



WTO SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES

TERMS AND CONDITIONS 2025

I. ELIGIBILITY

1. The Programme is open to doctoral students from Developing and Least-Developed Countries and customs territories that are WTO Members (or engaged in WTO accession negotiations). Government officials are not eligible to apply to the Programme.
2. Applicants must be undertaking a WTO-related PhD or equivalent in economics, law, international relations, or other relevant discipline.
3. Applicants must be in the final stage of their PhD. As a general guideline, a minimum of 75% of their thesis should be completed and submitted with their application.
4. If the thesis is not in one of the three official WTO languages (English, French or Spanish) this will reduce the likelihood of acceptance to the Programme (which depends on the availability of WTO staff to serve as mentor).
5. Applications must be accompanied by a written recommendation from the applicant's academic supervisor plus a letter from the University attended by the applicant confirming that he/she is registered for a PhD degree.
6. Those who are accepted into the PhD Support Programme will be requested to provide a medical certificate prior to the commencement of their residency.
7. Prior to accepting a candidate, the WTO Selection Committee may contact the applicant's academic supervisor if further information is deemed necessary.

II. CONTRACTUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. NATURE OF THE PROGRAMME

8. Participants in the PhD support Programme are expected to make use of their time at the WTO Secretariat to advance the completion of their doctoral thesis, taking advantage of access to facilities and information as well as opportunities for interaction with the general trade policy community.
9. While they are at the WTO, participants will work exclusively and autonomously on their own research and thesis and will not be expected to undertake assignments on behalf of the WTO Secretariat and will, therefore, not be considered officials or staff members of the Organization.

B. DURATION

10. Participation in the PhD support Programme may start at any time during the year. The duration of the residency is between three and six months maximum and will be agreed between the parties in advance. Entry into the PhD support Programme does not entail any right to an extension in that programme, or any right to be considered for an internal vacancy in another part of the Secretariat. Participants in the PhD support Programme are not permissible to apply for an internship with the Secretariat.
 11. Contracts undertaken must be continuous.
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12. Participation in the Programme may be terminated by the WTO Secretariat or the participant with one week's notice.

C. ASSIGNMENT OF A MENTOR

13. A mentor will be assigned to the participant for the duration of the Programme. The role of the mentor will be to serve as a contact point to facilitate the participant's access to other WTO staff. The mentor is not intended to take on the role of an academic supervisor.

14. Prior to the end of the residency, the participant will deliver a presentation on their work to interested staff.

15. The mentor responsible for the participant will complete a short questionnaire at the end of the support period, and the participant will also be required to evaluate the Programme. Both documents will be placed on file.

D. REMUNERATION

16. Participants shall receive a daily allowance of 60 Swiss francs (including weekends and official holidays falling within the selected period). No other remuneration of any kind shall be paid.

17. The contract between the PhD student and the Director of the Human Resources Division will specify the conditions of service and details of the remuneration.

E. LEAVE

18. The participant may be authorized to take time off not exceeding two days per month, except that the participant is required to be on duty on the last day of the Programme. Untaken annual leave will not be compensated at the time of separation from service.

F. TRAVEL AND VISA

19. For those participants not resident in Switzerland, an economy class round-trip ticket (excursion fare) will be arranged by the WTO Secretariat. **Participants must not arrange their own travel.** The point of departure/return must be from the participant's home country or official residence if the latter is not the same as the home country. Return must take place within 2 weeks from the end of contract.

20. For those participants who are resident in Switzerland, no travel expenses will be paid.

21. Participants will be responsible for obtaining their **own visas** (including transit if necessary) for travel to and from the WTO, as well as for any travel undertaken during the duration of their residence in Switzerland. Costs related thereto are not reimbursed by the WTO.

22. Participants must ensure that their passport is valid for at least six months after the end of the Programme.

23. Once the participant's flights have been booked (both to and from Geneva), any changes to the flights requested by the participant which incur a cost must be paid for by the participant and must first be approved by the WTO HR Division.

G. HEALTH INSURANCE

24. Please note that Swiss law requires participants to have health insurance cover for illness and accidents while working in Switzerland and participants are responsible for organizing this themselves (please note that this is different to having only travel insurance). If the participant already has health insurance, a recent insurance certificate attesting adequate coverage in Switzerland which sets out the details of the illness and accident coverage for the duration of the contract and **which meets Swiss requirements**, must be provided to the HR Division. If you do not have such coverage, **the participant must enroll in a Swiss insurance scheme.**

H. RESIDENCE PERMIT

25. On the arrival of the participant in Geneva, the WTO will apply to the Swiss authorities for a Carte de légitimation Series H (residence permit) for the participant.

I. FAMILY MEMBERS

26. The family members of a person holding a Carte de légitimation Series H may not be admitted to Switzerland for the purpose of family regrouping. Should a participant decide to be accompanied by family members, the WTO is not in a position to assist with residence permits or medical insurance costs.

J. ACCOMMODATION

27. Participants will be responsible for all expenditures relating to their accommodation during their stay in Geneva.

28. The WTO is not in a position to pay an advance deposit on behalf of a participant for accommodation. However, if requested, the Secretariat will provide a letter to the participant confirming their participation in the Doctoral Support Programme.

K. INFORMATICS

29. The WTO will provide the participant with a standard desktop computer with access to a printer. The computer will be installed with a standard Microsoft Office package. No additional software can be installed on WTO computers.

L. SELECTION PROCESS

30. Applications to the Programme are reviewed and decided by a Selection Committee.

31. Decisions are normally communicated to an applicant one month after the date of the application.

32. Positions are limited, and the application process is competitive. Key considerations include the relevance of the dissertation to the work of the WTO, and the availability of staff members with expertise and experience to serve as a mentor.



WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU COMMERCE
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL COMERCIO

WTO Support Programme for Doctoral Studies
Application Form

Participation in the doctoral support Programme
is not connected with employment in the WTO in any way

To be completed by the applicant:

1. Family name (exactly as it appears on your passport):

First names:

Male { } Female { } Marital Status:

Date and place of Birth (day, month, year):

Present Nationality:

Passport No:

Place and date of issues:

Date of expiry:

e-mail address:

2. Permanent address and tel. no.:

3. Present address and tel. no., including mobile number if applicable:

4. Information to be provided:

(a) degrees acquired (institution, place, country, years attended, main subjects of study):

(b) title of PhD thesis, language in which the PhD thesis is written as well as working language, if different, and target date for completion:

(c) Please refer to the Terms and Conditions (above) of the Programme for the exact requirements, depending on your discipline.

(d) an explanation of why you believe that participation in the PhD support Programme will assist in the preparation of your thesis. Please also include a brief statement of why you are interested in participating in the WTO's PhD support Programme.

5 Please enclose a CV, a letter of recommendation from your academic supervisor and provide his/her contact details. Please also enclose a letter from the University you are attending, confirming that you are registered in the relevant PhD Programme.

6. Dates proposed for participation in the WTO doctoral support Programme (from 3 to 6 months):

7. Please advise if you are a government official:

I certify that the statements made by me in answer to the foregoing questions are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature:

Date:

Please return this form together with attachments to: supportprogrammefordoctoralstudies@wto.org
