

## **VLAG Graduate Programme 2020**

### What is it?

The VLAG Graduate Programme involves the funding of two PhD positions and aims to stimulate talented MSc students of Wageningen University to do a PhD within one of the VLAG groups.

Applications are written and submitted by candidates who have obtained or will obtain a Wageningen MSc degree between June 2019 and December 2020. The PhD candidate and his/her project must be embedded in one of the VLAG groups and thus in VLAG.

We ask all interested students who fulfil the criteria to apply for the programme and we will select 10-15 students who will take part and can submit their PhD proposal. Next to the regular Research Master Cluster, the students are expected to take part in some additional VLAG-specific learning activities. These include:

- A meeting with one or more PhD candidates to ask questions about being/becoming a PhD.
- Informal meetings with the other selected candidates and VLAG staff to exchange ideas about the research, being a PhD, and preparing for the call, and the presentation.
- Additional personal skills training offered by VLAG and given by experienced trainers to better prepare for the job.

For more information about Graduate School VLAG, the research domain and the participating groups, please take a look at the VLAG website ([www.vlaggraduateschool.nl](http://www.vlaggraduateschool.nl)).

### Who can participate?

Participation is possible if

- You are a (former) student at WUR (graduation between June 2019 and December 2020) from one of the eligible MSc programmes (MBF, MBS, MBT, MFQ, MFS, MFT, MML, MNH);
- You are highly motivated to start a scientific career;
- You belong to the best students of your cohort based on your (BSc and MSc) grades;
- You have the support of a coach who is affiliated with VLAG;
- You will submit an original research proposal for a PhD project, written by you on a topic of your choice, which fits the VLAG research domain, before 9 May 2020;
- You are able to start the awarded PhD project in 2020.

From 2021 onwards, only students who have participated in the course YWU-60312 Research Master Cluster: Proposal Writing (before YEI 60312) will be eligible to submit a proposal to apply for the PhD position(s) available from the VLAG Graduate Programme.

### How to enter the VLAG Graduate Programme

If you would like to participate in the VLAG Graduate Programme, please send your application to the executive secretary of VLAG, Anouk Geelen ([anouk.geelen@wur.nl](mailto:anouk.geelen@wur.nl)) and include in your application:

- A CV with BSc and MSc grades;
- A recommendation letter from a university staff member of one of the in VLAG participating chair groups including the (tentative) topic/title of your research;
- A letter with your motivation;
- A statement about the date of your past, current or future participation in the Research Master Cluster course (YWU 60312) if applicable.

Deadline for application: **1 February 2020.**

### Evaluation of the proposals

Only selected candidates can submit a full PhD proposal for the VLAG Graduate Program, the deadline is **9 May 2020**.

The VLAG Board will install a committee to assess the proposals. The committee will exist of VLAG (associate) professors who are not involved in any of the submitted projects or part of the same group.

The VLAG evaluation committee will assess the submitted proposals based on:

1. Quality of the candidate (40%)
2. Quality, originality, feasibility and societal relevance of the proposal (40%)
3. The fit of the proposed research within one of the VLAG research themes (20%)

Accordingly, the committee will select a number of applicants (5-10) for an interview and to present their PhD project proposal. If this is not feasible because of the fact that some of the students are abroad, e.g. because of their internship, all students will be asked to submit a recording of the presentation of their PhD proposal to the committee. The exact details of the procedure will be communicated in a later stage.

The application form is the same form that is used in the RMC course, i.e. Application Form – NWO Open Competition Domain Science – KLEIN-1.

### Time schedule 2020

- Information meeting: January 8<sup>th</sup>, 13.30-14.30 (Axis, Grote Zaal)
- Application deadline: 1 February
- Selection of 10-15 students: between 1 February and 15 February
- Additional VLAG-specific learning activities, i.e. meeting with PhD candidates, informal meetings and additional skills training: February – April
- Deadline to submit full PhD proposal for the VLAG Graduate Program: 9 May
- Result of the VLAG Graduate Program: ~1 June

### Information meeting

Students and staff are invited to attend an information meeting on the Graduate Programme on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 13.30-14.30 (Axis, Grote zaal, i.e. large room near the entrance to Axis X). Registration is not mandatory, but it is appreciated if you inform Anouk Geelen about your intention to attend the meeting ([anouk.geelen@wur.nl](mailto:anouk.geelen@wur.nl)).