



PhD Starter Package

Getting you started as a PhD student

Version 1.3

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Introduction

In this PhD starter package, which was created by the PhD student council, one can find a general overview of topics that might be of interest for (new) PhD students working in the NKI research institute and the AVL hospital.

The PhD student council is the representative body of the NKI-AvL PhD students that regularly meets to discuss general matters concerning PhD students as well as special wishes for courses or training. Every division delegates a PhD student to this council: it is up to the students within the division how they elect their delegate. He/she is the contact person for the division. Two council members also take part in the OOA PhD student council that is composed of representatives of NKI-AvL and Amsterdam UMC. You can always reach the PhD council with all your questions, or additions to this document, via: phd-council@nki.nl

To stay updated on the latest news for PhD students, please follow our page on MyAntonet by clicking [here](#).

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General

PhD students must enroll in a training program to increase their scientific knowledge and practical skills and prepare them for an independent scientific career. Most of the training is given on-the-job by their supervising group leader, group members, and other scientists within the Institute.

- PhD students should take part in the training program of the Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OGSA). PhD students are expected to participate in courses, PhD student retreats, attend seminars and staff evenings and meet with invited speakers. By attending such courses, you can earn points called ECTS. As mentioned before, a minimum of 30 ECTS is required to complete your PhD. **Note: the scientific integrity course is obligatory for all PhD students.**
- Each PhD student has a supervising committee which should meet with the supervisor and the PhD student at least once a year to discuss the progress and the plans. At the end of the second year (in case of a 4-year PhD contract), each PhD student has a mid-term evaluation during which the performance and potential of the student, the perspectives of the project and the expectations for the time frame of the PhD are reviewed. During the committee meeting at the end of year 3 and during subsequent meetings, the outline and planning of the thesis are discussed.
- The group leader has final responsibility for the supervision and the research performed by the PhD student.

The OOA: Oncology Graduate School

All PhD students at the NKI-AvL enroll in the Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (Oncologie Onderzoeksschool Amsterdam, OOA), an alliance between the NKI-AvL and the oncology departments of Amsterdam University medical centers. The OOA provides a training and supervision program to increase your scientific knowledge and practical skills. Most of the training is given on-the-job by the supervising group leaders, group members, and other scientists within the Institute. The OOA contributes to:

- **The supervisory committee** Each PhD student has a supervising committee which should meet with the supervisor and the PhD student at least once a year to discuss the progress and the plans. At the end of the second year (in case of a 4-year PhD contract), each PhD student has a mid-term evaluation to discuss the performance and potential of the student, the perspectives of the project and the expectations for the time frame of the PhD. During the committee meeting at the end of year 3 and during subsequent meetings, the outline and planning of the thesis are discussed.
- **The OOA training and Supervision plan** PhD students should take part in the training and supervision program of the OOA. The OOA TSP helps you in obtaining the 30 ECTS that are required to complete your PhD. PhD students are expected to participate in courses, PhD student retreats, attend seminars and staff evenings and meet with invited speakers. **Note: the scientific integrity course is obligatory for all PhD students.**

Below we further explain the most important points, including a checklist. More detailed information about the OOA can be found here: www.ooa-graduateschool.org. Joining the OOA graduate school is free of charge, and as a member of the OOA, you can participate in OOA activities without costs.

Contact persons

The OOA coordinators can be reached via OOA@nki.nl.

The supervisory committee

As PhD student at the NKI-AvL, you have a supervisory committee (*OIO begeleidingscommissie*) that is appointed right at the start of your PhD trajectory. This committee monitors the quality and progress of the research as well as the performance of the supervisor and the student. The committee can also help resolve possible conflicts between you and your supervisor(s). The committee operates for the entire period until the thesis defense.

Checklist for OOA supervisory committee meetings:

At the start of your PhD:

- Arrange a **supervisory committee** together with your PI. The committee should contain (besides the supervisor(s)/project leader(s)) at least three independent NKI-AvL staff members: one from within the division, preferably but not mandatory the head of the division, and two from other divisions. Send a proposal for a supervisory committee to OOA@nki.nl using the [Registration form](#).
- In case funding for your project is not based on a grant application that has been reviewed in the Research Council, complete the [Non-reviewed project description form](#).

Within 3 months of starting your PhD:

- Plan a **kick-off meeting** with all members of your supervisory committee to discuss your research plans.
- Prior to the meeting, send the abstract of your research project (either the abstract of the granted project or the project description for non-reviewed funding) to all committee members.
- Print the [Evaluation form for all meetings](#) that also contains the Training and Supervision Plan and take this form with you to the meeting.
- After discussions with the committee, ask the members to sign the [Evaluation form for all meetings](#), marked 'Kick-off'.
- Send the completed evaluation form and the TSP (as a combined file) to OOA@nki.nl and keep a copy for your own record.

6 months after starting your PhD:

- Schedule yearly evaluation meetings with your committee, exactly one year after the start of your appointment, to discuss your research progress.

One year after starting your PhD:

- Prepare a written report of the progress and plans (5-10 pages max) and send this together with an updated [NKI Training & Supervision Plan](#) to the committee members \pm 5 days before the meeting.
- The agenda of the meeting is:
 1. The project leader/supervisor talks with the committee, without the student.
 2. The committee discusses the science with both the student and the supervisor.
 3. The committee monitors your educational activities by checking and discussing your updated [NKI Training & Supervision Plan](#).
 4. The [Evaluation form for all meetings](#), marked 'Yearly evaluation', is completed and signed by all participants.
 5. The student talks with the committee, project leader/supervisor not being present.
- Send the completed evaluation form and the TSP (as a combined file) to OOA@nki.nl and keep a copy for your own record.

1.5 years after starting your PhD:

- Schedule a mid-term evaluation meeting with your committee, exactly two years (in case you have a 4-years PhD contract) after the start of your appointment, to discuss your research progress.

Two years after starting your PhD:

- Prepare a written report *plus* an oral presentation of the progress and plans and send the report together with an updated form [NKI Training & Supervision Plan](#) to the committee members \pm 5 days before the meeting.
- During the meeting, you give an oral presentation, and progress, plans and TSP are discussed.

- A Go-No Go decision about the continuation of your PhD will be made.
- After the meeting, complete the [Evaluation form for all meetings](#), marked 'Midterm evaluation', and ask the committee members to sign the form.
- Send the completed evaluation form and the TSP (as a combined file) to OOA@nki.nl and keep a copy for your own record.

Three years after starting your PhD:

Repeat the process from 'One year after starting your PhD'.

In the event that you would like to stop your PhD project/contract, you should contact your direct supervisor. Together you should decide whether an extra meeting with the supervisory committee is necessary to discuss the reasoning.

The OOA Training and Supervision Plan (TSP)

In order to be admitted to the thesis defense, the PhD candidate must have completed an obligatory education program comprising 30 ECTS. Use the [NKI Training and Supervision Plan](#) to record your progress. There are **obligatory** elements in the TSP:

- The course Scientific Integrity and Ethics (2 ECTS).
- 6 ECTS on topical courses and general skills.
- Annual supervisory committee meetings.
- Participation in the OOA retreat at least two times.
- Visit a scientific conference at least one time.
- Write a scientific paper at least one time.

The other ECTS in the TSP can be filled in **freely**, following your own interests; examples are given on the TSP. Specific and general skill courses can be selected at www.ooa-graduateschool.org. It is also possible to participate in courses from a different graduate school or even abroad (e.g., EMBO courses). If you want to attend multiple courses that are not organized by the OOA, please contact OOA@nki.nl. PSOE PhD students can take external courses without explicit approval.

Benefits from joining the OOA

Ensuring a training program of 30 ECTS

The OOA supports you in obtaining the mandatory 30 ECTS that are needed to be admitted to the thesis defense at a Dutch university. As member of the OOA, it is generally not necessary to register at the local graduate school of the university where you will defend your thesis.

Printing your thesis

PhD students of the NKI-AvL can get a discount on the regular printing costs of their thesis if they make use of the services of [Wöhrmann Printing Service](#), [PrintPartners Ipskamp](#), [GildePrint](#) or proefschriftmaken.nl. To qualify for the discount, indicate that you are from the NKI-AvL when you request a quote of the costs. The websites of these companies contain many useful tips and tricks for preparing your thesis.

Financial contribution

The NKI-AvL will contribute to the printing costs of the thesis, provided you have fulfilled all the requirements defined in the *OOA Training and Supervision Plan*. Applicable conditions and the application form are available on MyAntonet.

Tip: It is possible to announce your thesis defense on MyAntonet, NKI-websites and the NKI-AvL social media platforms. For this, communicate your thesis defense date with your office manager as soon as possible, so he/she can contact the communication department (Sanne Hijlkema).

Registration at University

Besides subscribing to the OOA graduate school, you will also need to register on-line at the **promotion track system** of the University where you are planning to graduate (e.g., Coveris at Leiden University, Hora Finita at many other universities). Ask your supervisor to which University he or she is affiliated to get this process going. Your supervisor can probably provide you with the necessary information, but below, you can find the most important links for the universities most NKI-AvL PhD students are affiliated with.

Tip: generally is not necessary to subscribe to the graduate school of the University too. However, check whether this is required. A possible advantage is that you may have more options to follow interesting courses. These courses will also count for your ECTS.

Bonus tip: check the graduation guidelines with your University and/or talk with your promotor. For example, some universities require a certain number of published (first author) papers before you can plan your defense.

AMC/UvA/VU:

- [Information about the PhD trajectory](#)
- [Information about PhD Graduation](#)
- [PhD courses](#)

Note: On April 15, 2021, the AMC Graduate School has transitioned into the Amsterdam UMC Doctoral School (for both AMC/UvA and VUmc/VU PhD Candidates).

Erasmus University:

- [Information about EUR Graduate schools](#)
- [Information about the training program](#)
- [Doctoral regulations](#)

Leiden University:

- [Information for External PhD candidates](#)
- [PhD guidelines](#)
- [PhD regulations](#)

Utrecht University:

- [PhD manual](#)
- [Instructions for registration](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Regulations](#)

Rights as a PhD student (or employee at the NKI-AvL)

Contract and extensions

A PhD student (Researcher in Training, (OIO)) will receive a 3- or 4-year employment contract of 36 hours/week. The employment contract ends when the PhD student obtains the PhD degree (i.e., if the promoter has approved the thesis after a positive recommendation by the reading committee) or when the end date of the employment contract has been reached (whatever comes first). One or more extensions on a temporary basis are possible in the course of the PhD training program of the student.

Contract extensions need to be requested by sending the most recent evaluation form containing a positive recommendation of the supervising committee, together with the progress report to the Policy Advisory Board (*Beleid Voorbereidend Orgaan*, BVO; ma.vd.berg@nki.nl). The progress report should include an outline of the thesis and a time frame. The BVO advises the Scientific Director whether an extension should be granted and for how long. If sufficient funding for an extension is lacking, NKI-AvL support for 12 months (maximum) can be requested.

Pregnancy leave during the PhD program, with the result that the thesis cannot be completed within the contract period, is, in any case, a reason for extending the contract of the PhD student by 16 weeks. The PhD student employment agreement is regarded as a contract for employment 'primarily for education'. This means that the employment contract does not count in the chain of contracts. Prior to or following the appointment as a PhD student, a temporary contract can be offered in another position (for example as technician or a postdoc).

Holidays/days off (PLB/RV/V days)

The number of vacation hours is arranged in your employment contract. There are different types of hours you may use for taking holidays or time-off:

- **V hours/days (*Verlof*)** - These are your holiday hours. They are 144 hours of paid holiday (4 full weeks) per calendar year based on full-time employment. Your vacation hours expire after 1.5 years. *This means that you can, for example, use the holiday hours that you receive on January 1, 2021, up to and including June 30, 2022.*
- **PLB (*Personal Life stage Budget*) Hours** - These are hours you can use for personal development, like doing a course beneficial to your work or personal growth. In general, a PhD student is entitled to 57 PLB hours per calendar year. These PLB hours do not expire. These hours can also be exchanged for money to cover the costs of courses or coaching. For instance, if you are an Expat interested in doing a Dutch course, you could make use of these hours to cover part of the cost. More info on using PLB hours for courses ([click here](#)).
- **RV hours/days (*Roostervrij*)** - As a full-time employee, your contract is 36 hours per week. However, in practice, most employees work on a schedule of 5 days/8 hours. The extra 4 hours (from 36 to 40) become *Roostervrij* or RV hours. You can take 4 hours off each week, a day off every two weeks, or save those hours for a holiday. Always discuss this with your PI to schedule these extra hours as free time as they will not be paid out and expire at the end of the year.

How to manage your Holidays? - You can check how many V, PLB, and RV hours you have under 'My Schedule' in your HR portal. You can find your HR portal easily in MyAntonet > Go To > HR Portal.

In addition to V/PLB/RV hours, there are some other types of leave.

- Paid leave for special events (1)
- Emergency leave (2)
- Short-term care leave (3)
- Long-term care leave (4)
- Pregnancy, maternity, and post-birth leave (5)
- Parental leave (6)
- Unpaid leave (7)

Firstly, maternity/paternity leave, emergency leave, and special leave (e.g., marriage, funeral, anniversary) must be requested via your office manager. These types of leave do not affect your annual working hours or your salary.

Other types of leave, like unpaid leave or family responsibility leave, must be requested through the HR Portal (click *View, modify or request my data*). This application is also sent to your manager, after which HR Services and Salary Administration will process it. These three types of leave affect your salary and must be processed through the HR Portal. For more information on the specifics of each leave, there is an extensive document you can find on iProva (only available from the NKI-AvL network).

Financial information

Salary

PhD students have a separate salary scale that increases every year. As per March '23, PhD students (OIOs) start at ip-number 23 which is increased to ip-number 27 after the first year. After your second year, your salary increases with 1 ip-number every next year up to ip-number 32 (see also [here](#) for the most recent version of the '*inpassingstabel*'). PhD students with an MD degree start higher in the PhD student salary scale (ip-29 to maximum ip-35).

For those who are not paid via the NKI-AvL but via an external party, for example through a personal grant or PhD fellowship, salary top-ups are available (check [this link](#) for more information.) Also see [Personnel - MyAntonet \(nki.nl\)](#) for more info.

CAO

The CAO is the Collective Labor Agreement (in Dutch *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst*). CAOs are collective agreements between employers (the NKI-AvL) and trade unions regarding wages, holidays, working conditions, and other aspects of importance to employees. This information can be found at <https://cao-ziekenhuizen.nl> and is only available in Dutch.

Transition compensation

The *transitievergoeding* (transition compensation) is a general Dutch rule stating that in case of termination of an employment contract by the employer, the employee is entitled to a transition allowance if your temporary contract is not renewed on your employer's initiative. This is also applicable to PhD students. The website of the Dutch government has a tool to calculate if you should get transition compensation at the end of your contract. Payment of transition money should be arranged automatically; thus, no action is required. Note, the transition compensation is not the same as a *ww-uitkering* (unemployment benefits). For more information, ([click here](#)).

Traveling to work

There are allowances for travel and working from home. The latest information about this you can find on MyAntonet [here](#). On [this page](#) on MyAntonet you can find all the information you need to decide whether you will come to the NKI-AvL with public transport, car or bike. Lastly, it is possible to buy a bike through the "Flexible Employee Benefits" or MKA. You can find information on how to do this by [clicking here](#).

Travel insurance

Are you traveling abroad for business (i.e. conference)? A regular travel insurance normally does not cover business trips. For this, the NKI offers a business travel insurance. More information about applying for the insurance can be found [here](#).

Important contact persons

Contact with the OOA

The board of the OOA consists of the dean - Hein te Riele (h.t.riele@nki.nl)-, plus administrators and coordinators, who can be reached at OOA@nki.nl.

Confidential counselor

If during your employment you are confronted with aggression, bullying, discrimination or other types of harassment and want to speak to someone other than your direct supervisor about this, you can contact our confidential advisor, Herman van der Wind.

Herman van der Wind has been appointed as an external confidential adviser as of January 1, 2021. All employees of the NKI can consult him by emailing to h.vanderwind@bezemerschubad.nl or calling at (+31) 88 144 0200. Herman van der Wind has been working at the firm of Bezemer & Schubad for years. This firm renders advice on how to approach inappropriate behavior and how to ensure a socially safe working environment. Herman has worked there in different capacities: as a permanent confidential adviser, as researcher or secretary when researching inappropriate behavior, and as a mediator in conflicts due to inappropriate behavior.

For issues regarding misuse of scientific conduct, you can contact the confidential scientific advisors Bas van Steensel (b.v.steensel@nki.nl) or Marjanka Schmidt (m.schmidt@nki.nl)

Health Services

The head of Health Services is Mariska Bakker. See the information on MyAntonet about the services provided by Health Services and the different persons who can be contacted by [clicking here](#). You can also contact Health services by phone (020 512 2888), email (arbodienst@nki.nl) or visit them on the ground floor of the O-building.

The company doctors are Susanne Andriessen & Willem Maasen. An appointment can be scheduled by email (healthservices@nki.nl).

PhD Council

If you're running into any problems regarding your life as a PhD student, and you do not know whom to turn to, you can always email us at phd-council@nki.nl. We will try to get back to you as soon as we can to either give you an answer, tell you who can help you, or help you address the problem you are facing.

Works Council

The Works Council is a council of employees of the NKI-AvL, which are elected by all employees in the Works Council Election. It represent the interests of all employees of the NKI-AvL and discusses matters of importance with the Board of Directors. You can contact the council via the Works Council page on MyAntonet, or through Marijn Koole (m.koole@nki.nl, tel no. 6066).

Social Worker

If you are struggling with mental health issues in your private or work-life, you can contact the Staff Welfare officer Julia van Hoven via email (j.v.hoven@nki.nl) or phone (06 18707016). Her goal within the Institute is to prevent sick leave by employees due to mental health issues. She can help you with issues including but not limited to burnout, grief, reintegration, bullying, interpersonal problems at work, learning to set boundaries, and many more things. She can also act as a coach to employees. It is important to note that all conversations with the staff welfare officer are confidential and cannot be shared with the managers or colleagues of the employee without explicit permission from the employees themselves. To make an appointment with the Staff welfare officer, you can email Health Services (healthservices@nki.nl).

Office manager and lab manager

Each division has three people that are very important for you to know: the office manager, the lab manager and the division head. The office manager will probably be in touch with you when you first start working in your new division. They can help you by pointing out what needs to be done in your first weeks, for example, getting your information on the NKI-AvL website and filling out the GMO and OOA forms. If you have any questions regarding administration, planning, booking rooms, etc., this is your go-to person.

The lab manager is the person to go to when you have any lab-related questions. When you start in the lab, they will give you a tour of the lab and explain how everything works; from waste disposal to lab tasks. If you have any lab-related questions that your direct colleagues cannot answer, go to the lab manager!

The division head supervises the scientific activities at the division, e.g., chairs the division meetings, organizes the division's staff evening, and represents the division at the research council. Generally, but not mandatory, the division head is member of your supervisory committee.

Unsure who's who at your department? You can find a list of all these important people on MyAntonet, or [click here](#).

Other useful information

Onboarding website

When you arrive at the NKI-AvL, you can make an account at the NKI-AvL onboarding website: <http://onboarding.nki.nl>. This is a useful website containing information for your first days at the NKI-AvL. This includes some introductions from NKI-AvL colleagues, how to get to the NKI-AvL, the maps of the NKI-AvL, and much more stuff. Make sure to have a look!

Service center

The service center provides support to all NKI-AvL employees to do their job. You can find the service center on the first floor of the A-building, and they are open between 8 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday. The service center consists of three departments:

- The front desk (servicecentre@nki.nl, tel. no. 2915): this is where you get your employee pass, but they, for example also help you with getting a parking card. If you have any questions, you can always call them or go there.
- The expat center (expatcentre@nki.nl, tel. no. 6959): the expat center helps all new NKI-AvL employees coming from abroad. They can help with arranging a visa, housing, or getting all papers in order to be able to start working here in the Netherlands.
- Technics and Facilities (techniek@nki.nl, tel. no. 1814): this part of the service center is dedicated to making sure the facilities at the NKI-AvL stay clean and functional.

Labhelp

Sometimes, you just need a small amount of reagent for a pilot experiment, or you realize some important enzyme has run out just when you need it. For these instances, there is a network within the NKI-AvL called 'labhelp'. This is a mailing list including many people from all over the Institute, to which you can send requests for small aliquots of reagents, help with a certain experiment that is new to you or other lab-related questions.

To be able to send requests to the Labhelp mailing list, you can email Jeffrey Klarenbeek (j.klarenbeek@nki.nl) and ask him to be added to Labhelp. Then when you need something, you can send an email to labhelp@nki.nl with your request. In turn, you will also get emails from your colleagues if they need something.

Research facilities

Within the Institute, we have many helpful research facilities, which can help you set up experiments, teach you new techniques or simply provide instruments for your research. Below you'll find a shortlist of some of them:

- *BioImaging facility* helps you with all your imaging experiments, from advice on sample preparation to microscopy training and help with image analysis.
- *Protein facility* provides support for all types of protein research, from protein production and purification to high throughput protein crystallization.
- *Proteomics facility* aims at identifying and/or quantifying proteins or their post-translational modifications.
- *Robotics and screening center* has the tools to perform high throughput screens using cell-based or biochemical readouts.

- *Genomics Core Facility* offers next-generation sequencing services and helps with the subsequent bioinformatic analyses.
- *Flow Cytometry facility* has a variety of cell analyzers and sorters to be able to quickly analyze, and if needed sort, millions of cells based on their characteristics.
- *BioTherapeutics Unit (BTU)* is responsible for the production and development of biotherapeutics mainly used for experimental immunotherapy.
- *Molecular Pathology and Biobanking Core Facility* registers, assists, coordinates, and facilitates research involving archived human/patient material.
- *Animal laboratory facility* facilitates any mouse-related work within the Institute; they help with housing and husbandry, animal experiments, and training and supervision.
- *Scientific Information Services\Library* provides assistance with literature search, requesting articles, ordering books, and data management. See below for more information.

If you want to know more about any of these facilities, or any of the other facilities, visit MyAntonet or [click here](#).

Tiffany's

Tiffany's is the restaurant for personnel of the NKI-AvL, which you can find on the first floor of the C-building. It is open Monday through Friday from 07:00-17:30, with warm products and full meals available between 11:30 and 14:00. You can pay here with your Debit Card, or you can transfer money to your employee card with the machines across from the dishwashing area.

Research Council

The Research Council consists of all heads of departments of the Institute, including members of the Board of Directors. They discuss all important research-related matters, including the composition of your PhD committee (see OOA information for more on this), but, for example, they are also responsible for the internal reviewing of grant proposals. As a PhD student, you have little to do with them, but it is good to know they exist. Your PI can tell you more about this council.

MyAntonet

If there is any other information you're looking for, MyAntonet is a good place to start. MyAntonet is the internal website of the NKI/AvL and provides a wide variety of information: you can, for example, find contact information of your colleagues here, extra information on research facilities and where to reach them, and several 'groups' which you can become part of (for example a Fit@Work group, or Young AvL). Don't forget to follow the 'PhD Students' group if you never want to miss any useful and fun information about your PhD by following [this link](#) and clicking the 'Join Team/Lid worden' button.

Inclusion and Diversity Committees

The NKI-AvL finds Diversity and Inclusion issues of great importance, and therefore two D&I committees were initiated in 2020. They are set up to promote the needs of minorities and historically marginalized groups at the NKI-AVL. If you think of ways the NKI-AVL can do better in this regard, do not hesitate to contact them through DiversityAndInclusion@nki.nl. There is also a suggestion box hanging across from the dishwashing area if you want to give an anonymous suggestion. It is good to note that if you ever experience discrimination within the Institute, you can always contact the confidential advisor whose contact information is shared above.

IT

Within the NKI-AvL, most employees use IT a lot. Whether it is simply using your computer, using the NKI-AvL network, or downloading applications through the Self-Service app, sometimes you run into problems. For this, you can contact the I&A department. You can call them at tel. no. 1809, or send a service request through the Service Portal ([click here](#)).

Scientific Information Service / Library

The Scientific Information Service (SIS), or in Dutch “Wetenschappelijke informatievoorziening”, offers numerous services. As most know, the SIS provides access to literature, by journal subscriptions, but if you walk into a paywall, you can also [request a specific article](#). You can [request a literature search](#) for the introduction of your article or get help during the entire process of conducting a systematic review. It is also possible to [request a PubMed course](#). They offer help around the topic of data management, they answer questions and give courses in the use of EndNote ([request EndNote course](#)) or help if there are problems with EndNote ([EndNote manual](#)). And you can contact them if you have questions about Open Access publishing. In general, if you have a question regarding research support, don't hesitate to contact them!

Scan the QR code or click on the QR code to find a more complete list of all the services they offer. There is a website where you can find a lot of information (avl.vakliteratuur.info). They have a [myantonet page](#) “Wetenschappelijke informatievoorziening”, where you can find quick links, manuals and where they often share tips. These tips can also be found on their Instagram [@nki_library](#), and you can always email them with your questions (library@nki.nl).

SCAN ME



Setting up the digital working environment

Due to the COVID situation, it has become increasingly common to work from home. For this, a digital work environment was created that allows you to work on the NKI-AvL network from any place, anytime. In order to set up the NKI-AvL *My Digital Workplace* to work from home effectively and safely, you will need to follow a few steps. Find the manual [here](#).

Note: For the first step you will need to be at NKI-AVL and need your smartphone.

Meetings

- **Mondays / Once a Month: Staff Meeting** 17:00 - 19:00 approx. Each time, one of the scientific divisions of the NKI-AvL presents its ongoing work. These staff meetings are open to everyone at the NKI-AvL. After the meeting, there is food and drinks.
- **Tuesdays and Thursdays / Weekly: Research Club** 12:00 - 13:00 pm. Each day, two PhDs/PostDocs will give a 25 min presentation of their ongoing work followed by a discussion. If not online, held in the Piet Borst Auditorium. A great way to learn about the ongoing research of your peers, set up collaborations, and get inspired.
- **Fridays / Weekly: NKI (International) Seminars** usually at 11:00 am. Afterward, the speaker (top international speaker, national, or a PI at NKI-AvL) has a chat with PhD and Post-Docs that you may sign up in advance for and join.

Additionally, there are division meetings from groups of the same division and lab meetings with your own group. Ask your group members when these meetings are held!

Of course, a great way to enrich your PhD experience is to attend conferences and even give short presentations or have a poster. There are many opportunities to attend conferences in both the Netherlands and abroad and they provide ECTS credits for your PhD training plan. You can always ask your PI or your colleagues which conferences they think are interesting and would be worthwhile to attend.

On top of that, each Friday there are Friday afternoon drinks with your colleagues from 17:00 onwards, usually in Tiffany's. A nice way to start your weekend and get to know colleagues from other divisions!

Final notes

We hope this document has provided you with all you need to know to successfully start your PhD! We wish you all the best in your research and really hope to see you at PhD events, Friday borrels or any of the other meetings within the institute. If you ever run into any problems, please do not hesitate to email us at phd-council@nki.nl or talk to the delegate of your division!

It is important to note that we aim to update this document regularly, but some things change so fast that we might not keep up. Therefore, we always recommend you to check MyAntonet for the latest news!

Cheers!

NKI-AvL PhD Council