Research School
Behavioural and
Cognitive Neurosciences

Instructions for application BCN Research Master PhD Research Proposal 2023

A. General Information

These guidelines are designed to help to complete an application for a PhD position within a neurosciences research group at the UMCG / Faculty of Medical Sciences under the umbrella of the Graduate School of Medical Sciences (GSMS) and the Research School of Behavioural and Cognitive Neurosciences (BCN). For the 2023 proposal, the GSMS can award one 3-year and one 4-year PhD position. PhD students will be employed by the UMCG and will have a regular employee contract.

The application should consist of [I] a BCN Research Master's research proposal that complies with the program of the UMCG Research Institute Brain and Cognition, [II] a letter of recommendation by a UMCG principal investigator, participating in one of the Brain and Cognition research programs (for more info, see research programs), who recommends the student for participation and is willing to act as supervisor for the PhD project and [III] a letter of recommendation from the program coordinator of the research program in which the proposed research project will be carried out and / or a (former) supervisor of a research training project the applicant has completed. Eligible proposals will be invited for an oral presentation of the research proposal.

The research proposal and the presentation will be evaluated by a committee composed of members of the UMCG Research Institute Brain and Cognition, the coordinator of the BCN Master N-track program, and at least two independent reviewers. The evaluation committee will rate all eligible proposals and will award maximum two PhD positions based on [1] the quality of the candidates (45%), [2] the quality of the research proposed (45%), and [3] its cultural, societal, technological or economic impact (10%). The decision to award either a 3-year or 4-year PhD will be based on the quality of the motivation for the fourth year of funding as part of the research proposal and interview. For this reason, please note that the proposed research should be feasibly completed within 3 years.

Applicants must submit a detailed research proposal following the instructions as described in part B. 'Instructions for application' of this letter. Applicants write their own PhD proposal (under supervision of a UMCG principal investigator) and should have finished their Master studies preferably 1st of September, 2023, but the latest by 1st of December, 2023 if there is a delay caused by the coronavirus outbreak. Students are allowed to apply until maximum 1 year after graduation from their Master studies.

The **deadline** for submission is **Monday, 3rd of July, 2023**
The **interviews** will take place in the **second week of July 2023 (week 28)**

A maximum of two PhD positions (one 3-year and one 4-year position) will be awarded to BCN Research Master students in 2023.

Submissions should be sent to:
Mrs. E.T. Kuiper-Drenth
Secretary Research School BCN/GSMS, UMCG (HPC FA30)
Hanzeplein 1
9713 GZ Groningen
Tel.: +31 (0)50 361 6778
E-mail: e.t.kuiper-drenth@umcg.nl (with a Cc. to bcn@umcg.nl)

university of
groningen

umcg

B. Instructions for application

Applicants write their own PhD proposal (under supervision of an UMCG principal investigator) and should have finished their Master studies at the latest by 1st of December, 2023. Students are allowed to participate until maximum 1 year after graduation from their Master studies.

B.1 Documents to be submitted.

Applicants must provide an updated *CV* and a *ProgRESS-report* with all grades obtained during their Research Master training up to the time of submission of this application. Please include a copy of your Master's project, and a list of all submitted or published papers.

B.2 Structure of the Research Proposal

Do not exceed the stated maximum number of words for each section and use a 10-point font size, except for references to the literature, which may be given in 9-point. If the stated maximum number of words has been exceeded the application will not be considered for award. The research proposal should be completed in **English** and must include the following sections:

1. **Title + name of applicant + name of UMCG supervisor participating in one of the Brain and Cognition research programs** (for more info, see research programs)

2. **Summary**

Provide a summary of the proposal (topic, approach and potential importance of results) in no more than 300 words and specify up to five keywords.

3. **Description of the proposed research**

Describe the proposed research project as accurately as possible within the stated maximum number of words (maximum 2000 words on no more than 4 pages, excluding references). Please indicate the number of words used.

This section should include details about:

a. Research topic
- Overall aim, key objectives, scientific background
- Originality and/or innovative elements of the topic
- Significance (contribution or potential contribution to science, technology and/or society)

b. Approach
- Experimental techniques and/or methodology, and ongoing research in the research group. Please indicate how the required bench fee will be funded in case this exceeds € 4500,- a year.

c. Innovation
- Originality and/or innovative elements of the approach
- Plan of work
- Research plan (practical timetable over the grant period)
- DEC and/or METc approval
- Local, national and international collaboration (please provide details of collaborating research groups)

4. Motivation for fourth year of PhD funding (if relevant)

Students wishing to apply for a 4-year PhD position should include a brief description of the research plans should an additional year of funding be awarded (maximum 200 words).

5. Literature references

List all relevant literature and full bibliographical details.

6. Letters of support/recommendation
-   Letter of recommendation by an UMCG principal investigator, participating in one of the UMCG Research Institute Brain and Cognition research programs (for more info, see research programs), who recommends the student for participation and is willing to act as supervisor for the PhD project. Please indicate in the letter of support how the proposed research relates to ongoing research in the group and include a budget for the required bench money over the three-year period. In case a fourth year may be needed for the project, please indicate how this will be funded.
-   Letter of recommendation from the program coordinator of the research program in which the proposed research project will be carried out and / or a (former) supervisor of a research-training project the applicant has completed.

B.3 Oral Presentation

Eligible proposals will be invited for an oral presentation. The oral presentations will take place after the deadline for submission of the research proposal in the **second week of July 2023 (week 28)**. The presentation should not last longer than 10 minutes. Brief motivation for a fourth year of funding (if relevant) should be included. There will be 5 minutes for discussion thereafter.