

Guide for applicants

Breath : BRinging hEALTH and Social Sciences to a new level through interdisciplinary doctoral program

1/01/2025 – 31/12/2029

Updated for the extension of the call 2, for 2 PhD topics:

Enduring Women Limits: Women's Ultra-Endurance Running, Psychological Flexibility and Empowerment in Space and Pain (France–USA):

<https://amethis.doctorat.org/amethis-client/prd/consulter/offre/2541>

Psychosociologic functioning of young adults with childhood onset pituitary deficiency: nationwide multicentric observational study. A sociological and clinical psychological approach

<https://amethis.doctorat.org/amethis-client/prd/consulter/offre/2561>

Angers University has been awarded with an MSCA COFUND to develop a European interdisciplinary doctoral programme: Breath. Please read this guide carefully before applying.

This is a call for applications for 20 fellowships (3-years) in **Health and SSH - Social Sciences and Humanities** in the “Pays de la Loire Region” in the West part of France. The doctoral student will be hosted in one of the 3 cities of the implemented partners Angers, Nantes, Le Mans.

19 doctoral students have been recruited from all over the world. This is an extension of the 2nd call for applications to recruit 1 additional PhD students to complete the recruitment.

Extension Call #2 - Calendar

4th of June 2026	Opening of the extension call for 1 fellowship
25th of June 2026	Deadline for submitting applications online
26 th of June - 5 th of July 2026	Evaluation of candidates
9th & 10th of July 2026	Online interviews of selected applicants
11th of July 2026	Final results of the call are published
1st of October 2026	Beginning of the 3 years thesis

Contacts :

Email : breath@univ-angers.fr

Project Manager : Meryl Galdeano

Scientific coordinator : Sébastien Fleuret

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	Ethic assessment for candidates offering their own research topic Erreur ! Signet non défini.	

1. About Breath: BRinging hEALTH and Social Sciences to a new level through interdisciplinary doctoral program

1.1 What is the Breath programme?

The Breath project, cofounded by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions MSCA-COFUND-2025 is led by the University of Angers on behalf of the three public universities in Pays de la Loire: University of Angers (UA), Le Mans University (LMU) and Nantes University (NU). The BREATH project offers 20 fellowships divided into 2 cohorts, in the framework of the European Horizon 2020 programme. They will be hosted in one of the cities of the implementing partners Angers, Nantes or Le Mans, in the West Part of France. It also aims to bring together all the stakeholders in the Pays de la Loire region who have a shared interest in training young researchers in SSH/Health.

1.2 Who can apply ?

The call is open to researchers having a master's degree in SSH/Health of any nationality at the deadline of the call. They must respect the mobility rule: they cannot apply if they have spent more than a year in France during the past three years before the call.

1.3 Which research topics are offered?

2 topics in **the medical sciences and the humanities and social sciences** that did not find the right candidates during the second call of BREATH. They are displayed on the Breath's website:

Enduring Women Limits: Women's Ultra-Endurance Running, Psychological Flexibility and Empowerment in Space and Pain (France–USA):

<https://amethis.doctorat.org/amethis-client/prd/consulter/offre/2541>

Psychosociologic functioning of young adults with childhood onset pituitary deficiency: nationwide multicentric observational study. A sociological and clinical psychological approach:

<https://amethis.doctorat.org/amethis-client/prd/consulter/offre/2561>

1.4 How to apply?

Candidates must apply online on the dedicated platform Amethis within the specified deadlines by submitting the required documents. **All documents must be written in**

English or must be translated in English. **Access the [application platform HERE](https://breath.univ-angers.fr/en/apply/phd-opportunities.html) or go on Breath website and click on the chosen subject, available here: <https://breath.univ-angers.fr/en/apply/phd-opportunities.html>.** All eligible proposals will be evaluated in the selection. The final selected candidate will be notified on the 11th of July. Fellowships will start in October 2026.

1.5 What kind of contract will fellows have?

Recruited fellows will be hired for a 36-month temporary research work contract by one of the three implemented partners: Angers University, Le Mans University, Nantes University, in accordance with the French labour legislation. The fellows will benefit from French public health care system. The employment conditions will be similar as permanent researchers from their hosting university regarding working hours, paid annual leave, child leave and unemployment insurance

1.6 What wage will the fellows have?

Selected fellows will get a **wage around 2 250€ per month gross + 400€ for mobility allowance. Additional 400€ will be offered to doctoral students with family** (being married and/or having children) as family allowance: a very attractive bonus! Please, note that social taxes apply on the mobility and family allowances.

In addition, financial support for the thesis costs up to 700€/month is provided to cover environmental, travel and training costs. These funds will be paid to the laboratory, for the doctoral student. Therefore, selected fellows will be affiliated to the French Social Security during the stay, together with their potential family members.

2. Eligibility criteria

The call is open to researchers in SSH/Health of any nationality.

2.1 Language:

The applicant must be fluent in English (written and spoken – B2 minimum following the Common European Framework of Reference for languages). Tests scores have to be provided and shouldn't be older than 2 years old.

2.2 Mobility rule:

Doctoral candidates must comply with the “Mobility Rule”, they cannot have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in France for more than 12 months in the 36 months before the deadline of the call. Compulsory national service, short stays such as holidays and time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not considered.

2.3 Education:

At the deadline of the call for applications (25th of June 2026), the candidate should justify a master's degree (or international equivalence) with connection and relevance to the chosen Breath PhD Topic, particularly SSH/Health. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of Breath, no specific Master' field will be expected. The candidate shouldn't be in possession of a PhD.

2.4 Adequacy discipline/candidate

Disciplinary background must align with the chosen PhD topic. The scientific coordinator will reject applications that are not related to the topic for which the candidate is applying.

3. Application

3.1 Open projects for call#2

Doctoral school BS – Biologie Santé - Biology health

- Psychosociologic functioning of young adults with childhood onset pituitary deficiency: nationwide multicentric observational study. A sociological and clinical psychological approach.

Doctoral school ECLIS – Education, Cognition, Langages, Interactions, Santé - Education, Cognition, Languages, Interactions, Health

- Women's Ultra-Endurance Running, Psychological Flexibility and Empowerment in Space and Pain (France–USA)

3.2 How to apply on the application platform?

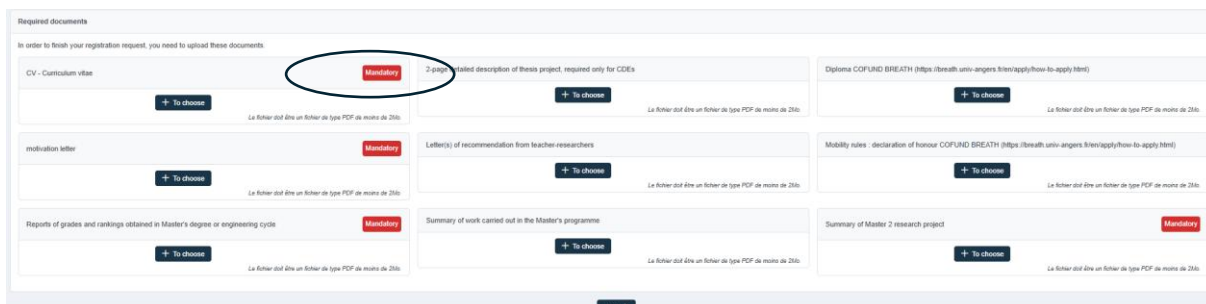
Candidates have to apply online on a dedicated [platform Amethis](#) within the specified deadlines by submitting the required documents. The application and all supporting documents must be written in English or translated in English.

All open research projects are available on the dedicated page « [PhD Opportunities](#) » on the breath.univ-angers.com. Select one topic and click on it to be transferred to the application platform Amethis.

3.3 Application material: **READ CAREFULLY!**

Applications must be submitted exclusively online through the dedicated Amethis platform and must include the complete set of application material.

Note that all boxes including a red “Obligatoire” or “Mandatory” must have a document uploaded.



- **Online application form including personal details**
- **Eligibility check list** : the eligibility declaration for mobility rule (*use BREATH template*)
- **CV** : The candidate’s extended CV (*PDF - Europass anonymized – use BREATH template*) No other form of CV will be allowed
- **Motivation letter.** (*use BREATH template*)
- **Copy of diplomas (Bachelor and Master) and English certificates (when if it’s required)** :
 - o If your Master's degree certificate is not yet available, you have to complete a declaration of honour (BREATH template to use) originals transcripts/degree should be provided later before call completion end of May at latest)
 - o English level requires B2 minimum following the Common European Framework of Reference for languages). Tests scores has to be provided and shouldn’t be older than 2 years old (IELTS, TOEIC, TOEFL, Cambridge certificates). For native English speakers and non-native English speakers having completed their Master’s degree in either United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, USA, Australia or New Zealand will be exempted from providing any English proficiency test certificate.
- **Transcripts for Bachelor, M1, M2**
- **Resume of Master**
- **2 reference letters**
- if applicable ethics self-assessment (for PhD topics proposed by applicants – available at the end of your Guide for Applicants)

[Download the **BREATH** templates to use on Breath's website](https://Breath.univ-angers.fr) : Breath.univ-angers.fr

- **Motivation letter**
- **Anonymized CV**
- **Eligibility check list : declaration for mobility rule**
- **Declaration of honour for Master's degree if your transcripts are not available yet**

Please note that selected candidates must provide hard evidence that they fulfill the eligibility criteria: copies of previous employment, university grades, utility bills, entry/exit stamps in passport, etc. The project management team will check the authenticity of the documents and detect fraud. They can issue warnings to the applicants before the closing date of the call, when the application is incomplete, or when documents provide insufficient information or cannot be clearly identified as official documents emanating from Higher Education establishments.

Ethics and equal opportunities

The Breath programme will respect the principle of equal treatment in recruitment, working conditions, monitoring and management. The goal of Breath is to hire the best possible researchers regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, disabilities.

Each application will be anonymized with no name and gender, no picture, no civil status in the CV template.

4. Evaluation process for candidates

4.1 Eligibility check for online applications:

From the 25th of June – 5th of July.

4.2 Evaluation of the applications – 26th of June – 5th of July 2026

A list of pre-admitted candidates will enter the external evaluation. Each admitted applicants will be evaluated by 2 external experts and will receive scores according to the evaluation criteria (see evaluation grid). Once each expert will have evaluated his/her assigned applications, scores will be calculated to obtain the mean mark. At the end of this process, the best ranked applications will be short-listed for interviews, and applicants will be informed.

All application below 75/100 will be automatically rejected.

4.3 Interview of eligible candidates – 9th & 10th of July 2026

The 4 best-ranked applications per doctoral project offered will be invited for an interview through video conference with the interview panel. The possible ex aequo (among the 4 best-ranked) will be counted among the candidates to be invited for the interview. A reserve list for the interviews of 10 candidates will be made (to reduce the risk of losing candidates who would have changed their career plans).

The online interview will be divided as follow: a 15 min scientific presentation (scientific quality, the feasibility of the thesis and the career development you have in mind) followed by 10 min of questions and answer with the jury.

All interview below 75/100 will be automatically rejected.

4.4 Final selection – 11th of July 2026

The final ranking of the candidate will be calculated considering the oral presentation results only. In case of difficulty to reach an agreement, the supervisor's opinion will be asked. At the end of June, all candidates will be notified by email about its results.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION AND EVALUATION GRID

Evaluation grid for first stage, online applications:

Online Applications			
Evaluation	Criteria for the first phase of selection	Scoring	Ex aequo priority
Quality and Academic Merit (weighting 60%)	Academic record, training and skills of the candidate	/5	1
	Motivation and quality of the candidate (based on Motivation letter and recommendations)	/5	
Leadership potential (weighting 40%)	International experience (stays or studies abroad, international collaborations, etc.)	/5	2
	Partnerships and collaborations (incl. the planned ones)	/5	
	Ability and/or interest to engage with interdisciplinarity	/5	
	Personal skills (e.g., problem-solving, language and communication skills, capacity to work independently, perseverance, etc. as evidence e.g., in extracurricular activities)	/5	
Total <i>Threshold 22,5 (75%)</i>		/30	

Evaluation grid for third stage, online interviews:

Evaluation			Ex-aequo priority
Scientific quality 5 min	Presentation skills, clarity and originality of the presentation, awareness of the current debates and current state of the art	/40	1
Feasibility 5 min	Adequacy between the research area and the candidate's skills. Expected contributions. Capacity to carry out the research project	/20	2
Career development 5 min	Relevance of the fellowship at this career stage. Personal motivation and career plan	/30	3
Interview 10 min	Quality of the answers to the questions	/10	4
TOTAL /100			

5. Training programme

5.1 Training

The training will include personal career development in the individual professional project in order to open doors in and outside the academic field, towards the economic world and civil society.

Doctoral student will have access to a catalogue of disciplinary (in SSH and health themes) and transversal trainings. They will compose their individual training plan from this catalogue, and they must follow Breath specific trainings in SSH and in Health with an equal weight in the training plan.

The initial programme of a traditional PhD is to participate to a minimum amount of 100 hours. Within Breath, mandatory specific network wide events will complement this initial programme reaching a total of more than **200 hours training during their 3 years project.**

5.2 Secondment

In addition to their research training, the doctoral students will complete a mandatory three-month internship in a non-academic structure.



Co-funded by
the European Union