

ODYSSEUS CALL 2026

Are you an international academic looking for research funding to pursue cutting-edge research at UHasselt? Apply for an Odysseus research grant to receive five years of project funding, offered by the Flemish Government (Research Foundation Flanders). Successful candidates are offered a staff position at UHasselt.

To apply, please consult your UHasselt scientific contacts and complete the UHasselt internal application form. Please send this form to research@uhasselt.be. Please first read the eligibility criteria and instructions below.

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1. OFFER FOR ODYSSEUS TYPE I GRANTS

- 5 year grant, from €400.000 to € 700.000 euros/year (personnel costs, consumables, equipment. The salary of the Odysseus grantholder should not be included - this is covered by the University)
- Opportunity to start your own research unit and research line at UHasselt. Both have to fit within the strategy of the Faculty or Research Groups/Institutes and complement current research of the university.
- Grants are available for all UHasselt faculties and research disciplines that are hosted by UHasselt.
- UHasselt offers a permanent position in one of the senior academic grades.

1.1 ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to apply for an Odysseus Type I grant if you:

- are an established and internationally recognized researcher, leading your own research group. You have an outstanding international reputation in your field.
- have an excellent track record in research and evidence of teaching skills and academic leadership
- have had an academic or other research position of at least 80% outside Belgium for at least three years in the last five years (reference date 30.09.2026).

2. OFFER FOR ODYSSEUS TYPE II GRANTS

- 5-year grants, € 100 K – 200 K/year (personnel costs, consumables, equipment) (salary of the Odysseus grantholder should not be included! This is covered by the university)
- Opportunity to start your own research group and research line at UHasselt. Both have to fit within the strategy of the Faculty or research group/institute and complement current research of the university.
- Grants are available for all UHasselt faculties and research disciplines that are hosted by UHasselt.
- UHasselt offers an academic position, a tenure track academic position or a tenured academic position. This depends on your track record and the policy of the Faculties and Research Groups/Institutes.

2.1 ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to apply for an Odysseus Type II grant if you:

- are a successful researcher with minimum 3 years and a maximum of 12 years of postdoctoral experience?
- have a strong track record in research and evidence of teaching skills and academic leadership. Type II applicants must have demonstrated potential to become outstanding scholars with international acclaim in their field of study
- have had an academic or other research position outside Belgium for at least three years in the last five years (reference date 30.09.2026).

3. SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

The following procedure holds both for Type I and Type II Odysseus Grants and for all candidates

Although Odysseus grants are awarded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) candidates first have to go through a limited preselection procedure at a Flemish university of their choice. This is because the universities have to provide a binding letter of commitment stating that the candidate, if selected for funding, will effectively be able to take up a permanent academic position at the university. Without this letter of commitment, the application is ineligible.

The internal UHasselt procedure consists of the following steps:

- The internal application form is to be submitted no later than **May 30 2026**, to the UHasselt Directorate Research, Library, and Internationalisation (research@uhasselt.be) via the application form (see below)
- The Directorate Research, Library, and Internationalisation, Faculties and Research Groups/Institutes will evaluate the files and will give a pass/fail: first candidates will go through an eligibility check and secondly they will be evaluated by the Faculties and/or Research Groups/Institutes, who will evaluate the candidates based on the following criteria:
 1. Available FTEs in function of the academic staff position via 1) BOF ZAP or 2) regular ZAP or 3) ZAP Tenure Track
 2. Quality of the CV and the project
 3. Match with the research policy of the Faculty/Research Group/Institutes
 4. Willingness of the candidate to integrate in UHasselt
- **By the end of June**, candidates will be informed about the pass/fail scores. Candidates with a pass will be invited to draw up a proposal for FWO. They will also be informed about the procedure for acquiring their academic position. Please be aware that receiving a pass does not necessarily mean that UHasselt will offer you an academic position in case the Odysseus project is awarded:
 - In some cases, the candidate will still have to go through UHasselt-internal application procedures for the academic position
 - In exceptional cases, there might be two candidates for the same position, in which case UHasselt will select the candidate who is most highly ranked by the international FWO-jury
 - UHasselt is obliged to maintain a gender balance for the candidates they support. It will be the research council who takes a decision in case this balance is not in line with the FWO guidelines.
- **By August 31**, candidates have to confirm to the Directorate Research, Library, and Internationalisation that they will submit a proposal to FWO by the internal deadline (23/9/2026).
- **By September 23 the candidate submits** his/her application (internal deadline)
- **By September 30, 5pm**, OBI submits the application forms (available in the FWO e-portal) to FWO.

The FWO-procedure consists of the following steps:

- An international, multidisciplinary jury will evaluate the submissions. Per submission, four external referee reports will be requested. In principle, each eligible candidate will be invited to present his/her project to an ad hoc international jury. After the oral presentation, candidates will be interviewed by this Odysseus jury. However, in case of more than 20 eligible candidates of a specific Type, the FWO reserves the right to perform a pre-selection. In this case, the international jury will decide which eligible candidates will be invited for an interview, based on the scientific advice of in principle 4 international external referees. Interviews will take place end February 2025.
- The decisions on funding will be taken by the FWO Board by the beginning of April 2027.
- Start of the project can be up to 1 year after the granting date (i.e. March 1 2028 latest).

If you have questions about the eligibility criteria or the internal procedure, please contact Ellen Van Cutsem (ellen.vancutsem@uhasselt.be).

3.1 DRAWING UP THE BUDGET

In parallel to regular FWO-research projects, the budget can be applied for staff, consumables and equipment:

Staff

The salary of the Odysseus grantholder is covered by the university and cannot be budgeted in the Odysseus project. The following staff members can be budgeted:

- PhD-students: €58.918,80/year for 4 years (4 years is the fixed timeframe for a PhD-bursary)
- Postdocs: €107.483,50/year for 3 years
- Scientific assistants (without PhD): €76.571,28/year for 4 years
- Technical assistants (eg. lab technicians): please contact research@uhasselt.be. the average personnel cost for technical staff differs according to their scientific experience.
- personnel cost of researcher(s) already known by name: contact research@uhasselt.be for a detailed cost calculation

Consumables

Includes costs such as travel, conference fees, books, laptops, smaller equipment (<20.000 euros per piece), publication costs, job students, ...

Equipment

Larger equipment that costs between minimum 20.000 euros and maximum 150.000 euros/piece.

4. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AT UHASSELT

Hasselt University has developed into an active hub in the global knowledge and innovation web and partners with universities, research centres and organisations all over the world. The university welcomes students and researchers from every continent. This results in intense interaction and cross-pollination and makes it possible for Hasselt University to fully take up its role as a civic university. The international quality and cooperation are reflected in its commitment to the region's economic, social and cultural development. This enables Hasselt University to play a key role in society's social, economic and cultural development. In addition, Hasselt University and the Province of Limburg constantly spur each other on to grow and innovate. In its teaching, research and service provision Hasselt University is convinced by the notion that: a strong university makes a strong region.

Hasselt University is a key actor in the different regional innovation systems and, being a dynamic university, strives to present itself as a driving force for prosperity and welfare in society via impactful research and innovation that promotes the growth of economic and social development both within and outside the region. Hasselt University sees impact as also encompassing research and innovation that take place in an ethically responsible manner with a focus on integrity and diversity.

For more information on our research structure, visit the following link:

<https://www.uhasselt.be/researchstructure>

5. WORKING AT UHASSELT

Hasselt University has a long tradition of paying attention to research careers. In 2007 the university was one of the first Flemish universities to subscribe to the Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers from the European Commission. On 1 April 2010, the Hasselt University Board of Deans expressed its wish to achieve the recognition of HR Excellence in Research from the European Commission. As first of all Flemish universities, Hasselt University obtained this recognition in 2011.

To renew our HR Strategy for Researchers label, the HR Department and the Directorate Research, Library, and Internationalisation have organised an institution-wide stakeholders meeting on 27 September 2017. Researchers of all stadia of the research career were invited to conduct a gap analysis and formulate their advice regarding a new action plan. This action plan has been submitted to the European Commission on 26 January 2018 and is to be found on this web page.

All information on job applications and working at UHasselt can be found via the following link:

<https://www.uhasselt.be/en/about-hasselt-university/working-at-hasselt-university>

6. LIVING IN HASSELT

Located within the vast green of Limburg, Hasselt is a great city to live and work. Only a train ride away from the airport of Brussels (approximately 60 minutes), Hasselt is easily accessible by public transport. Hasselt is located in the Euregion Maas-Rijn which means the borders from Germany and The Netherlands are very close by.

The city of Hasselt might not be the biggest city with its 80.6011 inhabitants, but it is a vibrant place with loads of possibilities: shopping, cosy bars and restaurants, interesting musea, nightlife and their very own signature drink: 'jenever' or schnapps.

For more information on the city of Hasselt, please check the following link:

<https://www.visithasselt.be/en>