



Regulations for the Doctoral Program Plant Sciences (PSC PS)

Version June 1, 2023

I. General Information

1. The doctoral program Plant Sciences at the University of Zurich, ETH Zurich and University of Basel fosters its PhD students' research qualifications and helps them to acquire transferrable skills for careers within and outside academia. The program's courses convey technical and conceptual skills for current research in plant sciences, promote interdisciplinary expertise in plant sciences and impart transferrable skills.
2. The program is run by the Life Science Zurich Graduate School (LSZGS), a joint organization belonging to UZH and ETHZ.
3. The doctoral studies are regulated according to the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree (PVO) at the respective institution¹ and the Doctoral Program Regulation at the respective faculty² or department³, where students matriculated for their doctorate.
4. The following requirements must be fulfilled to graduate from the doctoral program Plant Sciences:
 - Composition and successful defense of a dissertation containing original research.
 - Earning of 12 ECTS credits that fulfill the curricular requirements.
 - Completion of all the relevant conditions and additional requirements set by the institute or department where the student matriculated.
5. The doctoral degree is awarded by the respective institution (University of Zurich, ETH Zurich or University of Basel).

II. Admission

1. Candidates must have a master's or an equivalent degree. They can be accepted to the program over one of two tracks.

Track I: Online Application on the LSZGS Website

Candidates may submit their applications twice a year: December 1 and July 1. A successful application depends on the selection criteria of the LSZGS and successful admissions interview. The interview is recorded and signed by all present. The details about the selection and admission procedure can be found in the relevant LSZGS regulations. After passing the selection procedure and in agreement with a research

¹ Universität Zürich (Verordnung über die Promotion an der Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Universität Zürich vom 31. Januar 2011), Universität Basel (Promotionsordnung der Philosophisch-Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Universität Basel vom 16. Dezember 2003) oder ETH Zürich (Verordnung über das Doktorat an der Eidgenössischen Technischen Hochschule Zürich vom 1. Juli 2008)

² University of Zürich: Faculty of Science

³ ETH Zürich: Department of Biology, Department of Environmental Systems Sciences; University of Basel: Department of Environmental Sciences

group leader with the right to supervise and direct the dissertation at the respective university, the candidates from Track I are admitted to the program.

Track II: Direct Application to a Research Group Leader

Candidates may apply directly to a research group, have a formal interview with a research group leader involved in the program with doctoral privileges at the respective university and in the presence of at least one other group leader or faculty member. The interview is recorded and signed by all present. Track II-Candidates must submit a written application to the program within 3 months after beginning their doctorate (matriculation) in agreement with the research group leader supervising the dissertation. Both, application and transcript of the interview must be submitted to the program coordination office.

2. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in English.
3. All candidates must matriculate at the university where the research group in which they are working is located. Conferral of a doctoral degree is determined by the respective university.

III. Structure of the Doctoral Program

1. Curricular Portion

By the time students apply for their PhD defense, they must have earned at least 12 ECTS credits. One ECTS credit corresponds to approximately 30 hours of work.

Active participation during the entire course is necessary for earning ECTS credits. Participation involves an individual record of achievement, e.g. by completing homework assignments, a presentation or a report during the course.

Successfully graduating from the doctoral program Plant Sciences will be attested by a joint certificate from the three participant institutions. The certificate will be presented once all the program’s requirements have been fulfilled and the responsible university has awarded a doctorate.

Module/Course	ECTS credits
Compulsory module: Colloquium "Challenges in Plant Sciences"	2
Core elective modules: - Intensive courses in Plant Sciences - Transferable skill courses organized by PSC or LSZGS	4-10
Elective module*: - Participation in international scientific conferences with a personal contribution (presentation or poster) (max 1 ECTS credit) - Participation in extra-curricular activities: a) of the Universities (max. 1 ECTS credit) b) Organisation of a PSC PhD Symposium (2 ECTS credit) c) UZH GreenLabs: Engagement for a sustainable working environment (max. 2 ECTS credit)**	max. 6
Total	min. 12

* With the understanding of the PhD advisor and/or the doctoral committee.

** By arrangement with the PSC PhD program coordination office

2. Teaching Assistance

All MNF doctoral students at the University of Zurich must participate in teaching to the extent of 150-420 hours during their doctorate. In addition to the contact time, the preparation and follow-up times are also taken into account when calculating the number of hours.

The following activities can be counted towards the teaching requirement: supervising bachelor students in practical trainings during lower-level courses, supervising bachelor and master's students' research projects in the lab (practical trainings in advanced courses), grading exams and problem sets, teaching at the Science Education Center.

Implementation of the teaching requirement should be conducted in consultation with the Studies Coordination Biology according to the rules specified in the document "Teaching requirement for PhD students" (see www.biologie.uzh/studium/Doktorat.html).

3. Doctoral Committee and Doctoral Agreement

The research group leader supervising the dissertation and the PhD student determine the composition of the doctoral committee together. The composition of the doctoral committee should be determined according to the doctoral program regulations of the faculty or department where the student matriculated.

The doctoral program regulations also specify how often meetings between the doctoral committee and the PhD student should be held and how they should be executed. A transcript should be kept of the meetings and should be signed by the committee members.

A signed doctoral agreement between the research group leader and the PhD student should be submitted during the first 6 months of the doctorate if a doctoral agreement is required at the respective faculty or department.

IV. Doctoral Degree

Confidentiality

An important aspect of the doctoral program is the exchange of scientific data and results between the various institutes at the participant universities. Such results should be treated as strictly confidential by all those involved and may not be passed along to individuals outside of the program if they have not yet been published by the author or their initial discoverer. No member of the doctoral program may use scientific results to the disadvantage of the university. In particular, no member may infringe upon the University's right for the protection of its intellectual property by publishing data prematurely.