

Guideline of the Graduate Academy

concerning Grants under UniLU Doc.Mobility and UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time

dated 2 March 2026

The Vice-Rector for Research,

pursuant to § 4 para. 2 and § 14 para. 3 lit. a of the Statute of the University of Lucerne (University Statute) of 13 December 2023 as well as § 5 para. 2 of the Organizational Regulations of the Research Commission of the University of Lucerne (OrgR FoKo) of 1 January 2025,

resolves:

1. General Provisions

§ 1 Subject Matter and Purpose

1 This Guideline regulates the framework conditions and the procedure for the awarding of UniLU Doc.Mobility grants and the granting of UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time within the framework of doctoral support at university level. Further details may be specified in an information sheet.

2 Through the awarding of UniLU Doc.Mobility grants, the Graduate Academy supports mobility stays of doctoral candidates at the University of Lucerne. During the mobility stay, the candidates shall deepen their academic knowledge, advance their dissertation, and expand their international network. Grant recipients shall pursue their research activities in an international context, thereby fostering disciplinary expertise and interdisciplinary collaboration.

3 Through UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time, the Graduate Academy grants doctoral candidates employed at the University of Lucerne as research assistants protected research time for the purpose of completing their qualification thesis. During this protected research period, doctoral candidates are fully released from their duties, in particular assistance, teaching and administrative tasks of the professorship, and are required to devote their working time exclusively to the completion of their dissertation. During the protected research period, they shall receive their full salary. The salary costs shall be borne by the Graduate Academy (contribution pursuant to § 11 para. 1).

4 There is no entitlement to the awarding of grants or the granting of protected research time.

§ 2 Principles

1 When awarding UniLU Doc.Mobility grants, due consideration shall be given to ensuring that the mobility stay serves both academic specialization and academic development, in particular the strengthening of the international network.

2 The place of research during mobility stays must not correspond to the place of training. The host institution should also not be located in the applicant's country of origin; exceptions may be permitted upon a scientifically justified request.

3 Within the framework of UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time, the protected research period must be used exclusively for the purpose of completing the qualification thesis.

4 Applicants for a UniLU Doc.Mobility grant whose application has been rejected may apply for a grant at most one additional time, provided that all requirements pursuant to § 5 are fulfilled. A renewed application for UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time by applicants whose request has been rejected is excluded.

§ 3 Duration and Commencement of the UniLU Doc.Mobility Grant

1 The UniLU Doc.Mobility grant is generally awarded for a period of at least three and at most twelve months.

2 Applicants shall indicate in their application the date on which they wish to begin the grant. The commencement date shall be the first day of the month in which the mobility stay begins. The end date shall be the last day of the month in which the mobility stay takes place.

3 The grant may commence no earlier than six weeks after receipt of the notification of the award. It must commence no later than twelve months after receipt of the notification of the award.

4 UniLU Doc.Mobility grants cannot be awarded retroactively.

§ 4 Duration and Start of UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time

1 The coverage of salary costs (contribution pursuant to § 11 para. 1) within the framework of UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time shall be granted for a maximum of six months. The number of months and the starting date of the protected research period may be determined in consultation with the professorship.

2 The protected research period shall begin in the semester following the decision on the award. Retroactive granting is excluded.

3 During the protected research period, the employment relationship shall continue. The duration of the protected research period shall be counted towards the maximum duration of employment pursuant to § 4 of the Regulations on Research Assistants at the University of Lucerne.

2. Formal Requirements

§ 5 Requirements

1 Doctoral candidates of all faculties of the University of Lucerne are eligible to apply for a UniLU Doc.Mobility grant or UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time, provided that they meet the following requirements:

a) they are enrolled as doctoral candidates at the University of Lucerne at the time of application;

b) they are not pursuing their doctorate within the framework of a project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).

An application for UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time may be submitted at the earliest in the penultimate semester, and in justified cases already in the third-to-last semester, before the end of the applicant's employment as a research assistant (§ 4 para. 1 of the Regulations on Research Assistants at the University of Lucerne).

2 The grant must be applied for a mobility stay of at least three and at most twelve months; a maximum of six months may be applied for as protected research time.

3 The application must include the following documents (either in German or English):

a) UniLU Doc.Mobility

- Curriculum vitae (including career plan and list of previous academic achievements) and confirmation of enrolment
- Delivery address in Switzerland for official communications
- Research plan for the mobility stay
- Confirmation and support letter from the foreign host institution signed by the academically responsible person
- If accompanied by family members (§ 10 para. 3): personal details and copy of the family record book or birth certificate(s)
- Confirmation and reference letter from the primary supervisor at the University of Lucerne

b) UniLU Doc.Protected Research Time

- Application dossier (research outline, curriculum vitae and relief plan explaining implementation of the relief from duties)
- Letter of support from the primary supervisor indicating how the contribution (§ 11 para. 1) will compensate the temporary loss of work performance and confirming that measures are taken to avoid additional workload for other staff

The Graduate Academy reviews the planned use of the compensation pursuant to § 7. It may request further evidence if necessary.

4 Upon submission, applicants confirm that:

- they have taken note of this Guideline and its obligations;
- their application is complete and accurate;
- the application was prepared independently and in compliance with scientific integrity.

5 For mobility grants awarded to persons without Swiss nationality, all arrangements regarding stay abroad (visa, entry requirements, etc.) and possible effects on residence status in Switzerland lie solely within the responsibility of the applicants.

3. Procedure

§ 6 Submission Deadline

1 Two application deadlines are set each year and announced via the Graduate Academy newsletter and website.

2 Applications must be submitted electronically via the University of Lucerne Research Information System (FIS) by the deadline. Late submissions will not be considered.

§ 7 Preliminary Review

1 The Graduate Academy verifies whether applications fulfil the requirements pursuant to § 5. Applications not meeting the requirements will not be considered.

§ 8 Evaluation and Decision

1 Applications are forwarded to the Research Commission (FoKo) for scientific evaluation and recommendation.

2 Evaluation is conducted according to the criteria of the Guideline concerning the Requirements and Procedure for the Awarding of Research Funding of the University of Lucerne (Research Funding Guideline) of 1 January 2025.

3 The Graduate Academy makes the final decision based on the FoKo recommendation and notifies applicants in writing.

§ 9 Additional Funding

1 Applicants must inform the Graduate Academy in writing if they receive additional funding for the planned mobility period.

2 If additional funding exceeds 20% of the UniLU Doc.Mobility grant, the grant may be reduced accordingly (reduction of the amount exceeding 120% of the grant).

4. Rights and Obligations

§ 10 Mobility Lump Sum

1 Grants are paid as a lump sum for living, travel and research costs.

2 Lump-sum rates are determined by the Graduate Academy and published online.

3 Applicants with children may request an increased amount.

4 Employed grant recipients shall apply for unpaid leave in accordance with personnel regulations.

5 The mobility stay interrupts the maximum duration of employment in accordance with personnel regulations for the duration of the stay.

6 Payment is made upon request at the earliest one month before commencement, in Swiss francs, to a bank or postal account in Switzerland.

§ 11 Contribution for Protected Research Time

1 The professorship receives a contribution of 70% of salary costs (maximum six months) to finance replacement staff.

2 Payment is made upon request of the professorship.

§ 12 Taxes and Insurance

1 The grant is awarded without consideration and may constitute taxable income.

2 No insurance coverage is included. Insurance obligations remain the responsibility of the recipients.

§ 13 Enrolment

Continuous enrolment at the University of Lucerne is mandatory during the entire funding period.

§ 14 Changes

Changes to research plan or location require prior written approval of the Graduate Academy.

§ 15 Withdrawal and Termination

1 Immediate written notification is required in case of withdrawal, delay or early termination.

2 Repayment:

- pro rata temporis in case of early termination
- in full in case of withdrawal, late or non-commencement

For protected research time, the release from duties ends immediately.

§ 16 Reporting

A final report must be submitted within three months after completion to the Graduate Academy and the primary supervisor.

5. Final Provisions

§ 17 Further Provisions

In cases of misuse or violations, the Act on University Higher Education and the University Statute apply.

In cases of suspected scientific misconduct, the Regulations on Scientific Integrity and Good Scientific Practice apply.

§ 18 Entry into Force

1 This Guideline enters into force on 2 March 2026.

2 It replaces the Regulations of 13 December 2023, subject to transitional provisions for applications submitted in 2024 and 2025.

3 The Regulations on Contributions for Research Stays Abroad of 1 January 2021 are repealed upon entry into force.

4 In the event of inconsistencies between the German and English versions, the German version shall be legally binding. The English version is provided for informational purposes only and does not have legal effect.