

SACRe: Call for applications

from March 5 to
May 5, 2026, at 4 PM

architecture
visual arts
cinema
danse
design
creative
writing
music
theater



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Admission to the SACRe Doctoral Program

Graduate Program Arts / SACRe Laboratory (EA 7410)

General Presentation of SACRe

The objective of SACRe (Sciences Arts Création Recherche) is to enable the development of original projects combining creation and research, allowing artists and designers to obtain a Doctorate in their respective disciplines and specialties.

This doctoral program is intended for experienced practitioners in the fields of cinema, music, dance, visual arts, architecture, theater, design, and creative writing.

This doctoral program is the result of cooperation among seven component or partner institutions of Université Paris Sciences et Lettres (PSL), which share a common ambition for high-level artistic and scientific research:

- ✧ Conservatoire national supérieur d'art dramatique – PSL (CNSAD-PSL)
- ✧ Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Paris (CNSMDP)
- ✧ École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs – PSL (ENSAD-PSL)
- ✧ École nationale supérieure d'architecture Paris-Malaquais – PSL (ENSAPM-PSL)
- ✧ École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (ENSBA)
- ✧ École normale supérieure – PSL (ENS-PSL)
- ✧ École nationale supérieure des métiers de l'image et du son (La Fémis)

Founded in 2012 by Université PSL, the SACRe Doctorate is now recognized nationally and internationally as a reference doctoral program in research through the arts and/or design based on practice (practice-based research). As part of the PSL Graduate Program Arts, SACRe refers both to a doctoral program and to a research unit bringing together all SACRe doctoral students, as well as research environments specific to each school and conservatory.

Creation occupies a structuring place in the research process, serving as the main instrument of inquiry and production of research results. The works, projects, performances, devices, or realizations produced fully participate in the formulation of research questions and the exploration of the scientific issues raised by the project. They are necessarily linked to written work of critical, theoretical, and methodological reflection, allowing evaluation by academic peer communities and structured knowledge sharing. In this context, the thesis consists of the production of works, objects, or devices, as well as the writing of a

dissertation contextualizing and problematizing the research and providing new knowledge. These two corpora – works and dissertation – constitute the thesis.

Common Evaluation Criteria for the SACRe Call

At the level of the call issued by the SACRe laboratory, the evaluation of research projects is based on a “core” of common criteria shared by all institutions.

Doctoral projects must:

- ✦ Demonstrate a high-level artistic practice essential to the realization of the project and corresponding to the discipline represented in the targeted institution;
- ✦ Establish links between creation and science, an essential objective of the doctoral program;
- ✦ Present a solid theoretical foundation clearly situating the subject in its field of reference, explaining the artistic and scientific contexts, and affirming its originality;
- ✦ Rely on an explicit methodology consistent with the research questions posed and the forms of artistic practice used;
- ✦ Be part of an approach that respects the principles of ethics, positionality, professional conduct, and scientific integrity, with particular attention paid to inclusivity issues, broadly understood, especially in terms of gender equity, diversity of backgrounds, cultural and social contexts, as well as the viewpoints and approaches mobilized in the projects.

In addition to these common criteria, candidates are invited to consult the specific application conditions for each institution on their websites.

Doctoral Training Modalities

Direction and Supervision of SACRe Theses

Applications do not require a letter of commitment from the intended supervisor. The information below nevertheless clarifies the framework. Thesis supervision for laureates will be established in consultation with the institutions during thesis registration.

The thesis is supervised by a researcher holding a PhD accredited to supervise research (HDR).

For practitioner doctoral students, the collective supervision of the thesis must include artistic expertise. When the HDR supervisor is not an artist, the supervision is supplemented by a co-supervisor and/or an artist co-advisor.

Depending on the profiles of the doctoral students, the degrees held, and the artistic and

scientific specialties required for supervision, thesis direction may consist of one to three persons at most, according to the following configurations: one thesis supervisor holding a PhD and HDR; one co-supervisor holding a PhD and HDR or a PhD; and one co-advisor from the professional field of the creative discipline, if this is not the case for the supervisor(s), whose status is similar to that of professional advisors for CIFRE theses.

The supervision and direction of the thesis must include at least one member chosen from among the main or associated members of the SACRe laboratory, attached to Doctoral School 540 – Lettres, Arts, Sciences humaines et sociales –, or the laboratories of PSL University institutions. The list of members is available on the SACRe, ED 540, and PSL websites.

The list of members is available on the [SACRe](#), de l'[ED 540](#) and [PSL](#) websites.

Training Program

This training falls under the framework defined by Article 12 of the decree of May 25, 2016 relating to the national doctorate diploma. It is part of the training plan of ED 540 and the doctoral preparation school. Doctoral training lasts three years and requires the laureate to follow specific training provided within the schools and conservatories, each institution organizing the conditions of reception, organization, and operation for each doctoral student attached to it; the common doctoral seminar of the SACRe laboratory within the Graduate Program Arts, which aims to explore the relationships between creation and research and to extend the professional and academic network of doctoral students, particularly internationally, and which is mandatory for doctoral students in their first and second years; and additional professional or transversal training chosen from the offerings of ED 540, the PSL Doctoral College, or the Graduate Program Arts.

The training plan of ED 540, which includes these three components, must be validated before the thesis defense.

[f – consulter l'arrêté](#)

Funding

For the year 2026, five doctoral contracts funded by PSL, together with a production budget, are open to competition across all SACRe institutions. They may be awarded to candidates wishing to begin a thesis in one of the following institutions: CNSAD-PSL, CNSMDP, ENSAD-PSL, ENSAPM-PSL, ENS-PSL, La Fémis, ENSBA.

[f – consulter le décret](#)

Doctoral students awarded PSL doctoral contracts become employees for a duration of three years, the legal duration of the training, under the conditions set by Decree No. 2016-1173 of August 29, 2016, amending Decree No. 2009-464 of April 23, 2009. This is a full-time contract with a gross monthly salary of €2,200 at the date of publication of the call (indicative and subject to legal changes), in accordance with the decree of December 26, 2022 amending the decree of August 29, 2016 setting the amount of remuneration for doctoral contractors. This contract makes any other salaried work subject to authorization for cumulative employment.

Candidates who do not apply for a PSL doctoral contract must specify in their application file the provision of other thesis funding (such as CIFRE doctoral contracts, Normalien-specific doctoral contracts – CDSN –, projects funded by the National Research Agency – ANR –, Horizon Europe, private organizations, etc.). This funding must be at least equivalent to the remuneration of a doctoral contract, with an accompanying budget aligned with the PSL allocation to cover the doctoral student's production and defense expenses. [f – consulter l'arrêté](#)

Thesis Defense and Awarding of the Doctorate

The thesis defense of practitioner doctoral students includes the presentation of the works produced for the doctorate in various forms (exhibitions, performances, concerts, screenings, shows, prototypes) and the written dissertation, documented and problematized.

At the end of the defense, the national doctorate diploma is awarded by PSL, with the preparation institution and the chosen SACRe specialty inscribed. The diploma supplement accompanies the diploma and specifies its content, level, training context, and acquired skills in order to ensure national and international readability and recognition.

In its deliberations, the jury assesses the quality of the doctoral student's work, its innovative character, the doctoral student's ability to situate it within its scientific context, as well as their presentation skills.

– Article 19 of the decree of May 25, 2016

Application

Admission Requirements

Candidates must meet the general university registration conditions and hold:

- ✧ A national Master's degree,
- ✧ Or a degree conferring Master's level.

Candidates are advised to verify institutional diplomas whose titles may suggest equivalence to a Master's degree. It is the candidate's responsibility to confirm that the diploma corresponds to a national Master's degree or an equivalent qualification. Any error in this regard may result in the invalidation of the application and, where applicable, doctoral registration.

For international candidates, proof of a minimum C1 level in French is required at the time of application and no later than the admission phase. The thesis may be written in English or another international scientific language, subject to the agreement of the thesis supervisor, provided it includes a substantial summary in French.

- Candidates must comply with the criteria set out in this call, supplemented where applicable by the specific modalities of each institution.
- Candidates must not already be enrolled in a doctoral program.
- Candidates with confirmed thesis funding must explicitly mention it in their application file.
- No age limit is set.
- A candidate may not apply more than three times, across all institutions.

Application Modalities

- Each candidate submits a doctoral research project on a topic of their choice and/or according to the research axes specified in institutional calls.
- Applications are submitted to the chosen SACRe institution according to the main artistic practice and project theme.

SACRe Specialties

Candidates must choose one of the ten specialties from the list below and select an institution to which they will submit their application (see the list of institutions on page 1):

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------------|
| ✦ Architecture | ✦ Dance | ✦ Theater |
| ✦ Cinema | ✦ Design | ✦ Visual Arts |
| ✦ Creative Writing | ✦ Music | |

Calendar

The application submission period runs from **March 5, 2026 to May 5, 2026 at 4:00 PM** (Paris time, UTC+1).

Procedure Details

1 Eligibility Phase

The eligibility phase falls under the responsibility of each institution and unfolds in several stages. Each institution supplements the common criteria of the SACRe call with specific criteria mentioned in the modalities published on its website. Institutions evaluate the artistic and scientific qualities of each application as well as the feasibility of the project. Each institution organizes the eligibility phase according to these steps and modalities specific to them (refer to the call posted on their websites):

- ① **Eligibility:** Verification, in particular, of the required diploma and language level.
- ② **Pre-selection based on the application file.**
- ③ **Selection** (organization of auditions for projects in category 1, practices, see above).

Based on the selected files transmitted by each institution, an eligibility list is established for all of SACRe. It distinguishes three categories of applications:

- ① **Proposals for the allocation of the five doctoral contracts funded by PSL.** Each institution propose applications, submitted to the competent jury of the admission phase. The list may be supplemented by a complementary list in case of withdrawal.
- ② **Proposals for doctoral projects funded by complementary funding schemes** (doctoral contracts specific to Normaliens, CIFRE, ANR, foundations, etc.). Applications declared eligible are transmitted to the competent jury of the admission phase, without the organization of an additional audition.
- ③ **Proposals for doctoral projects carried by employees of higher education institutions.** These projects may be carried by employees of higher education institutions (teachers, study or research engineers, technicians, etc.), with a significant modulation of their teaching service within the institution to which they belong, and benefiting from an accompanying budget (production means and expenses related to the doctoral project). These proposals are transmitted to the competent jury of the admission phase.

② Admission Phase

Based on the eligibility list established by the institutions, the admission phase is organized into two distinct juries, each competent for one or more categories of applications:

- ① **Jury for the allocation of doctoral contracts funded by PSL**
Composed of qualified personalities external to the SACRe member institutions and PSL, this jury awards the five doctoral contracts funded by PSL following auditions of the candidates and establishes the list of laureates, supplemented by a complementary list in case of withdrawal. Each institution can benefit from only one PSL-funded doctoral contract.
- ② **Admission jury for candidates not funded by PSL**
Applications with other funding are proposed for admission without an additional audition; these projects also being evaluated by the funding schemes on which they depend (ANRT, ANR, etc.) and by the thesis preparation institution. Composed of a representative of the PSL Research Vice-Presidency, the director of Doctoral

School 540, the directors of the SACRe laboratory and the Graduate Program Arts, and representatives of the SACRe member institutions (on per institution), this jury establishes the list of laureates, supplemented by a complementary list in case of withdrawal.

The final results are published on the SACRe laboratory website as well as on those of the SACRe institutions.

Administrative Registration for the Doctorate

After final admission, doctoral students preparing their thesis in the Culture schools must complete dual administrative registration at:

- ✧ the host institution;
- ✧ Doctoral School No. 540.

ENS-PSL doctoral students register exclusively at ENS-PSL.

Important Reminder

By applying, candidates acknowledge having read the regulations governing the national doctorate diploma. Strict compliance with the provisions of this call and the specific modalities defined by each institution is required; otherwise, the application may be declared inadmissible.

Contact

For any questions about the general procedure, you can write to sacre@psl.eu.



Useful Links

www.psl.eu
collegedoctoral.psl.eu
sacre.psl.eu

PSL Website
PSL College doctoral Website
SACRe laboratory Website

cnsad.psl.eu
www.conservatoiredeparis.fr
ens.psl.eu
www.ensad.fr
www.femis.fr
www.beauxartsparis.fr
www.paris-malaquais.archi.fr

CNSAD-PSL (Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique)
CNSMDP (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris)
ENS-PSL (École Normale Supérieure)
ENSAD-PSL (École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs)
La Fémis (École Nationale Supérieure des Métiers de l'Image et du Son)
ENSBA (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts)
ENSAPM-PSL (École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Malaquais)