

MATURE YOUR PHD CHALLENGE 2023

Rules

Article 1: Scope of the challenge

Société d'Accélération du Transfert de Technologies SATT Conectus, a company incorporated under private law registered with the trade and company register of Strasbourg, having its registered office at 5 rue Schiller 67000 STRASBOURG (main organiser), is organising the 5th edition of a challenge (contest) named "Mature your PhD" aimed at facilitating the professional insertion of doctoral students and giving a boost to the detection of innovative research projects.

The aim of the challenge is to support second and third-year doctoral students (Alsace territory) by offering personalised assistance focused on the issues of market requirements and intellectual property. Once the candidates secure their degree, with the consent of the thesis supervisor and subject to the thesis results being conclusive and in line with the aim of this challenge, Conectus may make a financial contribution to help mature the winning project or projects (proof of concept).

Article 2: Eligible contestants

This contest is open to second and third-year doctoral students enrolled in the Universities of Strasbourg or Upper Alsace, who are working on their thesis in a laboratory based in Alsace territory. The candidates must have started or planned a research thesis as part of their doctoral curriculum.

They must have secured the agreement of their thesis supervisor to take part in this challenge. Candidates who do not meet that condition will be eliminated.

This challenge aims to select a maximum of 15 winning thesis projects that could result in innovations to address unmet market needs and have potential for eventual economic results (e.g. development of new products, business creation, development of new markets for an existing company etc.)

The following doctoral students are not eligible:

- those working on a CIFRE thesis or whose research programme is part of a partnership with a company or an organisation that will benefit from the right to exploit the results.
- those that take four or more years to complete their thesis.

A "doctoral student" is defined as a natural person enrolled with one of the two a forementioned universities for a doctorate in the academic years 2022-2023.

Each candidate may only put in a single application.

Any projects that have already benefited from support or financing from Conectus (currently or in the past) will be the subject of a particular examination and may not be selected. A candidate who has already initiated a project supported or financed by Conectus may take part in the competition if they present a new project.

Article 3: Prize

The judges shall identify the final list of theses that could be the winners of this Challenge. Each winning doctoral student shall receive:

🔄 DURING THEIR DOCTORAL WORK:**Personalised support from SATT Conectus:**

Period: up to the end of their thesis

The support will provide :

- **the supply by Conectus staff of socio-economic and intellectual property analyses focused on the subject of the student's thesis** (one project review every four months). The aim is to provide information that will enable the student and their thesis supervisor to adapt the project to ensure eventual economic benefit.

- **a 12-day "Deeptech Days" training* focused on Deeptech entrepreneurship** (project management, financing, regulatory issues, intellectual property, market access, team management, communication), with renowned speakers, national and international experts in Deeptech. ** This Deeptech Days training is organized by the University of Strasbourg as part of the IPI Master's degree - Engineering of Innovative Projects (Faculty of Economics and Management / European Management and Economics Pole). It will be granted to doctoral students who have won the Mature PhD Challenge, subject to acceptance after a preliminary interview with the Master's educational team. With the support of SEMIA incubator and Pepite Etena.*

🔄 AFTER THE DOCTORATE IS SECURED:**A opportunity of financing by Conectus:**

Period: 18 to 24 months after the doctorate

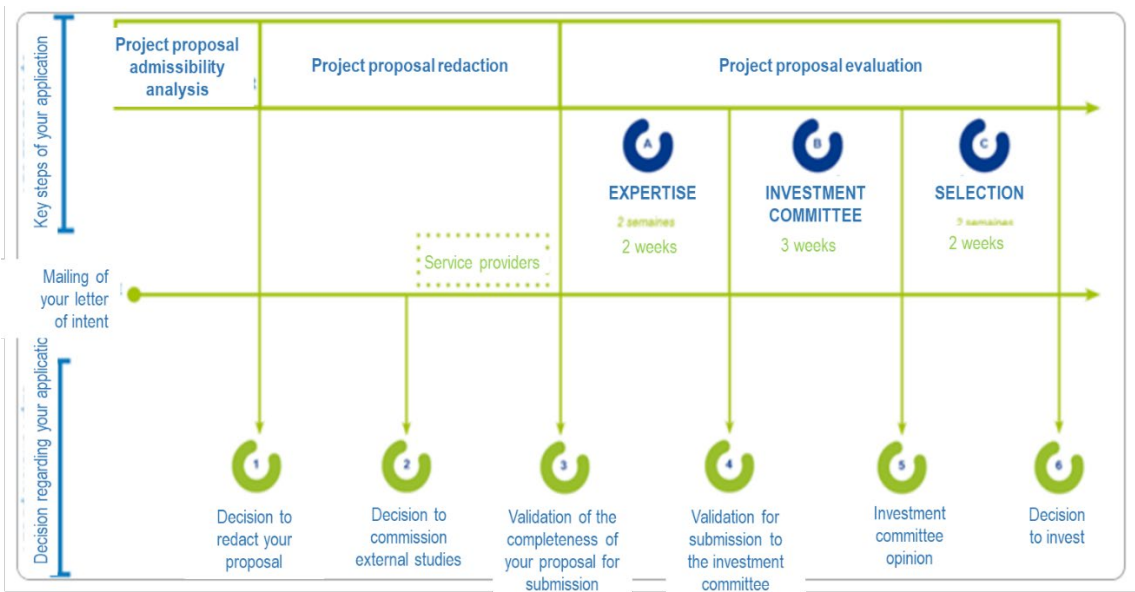
Conectus may conditionally finance the continuation of the development of the innovation explored in the thesis to take it to market. The amounts allocated - up to €500,000 maximum - will

cover the salary of the new doctor (winner of this challenge), along with all the expenditure for carrying out the work (e.g. consumables, subcontracting, small equipment etc.). **The whole programme shall be steered by SATT Conectus, which will also operate the budget management, including the approval of expenses.**

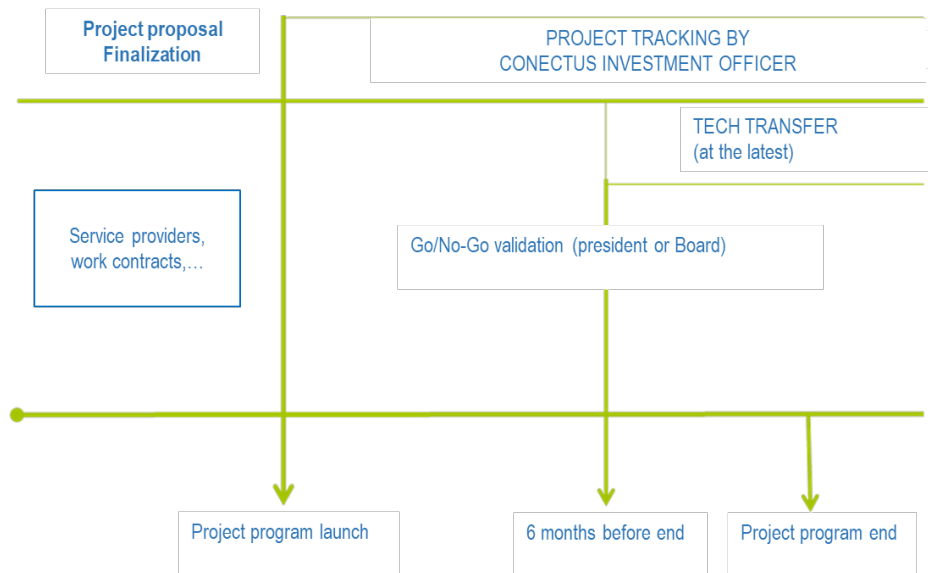
The project may only be financed on the following conditions:

1. **The research results obtained from the project at the end of the thesis are conclusive and allow a continuation of the development of the innovation with an eye to industrial application.**
2. **On the date of the call for funds, the project shows a market opportunity (differentiation from existing solutions, value proposition etc.) and intellectual property potential.**

If those conditions are met, Conectus shall prepare the project based on the process below and present the investment opportunity to its decision-making bodies (investment committee and board of directors), whose decision will be final.



The programme will include tracking every two months (see chart below) to jointly analyse the results achieved and market and intellectual property trends, in order to guide the continuation of the development along the way.



MISCELLANEOUS:

The profiles of candidates and winners shall be raised in the media and communication material orchestrated by Conectus, over the period of the operation of this challenge and after it ends.

In the event of a collective application, the prize shall be awarded to the candidate identified by name in the application.

The judges expressly reserve the right to identify fewer winners if an insufficient number of candidates meet the set criteria.

Article 4: Modalities of participation

In order to take part in the Mature your PhD Challenge, candidates need to complete the application form that can be downloaded from the site dedicated to the challenge: www.challenge-myphd.com/en

The form may be completed in French or English. A detailed CV of the candidate shall be attached with the form. Candidates may also attach any publications they find relevant to the assessment of their applications.

The completed form shall be sent in .PDF format before March 17, 2023 to the following email address: challenge-myphd@satt.conectus.fr. The candidate shall take care to specify that the subject of their email is: “Candidature au Challenge Mature Your PhD” (Application for the Mature Your PhD Challenge)

An email confirming the receipt of the application shall be sent to the candidate within seventy-two (72) hours of such receipt.

Only such applications as fulfil the eligibility criteria shall be selected and reviewed.

The complete application form (regulations excepted) may not exceed 7 A4 pages.
Only the Times New Roman font in size 11 with single line spacing may be used.

Please complete all the sections. If you are unable to reply or if you wish to add information, please justify that as far as possible and enter your comments in the free-format field of the application form titled “Comments and observations”.

In general, candidates must provide a complete and true description of the position of their project in respect of intellectual property and any constraints that may apply to the project due to earlier commitments made by the candidate or a member of their team. Any failure to fulfil this provision could call into question the possible positive decision by the judges.

Any charges incurred by the candidates for participating in the challenge shall not be refunded.

IMPORTANT: Applications that do not comply with the instructions shall not be taken into account

Article 5: Selection of winners

🔄 Short-listing: based on applications

SATT Conectus experts shall short-list the winning projects in March/April 2023 on the basis of the applications received by email. The criteria for assessing the applications shall be as follows:

1. **Innovative potential of the thesis project**
2. **Match for an economic and/or social need**
3. **Ambitions of the thesis project**

Short-listed candidates shall be called to present their project before Summer 2023 to a jury of members chosen by SATT Conectus.

🔄 Selection: upon a hearing by the judges

The short-listed candidates will be invited by an email to the address given by them on their application forms. The hearing, which will last **30 minutes**, will take place as follows:

- **oral presentation of the candidate’s project: 15 minutes**
- **question-and-answer session with the jury: 15 minutes**

Candidates are asked to comply strictly with the duration of the hearing.

The project presentation must cover the key points of the application form.

It can be completed by a presentation of the PowerPoint type, which shall be sent by the candidate to Conectus by email no later than on the day before the candidate is heard > to be sent to: challenge-myphd@satt.conectus.fr ⚠ **Attention: if your presentation exceeds 10 Mb in weight, please contact france.mandry@satt.conectus.fr before sending.**

The presentation should be made on a PC type computer. If a Mac computer is used, the candidate shall supply and bring along on the day of the hearing the VGA adapter required for connecting to the video projector.

The thesis supervisor may attend the session, but **the candidate alone shall make the oral presentation.** The criteria for assessing the project shall be as follows:

1. **Ambition of the project and potential in terms of technology transfer**
2. **Motivation, ambition and commitment of the candidate**
3. **Relevance of the work and consistency of the whole project**

A maximum of 15 winners shall be selected by the judges and informed by email before summer 2023.

Article 6: Composition of the jury

The panel of judges for the hearings shall be constituted of professionals from academia, industry and social and business environments.

It shall include 10 voting members (one vote per member):

- 6 representatives from Conectus
- 4 representatives of society, business and academia (company directors, investors, representatives from research institutions, socio-economic players etc.)

SATT Conectus shall chair the session.

The judges shall be sovereign and shall not have to justify their decisions.

Article 7: Commitments of winners

All candidates who accept the prize agree to the following:

During the support phase before completing their doctorate:

- ↻ Being available for follow-up meetings with Conectus teams during the support period
- ↻ Contributing transparently to the exchange of data on the planned thesis
- ↻ Informing the thesis supervisor of the exchanges with Conectus teams, obtaining their consent for all the action taken jointly and inviting them to all follow-up meetings with Conectus.

During the support phase after the doctorate if financial investment is secured from Conectus for the thesis project (maturing):

- ↻ Complying with the programme and schedule as validated by the board of directors of Conectus
- ↻ Using the allocated funds exclusively for the project
- ↻ Interacting transparently and regularly with the project manager, at least once every two months for a project meeting, and also whenever necessary, particularly in the event of a difficulty or delay
- ↻ Using laboratory books and carrying out experiments in GLP conditions
- ↻ Providing a regular report of the progress of work
- ↻ Not publishing any information in any form whatsoever before an approval loop with the Conectus teams to ensure protection of intellectual property
- ↻ Being available for actions relating to exploitation (meeting with industry, investors, sponsors etc.)

In general:

- ↻ Acting as ambassador of the *Mature your PhD Challenge* and, to that end, taking part for no compensation in any action for promoting the Challenge (winners, review etc.) as requested by Conectus. Candidates and winners hereby therefore authorise Conectus to publish their surname, first name and email address, the full particulars of their laboratory of work, a (non-confidential) general-public summary of their project as stated in the application form and the photographs taken as part of the challenge for the information and publicity action relating to the challenge, including on its website, with no claim to any right whatsoever.

- Agreeing to be present in person or through a representative on the day of the official announcement of the winners.

The winners of the contest shall be permitted to refuse the prize and withdraw from the contest.

Article 8: Confidentiality

The members of the short-listing committee and the judges and the parties with access to the applications made as part of the *Mature your PhD Challenge* agree in writing (in the form of a confidentiality agreement) to keep confidential any information about the projects and to comply with ethics rules.

Besides, the content of the projects shall not be disclosed to outside parties without the prior written consent of both the candidates and Conectus, other than in the form of the non-confidential summary supplied in the application form.

Article 9: Patents and intellectual property

The research work is part of theses conducted within research institutions, which are considered as the de facto holders of the intellectual property rights relating to the results. However, natural persons shall remain inventors, subject to their inventive contribution to the development of protected results.

Article 10: Disputes

If any of the provisions of these regulations is found to be null and void, the other clauses shall retain their validity and scope.

Any cases not covered in the regulations shall be settled by the organiser, whose decisions shall be final. These regulations shall be governed by the laws of France. The parties shall endeavour to amicably settle any dispute arising on the occasion of the contest. Failing such settlement, the courts of Strasbourg shall have jurisdiction.

Article 11: Limit of liability

The organiser shall not be liable in any way if, in the event of an act of God or events out of its control or justified necessity, it has to cancel, shorten, extend or postpone this challenge or amend its conditions.

The organiser reserves the right to take legal action against any fraud or attempted fraud. It shall not be liable in any way towards the candidates as a result of any fraud.

Article 12: Contact

Any queries may be sent by email by the candidates to:

challenge-myphd@satt.conectus.fr

Article 13: Acceptance of regulations

Candidates who submit an application shall at the end of the form agree that they have reviewed and accepted these regulations.