prizes or grants, or to provide various types of subsidies (research, travel, conferences, publications, SNSF, UE, etc.).

Other sources of funding
Much of the funding for university research comes from resources outside of the University’s basic budget. Researchers at the University of Geneva receive more than 130 million francs per year through highly competitive grant application processes, from the Swiss National Science Foundation, the European Union, special national and international programmes, foundations and research-allocated resources which are managed by the University.

AFTER A PHD

After completing the dissertation, doctoral students may continue their research as postdoc researchers. In addition, some may take up intermediary posts (maître d’enseignement et de recherche, maître assistant or premier assistant), which can lead to professional posts (such as assistant professor or full professor).
Université de Genève (UNIGE) is Switzerland’s second largest university with 30,000 students of more than 153 different nationalities. UNIGE is a global university, almost 40% of students, 6% of academic staff and 8% of doctoral students come from abroad.

UNIGE is composed of nine faculties (Science, Medicine, Humanities, Social Sciences, Economics and Management, Law, Psychology and educational sciences, Theology, Translation and interpreting) and twelve interdisciplinary Centres (Informatics, Genomics, Global Studies Institute...). In addition, various multidisciplinary research projects are in progress at UNIGE (for example, in the areas of neuroscience, the effective sciences, the environment), which reflect the wide scope of its activities.

UNIGE is an open institution to the world’s elite. As a result of these efforts, the university is able to recruit top-level scientists and educators, thereby attracting the best and brightest students. Also thanks to these efforts, UNIGE has hosted several Nobel laureates and recipients of other distinguished prizes, as students, researchers and/or professors including:

- Maurice Allais, Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 1988
- Martin Rössel, Nobel Prize in Medicine 1994
- Alan Jay Heeger, Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2000
- Koji Amada, Nobel Peace Prize 2011
- Stanislav Smirnov, Fields Medal (mathematics) 2010
- Martin Rodbell, Nobel Prize in Medicine 1994
- Maurice Allais, Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 1988

Competitive research funding and world-class research findings

- More than 50 million external research funding in 2019
- Lead or co-leads of six National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCR), SwissMAP, Chemical Biology, Affective Sciences, Synaptic Bases of Mental Diseases and D4E—Overcoming vulnerabilities in a life course perspective
- Major developments in the sciences: the discovery of extrasolar planets, major contributions in the field of quantum physics
- Bio projects which have received highly competitive funding
- Scientific collaborative research projects with no countries
- 400 publications in scientific journals per year
- 26% of the University of Geneva’s publications fell in the top 10% most cited of their discipline, showing the high impact of the research conducted.

Cutting-edge research infrastructures

- High-performance computing, seed to tackle some of the world’s most complex scientific challenges.
- A multilingual research environment.
- A unique facility dedicated to brain and behavioral studies.
- A Centre for Biomolecular Imaging equipped with some of the most powerful Magnetic Resonance Imaging systems in Europe capable of revealing not just the anatomy but the in-vivo metabolism.
- A centre for the development of the bioethics vector: the Bioethics Campus (The EPFL and UNIGE will inaugurate 15,000 m² of the Säckler site. Half of this surface area will be occupied by the Wyss Institute for Bio- and Neuronic Engineering, the other half by research groups from the EPFL and UNIGE.)

European Research Programmes

UNIGE participates in many European research programmes, including the European Framework Programme for Research (FP7, Horizon 2020), which offers a wide range of opportunities through collaborative projects, individual ERC excellence grants and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions networks and post-doc fellowships. Other openings for doctoral studies are provided by the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) and the European Space Agency (ESA). UNIGE also participates in major European research programmes and in many of the biggest European research networks.

European research grants (2015) (in Swiss Francs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Amount (in CHF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCCR, 2015 contributions</td>
<td>17,470,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,703,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

European cooperation in the field of scientific and technological research (2014)

72% of research conducted with international partners.