

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Admission to the SACRe Ph.D program 2025

visual arts | film | music composition | design | art history and theory | performing arts | architecture

Call open from March, 13 2025 to May 13 2025, 4pm (UTC+1, Paris)

This call is open to international candidates, without age restrictions.

The **Sciences, Arts, Creation, Research (SACRe) Ph.D. program**, within the **Arts Graduate program of PSL University**, is open to all candidates holding a **Master's degree** from any higher education institution. It welcomes both established practitioners (artists, architects, filmmakers, designers, composers, stage directors, etc.) and researchers.

Upon applying, candidates must indicate whether they wish to benefit from a **three-year doctoral contract** or if they already have a **confirmed research grant**.

By applying, candidates commit to completing the **curriculum of École doctorale 540** (« Lettres, Arts, Sciences humaines et sociales ») at PSL University. This includes participation in the **SACRe doctoral seminar**, cross-disciplinary training sessions, and both specialized and general courses (detailed below).

Upon successfully defending their dissertation, Ph.D. candidates will be awarded the **national doctoral diploma (Ph.D.)**, issued by **PSL University** and prepared within the institute to which they are affiliated.

Overview

The objective of SACRe is to facilitate the emergence and development of projects which associate art and research, and which are original in both their methods and their results. Encompassing multiple domains, as indicated by the name of the PhD program (SACRe: sciences, arts, creation and research), this truly interdisciplinary doctoral program brings together practitioners, as well as researchers in the sciences, humanities, and social sciences, thus inculcating a close articulation of thought and sensitivity.

The program is a result of the cooperation between six institutes which are either full members or associate members of PSL University: the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique (CNSAD-PSL : national theatre conservatory), Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris (CNSMDP: national music and dance conservatory), École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (ENSAD-PSL: national school of decorative arts), École Nationale Supérieure des Métiers de l'Image et du Son (La Fémis: national school for film), École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (Beaux-Arts : national school for fine arts), l'École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris Malaquais (ENSAPM-PSL : national school for architecture) and the École Normale Supérieure (ENS-PSL). Allowing research and creation projects to develop in an exceptional context, enabling practitioners in various creative fields and researchers to work and invent together: this is the mission of the SACRe Ph.D program.

The SACRe doctoral program consists :

- **for practitioners** : of the creation of works, objects or devices (dispositifs) and the redaction of a thesis, closely associated with a reflexive approach based on various theoretical and scientific fields. The thesis may be hybrid in nature, using written expression as well as other types of expression depending on the discipline. These two types of corpus - artworks and thesis - form the PhD corpus.
- **for theorists** : of the production of a written thesis, and of an artwork closely linked to the thesis' topic.

Terms of the Ph.D program

Ph.D supervision

The Ph.D is supervised jointly by a scientific supervisor and, at least, one artistic supervisor, for "practitioners".

The Ph.D supervisors may preferably be chosen among SACRe / Laboratory members, or among PSL and particularly within one of the laboratories attached to the Doctoral school 540 (ED 540).

The artistic supervisor will preferably be chosen among the teaching or researching staff of the art schools attached to the SACRe program. It is not mandatory to present a written agreement from a Ph.D supervisor in order to apply. The Ph.D supervision can be finalized after the candidate's selection by the school's jury. It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate a dialogue with a thesis supervisor, in consultation with the applying institution, in order to finalize the thesis supervisor before the admission committee (i.e. between the 2nd and 3d rounds of the admission process).

The list of members is available on the [SACRe](#), [ED 540](#) and [PSL](#)

The Ph.D program proceeds for three years, as follows:

- **Specific instruction is conducted in the SACRe art schools or conservatories.** Each institute arranges the facilities, the organization, and the functioning of the program for the Ph.D candidates.
- **A SACRe doctoral seminar**, within the Arts Graduate program, explores the links between research and creation for all doctoral students admitted to the program.
- **Complementary, professional, and cross-disciplinary trainings to be chosen** within the Ecole doctorale 540, Arts Graduate program, and PSL's Doctoral college.

The doctoral course plan of ED 540, including the three course categories listed above, must be completed before the Ph.D defense.

The program includes mandatory annual assessments and annual presentation of each student's work.

[f - consult the order](#)

The Ph.D candidates, all permanent members of SACRe research laboratory (EA 7410), must also participate in elaborating study days, seminars, conferences and symposia, as well as public events, especially within the frame of transdisciplinary projects.

This program is in line with the doctoral instruction fixed by the 12th article of the arrêté du 25 mai 2016 concerning the national doctoral degree.

By applying, the potential Ph.D candidates agree to the terms in line with the texts stating the frame of the national doctoral degree.

Financial aid and offers related to the program

Fln 2025, five PSL Ph.D. contracts are open to the call. They may be attributed to candidates wishing to start a thesis in one of the following establishments: ENS-PSL, CNSAD-PSL, l'École des Arts Décoratifs-PSL, ENSAPM-PSL, La Fémis, CNSMDP, ENSBA

[f - consult the decree](#)

Ph.D. candidates admitted by PSL receive doctoral contracts which provide them with a stipend for three years, the legal duration of the program as stated within the decree n°2016-1173 of August 29th 2016 modifying the decree n° 2009-464 of April 23rd 2009. It is a full-time job and every other unrelated job will have to be officially authorized.

If applicable, candidates must specify in their application the contribution of other thesis funding (such as CIFRE, ANR, CDSN, HES-SO funding...).

[f - consult the decree](#)

The amount specified in the doctoral contract is 2200 euros gross per month, in accordance with the decree of December 26th 2022, modifying the decree of August 29th 2016, which set the salary of a doctoral student.

Ph.D. candidates can benefit from specific aid to mount events related to their doctoral project: support for artistic production (works, exhibitions, concerts, etc.) and scientific activities (seminars, publications, etc.).

Thesis characteristics and defense and issuance of the SACRe PhD program

The SACRe PhD program is primarily for creative work by Ph.D candidates from the schools for the arts, and for interaction with creators by Ph.D candidates from the ENS-PSL.

The thesis consists jointly of **works of art** or design in the different formats and media proper to each discipline and of a **thesis**. The latter highlights the sources, experiences, research, and other practices, whether artistic or not, that have influenced the work. It provides a **well-reasoned and critical reflection** on the work accomplished during the three years of the thesis. Its form is defined based on the characteristics and approaches specific to each discipline and is matched to the candidate's research project, with the approval of the thesis supervisors.

The Ph.D defense for Ph.D candidates in the arts is based on the presentation of the works completed by the Ph.D candidate in diverse forms (exhibition, performance, concert, projection, event, or prototype) and the thesis. The Ph.D defense for theorists is based on the presentation of the written thesis and of the practical work carried out within the specific framework of this Ph.D. In both cases, on successful completion of the public defense, the national Ph.D diploma is issued by PSL and mentions the institute where it has been prepared.

Application

Conditions for admission

Candidates must meet university admission requirements and hold a five-year higher education diploma, among those listed below :

- Master’s degree
- French or foreign degree equivalent to a Master’s degree (“grade de Master”)

For foreign candidates, a minimum **B2-level** in French is required for PSL doctoral contracts when applying and, as a last deadline, before the admission committee. The thesis can then be written in English or in another international scientific language if the Ph.D supervision is favourable and if a long abstract is written in French, in accordance with the regulations.

Practitioner candidates must be able to present a portfolio as evidence of an established artistic practice.

Candidates must not currently be enrolled in another doctoral program. If you already benefit from a confirmed thesis funding, please expressly mention it in your application. There is no age limit for candidates. Candidates may not apply more than three times. It is not possible to apply simultaneously to several SACRe institutes.

Application process

According to each institute, the candidate can apply for a **free topic of research** she/he proposes.

Candidates first apply **to the partner institute** of their choice depending on their type of project:

CNSAD	CNSMDP	ENS	ENSAD	La Fémis	Beaux-Arts	ENSAPM
Performing arts	Music composition	Art history and theory	Visual Arts Design	Film	Visual Arts	Architecture

The website of each institute specifies the application process and the list of supporting documents required.

The availability date of application forms and the deadline for submission goes:

**from 13 March 2025
to 13 May 2025 at 4pm
(Paris time, UTC +1)**

Selection process

1. Admissibility

The admissibility procedure is the responsibility of each applicant institution.

Schools of arts and design : After a pre-selection on the basic applications (**1st step**), the school selects a number of candidates and invites them to an audition (**2nd step**).

ENS-PSL : Pre-selection is based solely on applications (**1st step**), *and if necessary ENS-PSL reserves the right to organise an audition (2nd step)*.

At this stage, the candidates selected by each institution are **admissible**.

2. Admission

The admission process is the responsibility of the **PSL Admission Committee**, composed of a representative of PSL University's Research Vice-Presidency, the direction of Doctoral School 540 and the direction of the SACRe and the Arts Graduate program at PSL.

On the basis of the selection made by each institution during the admissibility phase, **the PSL Admission Committee** establishes the list of candidates proposed for thesis registration and the allocation of doctoral contracts at PSL University (main list), and draws up a complementary list (waiting list).

The committee also decides on the admission of candidates not financed by PSL doctoral contracts.

The Executive Board of Université PSL pronounces the final results, which are published on the SACRe website and the SACRe institutes websites.

On admission, dual registration at one of the institutes as well as at ED 540 (ENS-PSL) is required to participate in the program. PhD students preparing their thesis at the ENS-PSL are registered only at this school



Contact

For any question about the general procedure, please write to sacre@psl.eu. For specific questions about the institute where you want to apply, please write to the specific contact mentioned on the website of the institute.

Useful links

psl.fr PSL website
collegedoctoral.psl.fr PSL Doctoral College website
sacre.psl.eu SACRe laboratory website

cnsad.psl.eu CNSAD-PSL (Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique)
conservatoiredeparis.fr Le conservatoire de Paris (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse)
ens.psl.eu ENS-PSL (École Normale Supérieure)
ensad.fr L'École des Arts Décoratifs de Paris-PSL (École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs)
femis.fr FÉMIS (École Nationale Supérieure des Métiers de l'Image et du Son)
beauxartsparis.fr Les Beaux-Arts de Paris (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts)
paris-malaquais.archi.fr ENSAPM-PSL (École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Malaquais)



Call for candidates SACRe for L'ÉCOLE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS -PSL SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND TIMETABLE

Each year, the **École des Arts Décoratifs - PSL** offers **SACRe doctoral students** specific funding opportunities

For the **2025 call for applications**, two funding opportunities are proposed:

- **One doctoral contract funded by PSL University:** any subject can be proposed provided that the topic is related to the axes of the research group in which he applies.
- **A CIFRE-funded doctoral position**, in partnership with the **Établissement Public du Parc et de la Grande Halle de la Villette (EPPGHV)**. The candidate will join the new research group of EnsadLab *Designs, Territories*.

NB:

- Each recruitment process follows specific procedures, detailed in the following pages. Any procedural error on the part of the applicant will invalidate the application

- Application fees for both calls:

The registration fee for the 2025 call is set at €55. Payment must be made online via a secure platform. Money orders and cash payments will not be accepted. If paying by bank transfer, all associated costs must be covered by the applicant—this is a ****sine qua non condition**** for the application to be processed.

Once the application form and online payment have been validated, the administrative pre-registration process will generate a confirmation email for the candidate, and their personal account will be updated accordingly.

The registration fee remains non-refundable, even in the event of withdrawal. However, candidates holding a scholarship for the 2024/2025 academic year may be exempt from this fee. To benefit from this exemption, they must upload a copy of their ****grant notification**** during the application process.

Link to apply: <https://sco.ensad.fr/>

1 - SACRE DOCTORAL CONTRACT FINANCED BY PSL

Application deadline: to 13 May 2025 at 4pm (Paris time, UTC +1)

The two stages of the eligibility process:

- Pre-selection, based on a review of applications by an internal jury at the École des Arts Décoratifs - PSL.
- An audition and interview for shortlisted candidates with the SACRe / École des Arts Décoratifs - PSL jury, lasting approximately 30 minutes. This interview will focus primarily on the candidate's motivations and thesis project.

This audition is scheduled for the week of June 16, 2025.

Registration is online only.

The complete application must be submitted **no later than May 13, 2025, before 4 p.m.** to the following address: [SACRe doctoral contract funded by PSL](#).

Documents to be uploaded:

- A copy of the required degree (Master 2 or equivalent).
- A cover letter explaining the applicant's interest in joining this program.
- A CV detailing the institutions where the candidate has studied, the professors they have worked with, any awards or distinctions received in academic examinations and competitions, etc.
- An optional letter of support from the proposed thesis supervisor.
- The thesis proposal (10 typed pages, maximum 20 pages with visual materials) outlining the candidate's project and its relevance to the SACRe doctoral program. The subject must be aligned with at least one of EnsadLab's three research areas—Materials, Interactions, Environments—and moreover related to the research groups.
- An artistic portfolio (art, design) documenting the candidate's recent artistic work. For digital works accompanying the portfolio, provide a link to access videos. Only a selection of extracts (maximum 10 minutes) will be reviewed by the jury.
- A one-page summary containing key details about the application: personal information, educational background, a summary of the thesis project, and any other relevant details.
- A copy of a valid identity document (identity card, passport, or residence permit).
- For candidates who are not nationals of French-speaking countries, a certificate from an organization approved by the French government, attesting to a French proficiency level of at least B2 on the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Incomplete applications or applications submitted in multiple separate parts will be deemed inadmissible.

EnsadLab contact : Martine Nicot, martine.nicot@ensad.fr

2 - SACRe / CIFRE DOCTORAL CONTRACT (PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN EPPGHV AND ÉCOLE DES ARTS DECORATIFS – PSL)



Application deadline: to 13 May 2025 at 4pm (Paris time, UTC +1)

[Link to application form: SACRe / CIFRE doctoral contract](#)

NB: This CIFRE doctoral contract is subject to the ANRT's acceptance of the project.

Specific Context for This Contract

The Établissement Public du Parc et de la Grande Halle de la Villette (EPPGHV) is launching a [CIFRE](#) call for applications to recruit a doctoral student for a design research project conducted through a practice based research- approach. A model of humanist architecture designed by Bernard Tschumi in the late 1980s, the Parc de la Villette spans 55 hectares in northern Paris, intersected by the Canal de l'Ourcq. With its meadows, gardens, and buildings, the park serves as a space for cultural, educational, and sports activities open to all. The EPPGHV is responsible for managing, operating, and promoting the cultural and urban complex of Parc de la Villette, excluding areas managed by three other public institutions: The Philharmonie – Cité de la Musique, The Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse (CNSMD), The Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie.

Today, the EPPGHV's activities focus on three key areas: supporting artistic creation and dissemination ; promoting artistic innovation for all audiences managing and developing the park. In addition to overseeing the park itself, the EPPGHV manages several cultural venues, including the Grande Halle de la Villette, Espace Chapiteaux, Pavillon Villette, Espace Périphérique, Little Villette, and various Folies, as well as around 40 concession buildings.

For full details on La Villette's missions and activities, [click here](#).

This doctoral project, if accepted by the ANRT, will be carried out under the supervision of Marion Nielsen, head of the Designs, Territoires research group at EnsadLab, as part of the Sciences, Arts, Création, Recherche (SACRe) doctoral program at Université Paris Sciences et Lettres (PSL).

Arrow theme :

Inaugurated in 1987, the Parc de la Villette is unique in both its scale and ambition. Over the past forty years, the EPPGHV has pursued a development strategy aimed at preserving its architectural heritage while adapting to evolving needs. This ongoing effort ensures that the park remains an open, accessible space for diverse audiences and continues to support its cultural programming.

To further this mission, it is now essential to reimagine the future of this space—enhancing its resilience and inclusivity, particularly in response to the pressing challenges of climate change, all while safeguarding its architectural and natural heritage.

The project must take into account key urban, social, and environmental concerns while also anticipating emerging challenges in the years ahead. This requires:

1. Assessing and defining the evolution of public space usage since the park's creation, along with the challenges these changes present.
2. Preserving and enhancing the park as an urban oasis, ensuring it remains a welcoming, high-quality green space for both visitors and local residents.

La Villette now seeks to develop a long-term strategy for the park's future, setting a clear vision to structure and guide development and intervention projects for its outdoor spaces in both the short and long term.

This call for applications is launched within this framework.

Objectives of the Research Project

The research project will contribute to La Villette's strategic planning by providing insights and recommendations for the park's development scenarios. This planning revolves around several key areas:

- Assessing the sustainable and ecological management of the park and its green spaces. Several challenges have already been identified by La Villette's teams and are currently under discussion, including:
 - Tree stock management
 - Meadow and embankment maintenance
 - Wildlife preservation
 - Water resource management
- Rethinking the design and adaptation of outdoor spaces to accommodate diverse uses. Key concerns include:
 - Creating cooling zones to mitigate urban heat
 - Supporting spontaneous practices, such as informal sports activities and addressing gender inequalities in public spaces
 - Ensuring the coexistence of different users, particularly cyclists and pedestrians
 - Enhancing visitor experience, including improving street furniture, updating lighting systems, and refining signage
 - Balancing conservation efforts with outdoor programming to maintain the park's cultural and ecological integrity

The researcher will be responsible for defining their specific contribution to these topics through a structured approach, drawing on a corpus of references and practical experiments. This work will be conducted in close collaboration with the teams at La Villette and the EnsadLab supervisory team.

Candidate Profile

The candidate must hold a master's degree in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, development, or design. Their academic background and experience should demonstrate an initial engagement with environmental issues and the development of public spaces in urban settings.

A strong technical foundation and the ability to conceptualize and develop architectural, landscape, and urban projects are essential for conducting project-based research on a complex site.

The candidate must also be capable of :

- Conducting an in-depth analysis of the built environment and a survey of its uses.
- Situating their research within the site's historical, heritage, economic, and cultural context.

While methodologies from various design disciplines will be valuable, they alone are insufficient. The doctoral project must integrate both practical and theoretical perspectives in design research and creative practice.

The research must align with a clearly defined field of study, ensuring coherence with its objectives while building on existing knowledge and advancements in the discipline. The project should propose:

An original thesis topic with relevant research questions.

- A contribution to new knowledge within the scientific design community.
- A preliminary research plan, acknowledging that, at the application stage, the project is still evolving and does not yet provide definitive answers to the research questions.

While prior knowledge of Parc de la Villette and its challenges would be an asset, it is not mandatory.

Thesis Supervision

Thesis supervision will be structured as follows :

- Primary Supervisor (Dr HDR): To be determined (affiliated with PSL or an external institution).
- Co-Supervisor (Dr): Marion Nielsen (École des Arts Décoratifs – PSL).
- Additional Co-Supervisor: At the EPPGHV DG.

While one or more potential HDR (Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches) supervisors may be suggested at the application stage, this is not mandatory. Additionally, the final appointment of the HDR thesis supervisor will be subject to the decision of the ENS Doctoral School 540, where the doctoral student will be enrolled.

Candidates must apply through the SACRe call for applications and subscribe to its regulations. In particular, they should consult the list of HDR supervisors on the website of the doctoral school , while also having the option to seek HDR supervision outside this list if the necessary expertise does not align with the thesis project.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE SACRe / CIFRE CONTRACT

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates must :

- Meet the university's enrollment requirements.
- Hold a French or foreign diploma equivalent to five years of higher education, such as a national Master's diploma or a diploma conferring the grade of Master.
- Not already be enrolled in a Ph.D. program.
- Have proficiency in French sufficient for a professional context.

There is no age limit.

Registration Fee

The registration fee for the 2025 call is €55. This fee must be paid online via a secure payment system.

- Money orders and cash payments are not accepted.
- If payment is made by bank transfer, the applicant must cover all associated fees, as this is a mandatory condition for registration.

Once the form and payment have been validated, the administrative pre-registration system will generate a confirmation email to the applicant, and their personal space will be updated.

Important : Registration fees are non-refundable, even in the event of withdrawal.

Candidates who receive a grant for the current academic year must upload their grant notification to qualify for an exemption from registration fees.

Timetable for the Call for Applications

The selection process consists of three stages:

1 & 2 – Selection by Établissement de la Villette and EnsadLab

- Pre-selection of applications by a jury composed of members of La Villette teams and the EnsadLab research unit.
- Interview of shortlisted candidates before a selection panel (approximately 30 minutes), focusing on the candidate's motivations and thesis project.

This interview will take place during the week of 10 June 2025.

The selected candidate will then be required to appear before the SACRe jury to validate their enrollment in the PSL doctoral program.

3 – Final Selection by the SACRe Jury of the École des Arts Décoratifs – PSL

- Interview with the SACRe / École des Arts Décoratifs – PSL jury on 18 June 2025.

Composition of the Application File

Documents to upload:

- A copy of the required degree (Master 2 or equivalent).
- A covering letter explaining the applicant's interest in the doctoral program.
- A CV specifying The institutions where the candidate has trained ,the teachers they have worked with, Any awards or distinctions obtained in academic examinations or competitions.
- An optional letter of support from the proposed thesis supervisor.
- The thesis proposal (10 typed pages, max. 20 pages including visual documents) presenting : the candidate's understanding of the Parc de la Villette and its key issues, their suitability for enrollment in the SACRe doctoral program, the relevance of their project to at least one of EnsadLab's three research areas Materials, Interactions, or Environments, in connection with the research groups.
- An artistic portfolio (art, design), tracing the evolution and recent developments of the candidate's work. For digital works, include a link to access videos, Only a selection of extracts (max. 10 minutes) will be viewed by the jury.
- A one-page summary containing: Personal information (name, marital status, etc.), Educational background, A summary of the thesis project, Any other relevant information.
- A copy of an identity document (ID card, passport, or residence permit). For non-French-speaking candidates : a certificate of proficiency in French (minimum B2 level), issued by a recognized institution approved by the French government. Good command of French in a professional context is also required.

Important:

Any incomplete application or one submitted in multiple separate parts will be deemed inadmissible.

The complete application must be submitted no later than 13 May 2025 at 4pm (Paris time, UTC +1) 4pm to the following address : [contrat doctoral SACRe / CIFRE](#)

Contact at EPPGHV : Eliott Pinel - General Management project manager - e.pinel@villette.com

Contact École des Arts Décoratifs-PSL/EnsadLab : Martine Nicot - martine.nicot@ensad.fr