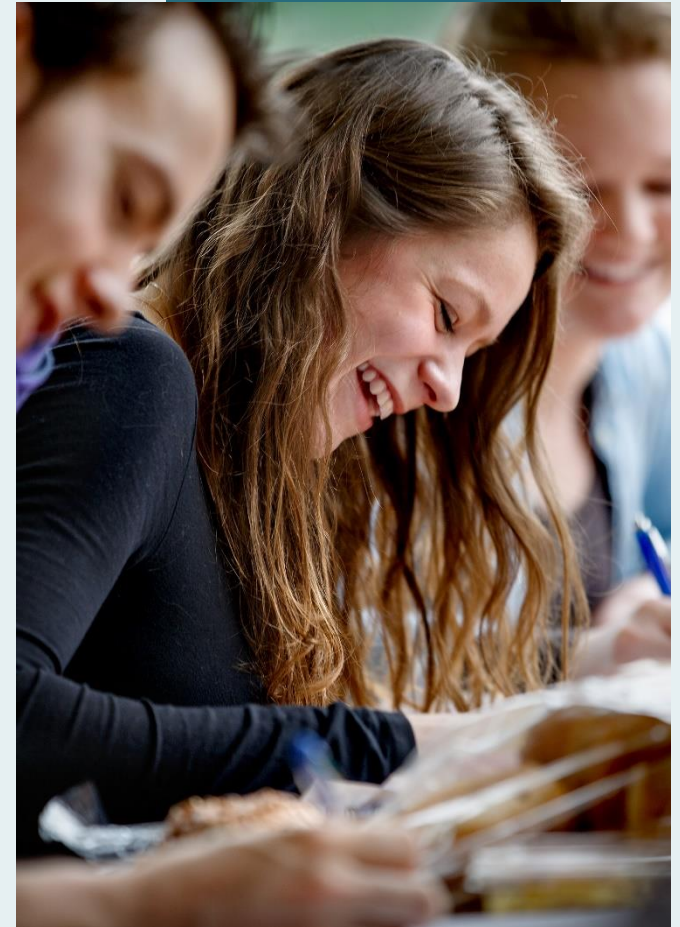


# OOA PHD STARTERS PACKAGE



# Colophon

## OOA management team

Prof. dr. Arjan W. Griffioen, chair

Dr. Heinz Jacobs, dean NKI

Dr. Marcel Spaargaren, dean Amsterdam UMC

Dr. Esther M. Ruhé, coordinator

## Supportive staff

Sanjhana Bhusal

Evelien Bos

Sarah Stolk

Jolieke Weijmer

## OOA PhD council

Ines Avenel

Emily Evans

Marieke Geurts

Klaudia Majszczyk

Charlotte Smith

Debra van Asten

**Authors:** Lidia Atencia Taboada, Bárbara Andrade Barbosa, Benthe Doeve, Chavelli Kensen, Esther Ruhé, Maud Schoot Uiterkamp, Wendy Stam, Ivar Wamelink, OOA PhD council

**Review:** Maarten Bijlsma, Evelien Bos, Emily Evans, Mila Griffioen, Gitta Kuipers, Wietske Pieters, Michiel Siroen, Renske Steenbergen, Sybren van der Zee, New Haven Biosciences Consulting.

**Layout and design:** Jolieke Weijmer and Emily Evans

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[www.ooa-graduateschool.org](http://www.ooa-graduateschool.org)  
[ooa@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:ooa@amsterdamumc.nl)

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- 02** Starting your PhD
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- 04** Help, support and advice
- 05** Coming from abroad



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# Welcome!

Congratulations on your new position as a PhD candidate at Amsterdam UMC. We are delighted that you will do your doctoral studies with us.

Amsterdam UMC is a large university medical center with over 19,000 employees and many departments, institutes, facilities and services. To guide you through the beginning of your PhD studies and to give you an overview of all topics that may be of interest to you, we created this PhD starters package.



## About this starters package

The package consists of five parts:

**About** provides a short introduction to Amsterdam UMC, VU, UvA, graduate schools, departments, research institutes, facilities and services.

**Starting your PhD** provides a hands-on practical guide on how to get started and registered for all facilities and services.

**During your PhD** describes the main tasks you have as a PhD candidate and where to get information and help for your research and educational program.

The **Help, Support and Advice** section provides a short overview of the various available resources for assistance during your PhD program.

The **Coming From Abroad** section is of particular interest for foreign PhD candidates who would like to get some guidance in all kinds of practical questions they might have.

We wish you success with your PhD program and an inspiring time at Amsterdam UMC! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

# 1. About

## Your PhD program

The aim of a doctoral study is to become an independent scientific researcher by performing original research with the help of (co-) supervisors and/or (co-)promotors. It is a diverse and varied qualification program with many different components. Conducting research and communicating the research results in scientific articles are very important parts. In addition, your program has a training aspect in the form of taking and/or teaching educational activities and attending conferences. The final phase of your PhD training will consist of writing, reviewing and defending your thesis (dissertation). The successful defense of your dissertation results in a doctorate (PhD) degree. During your PhD program, you will build your own scientific network and track record to obtain the most favorable prospect for continuation of your career after graduation, either in or outside of academia.

## Amsterdam UMC

Amsterdam UMC is a leading medical center that combines patient care, scientific research, and education of the next generation health-care professionals. It is a large center that houses many medical and research departments. Since your employment and research project is embedded in one of these Amsterdam UMC departments, most of your contact will be with colleagues from the same department. In addition, Amsterdam UMC also includes numerous supportive departments, (educational) institutions and facilities which are of great added value. The most relevant ones are briefly described on the next sections.

## Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA) and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU)

You will perform your PhD research under the supervision of a (associate) professor. The university to which your (associate) professor is affiliated will confer your doctoral degree. Most likely, you will defend your thesis at UvA or VU. At the start of your PhD, you do not necessarily have to contact the VU or UvA. Registration for your PhD program will be covered by the Amsterdam UMC Doctoral School and the Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam or the 'Onderzoekschool Oncologie Amsterdam (OOA)' in Dutch. The universities will become relevant during the final phase of your PhD, when you will have to apply for your dissertation defense. Both universities have specific rules and regulations with respect to your thesis and defense ([UvA](#) and [VU](#) doctoral regulations and the [Supplementary Regulations](#) for Amsterdam UMC). We recommend that you read these regulations at the beginning of your PhD studies so that you are well aware of what is expected of you during the final stage of your trajectory.



### Cancer Center Amsterdam (CCA)

During your PhD programme, you will work in parallel with more than 600 fellow PhD candidates on a cancer-related project. All PhD candidates focused on oncology research are part of Cancer Center Amsterdam (CCA). CCA is one of the eight research institutes of Amsterdam UMC, but is more than just a research institute. In fact, CCA is an academic oncology center that aims to create groundbreaking possibilities for patients with cancer by integrating research with healthcare and education. CCA connects all cancer researchers by organizing meetings and events for optimal cooperation and data sharing. Furthermore, CCA invests in research facilities that can be used by all researchers focusing on cancer research, provides grant opportunities, and offers support with grant applications.

### Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OOA)

The 'Onderzoekschool Oncologie Amsterdam (Oncology Graduate School - OOA) is the joint graduate school of Cancer Center Amsterdam UMC (CCA), the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI), Vrije University Amsterdam (VU) and University of Amsterdam (UvA). The OOA is dedicated to the training of more than 1000 PhD candidates working in the field of oncology. The main goal of the OOA is to offer you specialized courses in oncology. The OOA course program is designed to ensure that you acquire and develop the necessary skills for a successful career, either in or outside of academia. You can select which courses you want to take based on your interests and background. In addition to providing education, the OOA also organizes social activities and networking opportunities, including the highly valued annual OOA retreat. Because Amsterdam UMC and NKI closely work together, you have the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with many internationally recognized cancer researchers. All OOA activities count as part of your PhD Training Plan (see next page), which is monitored and evaluated by the OOA. All the relevant information can be found on the OOA website and the OOA movie.

### Amsterdam UMC Doctoral School

The Amsterdam UMC Doctoral School actively manages policy-related tasks concerning PhD trajectories. It also oversees the Bureau Promotiezaken. The Doctoral School will handle your registration at Amsterdam UMC, UvA and/or VU. If you will defend your thesis at the VU, the Doctoral School also creates a Hora Finita (HF) account for you right at start of your PhD programme. HF is the PhD tracking system of the VU. All PhD related processes, like admission procedure, progress monitoring, thesis submission and defence preparation run through your account. See page 9 for more information.

It is crucial that both you and your supervisors stay well-informed about important aspects of your PhD trajectory. The Doctoral School provides up-to-date information and answers all your questions. They offer advice and guide you through the challenging steps of your PhD journey.

While the OOA primarily offers courses in oncology research and research technologies, the Doctoral School provides a range of courses designed to support your development at both professional and personal levels.



## 2. Starting your PhD

### 2.1 Registration CCA, OOA and Doctoral School

In order to start your PhD program well-prepared and efficiently, it is essential that you go through a number of (registration) steps. After completing these, you are registered for the Doctoral School, OOA, CCA and UvA/VU, ensuring that you can join all of the activities organized by these institutions. The steps are briefly described below. You can click on the buttons to download the corresponding documents and information. Please also see the [OOA website](#) for more detailed guidance and information.



### 2.2 PhD plan

PhD candidates and their supervisor(s) jointly compile a PhD Plan to ensure the candidate receives proper training and supervision and to specify all parties' roles and responsibilities. The PhD plan consists of four main parts:

- The PhD project
- Supervision
- Personal goals and needs
- Training and education (OOA Training Plan)

#### OOA Training Plan

It is essential that you acquire and develop the right skills to support a successful career either within or outside of academia. The compulsory PhD Training Plan (the last part of the PhD plan), is designed to ensure that you receive the necessary education to support your research project and to prepare you for your future career. For that reason, you must follow a well-balanced Training Plan of 30 ECTS credits (1 ECTS = 28h) aimed at advancing both your professional skills and your personal development. This Training Plan is compulsory for all PhD candidates working in oncology research at both Amsterdam UMC locations. The curriculum is largely flexible so you can compile a training program that fits your own needs and interests.

[Click here](#) to download the OOA Training Plan template. As shown in the OOA template, the training plan consists of three main parts:

- [Professional knowledge courses](#)
- [Transferable skills courses](#)
- [Activities](#)

You need to complete this document right at start of your PhD program in consultation with your (co-)promotor and submit it to the [Doctoral school](#) and [OOA](#). OOA will review your plan and give you advice accordingly. The Doctoral School will invite you to discuss the other parts of your PhD plan.

The Training Plan, which you and your (co-)promotors will design, will become the foundation of your PhD training, but can be optimized during the course of your PhD studies. Please note: it is the responsibility of the doctoral candidate and the supervisor to follow a well-balanced training plan that complies with the OOA rules and regulations.

It is very important to focus on education right at the start of your PhD training along with your research project. As you get closer to completing your PhD, you will need to spend more time on finishing your research and writing articles and thesis, leaving less time to take courses.

If you have any questions about the OOA Training Plan or the educational program, please see our [FAQ](#) or [contact us](#). You can also meet us during our walk-in or drop-in [consultation moments](#). For questions about the educational program of the Amsterdam Doctoral School, you can contact the Amsterdam UMC [Doctoral School](#).

### 2.3 Hora Finita (only for PhD candidates who will defend their thesis at VU)

Hora Finita is the PhD registration and tracking system for all PhD candidates who will defend their thesis at the VU. All processes related to the PhD trajectory, from the admission to the submission of the dissertation, run through this system.

The Doctoral School will create a Hora Finita account once you have registered with the Doctoral School (see 2.1). You will receive login details by e-mail from no-reply-@vu.nl. More details on HF are described below and can be found at the [Doctoral School](#) and [VU](#) (scroll down).



#### Hora Finita

When completed the above mentioned steps, you will automatically receive HF login details by email



#### Submit details

Complete Hora Finita details & upload PhD and Training Plan



#### Submit info

Submit data for assessment

### Upload personal and PhD information in Hora Finita

Some basic information is included in your Hora Finita profile, but you still have to fill out some additional information. Please pay attention to the following items:

1. Passport.
2. Master diploma. If you hold a Dutch Master degree, it is sufficient to upload a DUO certificate.  
If you hold a foreign Master degree, the pdf can be uploaded in Hora Finita. Please note that the diploma has to be drawn up in Dutch, French, German or English. If not, it must be translated by a sworn (notarized) translator. If you do not hold a Dutch or foreign Master degree, you need an exemption (see [Request for exemption](#)). MD-PhD candidates can also request an exemption. [Click here](#) for information and contact details.
3. PhD contract. Information about the various types of contracts can be found in your Hora Finita account.
4. Training plan (training and supervision plan). After you have submitted the PhD plan at the Doctoral School and the OOA (see 2.2) and received a response back from the OOA, you can upload your TP in Hora Finita by using the button 'tsp'.

### Research proposal and work plan

It is not mandatory to upload a research proposal and a work plan in Hora Finita. However, it serves as a good motivator to draw up a plan of approach regarding the content and planning of your PhD project, together with your promotor and supervisors. There is no standard template for the research proposal and the work plan. You can use the data you filled in at the PhD plan as a foundation. The research proposal could be comparable to the grant proposal supporting your PhD project, but as a shorter, more compact version. The work plan describes what you are actually going to do during your PhD project, the planning, what kind of articles you are Submit for assessment

When you have entered all your details in Hora Finita, click 'submit'. Now your registration will be continued and the data will be assessed by the various parties involved in your PhD trajectory (your supervisor, the Dean's Office ('decanale zaken'), the VU Beadle's office, Cancer Center Amsterdam, and finally the Rector Magnificus of the VU) in the so-called 'chain of approval'. This chain of approval can take up to several months. In this phase, you temporarily have no access to Hora Finita because your project is under assessment.

### What's next

As soon as all parties have approved, your registration will be converted into an ongoing PhD program and you will have access to Hora Finita again. Your trajectory will also be visible in your supervisor's dashboard as well. From then on, you can keep track of your activities in your portfolio and upload the corresponding certificates/proofs.

*TIP: every time you earn ECTS, upload it immediately. Chances are you will forget otherwise!*

If you have any questions regarding your Hora Finita registration, please contact: [doctoralschool@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:doctoralschool@amsterdamumc.nl). For technical problems, you can contact the Beadle's office at [pedel@vu.nl](mailto:pedel@vu.nl). If you need to change some key data during your PhD program (i.e. change of supervisor/(co)promotors), you can send a request to the dean's office: [promoties-decanalezaken@vumc.nl](mailto:promoties-decanalezaken@vumc.nl).

## 2.4 Starting up

The first week of your PhD will most likely revolve around settling into your new office, opening accounts, etc. Most likely, your daily supervisor will help you arrange all the necessary steps right at the start. Of course, you can also ask for help from your colleagues working at the same department. To get acquainted with the Doctoral School, OOA and CCA, you will be invited to join their introduction meeting.

## Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) coordinates all central employment matters like contract, salary, insurance, pension, etc. For questions related to your contract and other topics, you can go to the [HR website](#) or to their service desk (location VUmc: 7th floor of the outpatient clinic. Location AMC: C0-215.1)

HR will also arrange your employee badge, which should be ready for pick up at your first working day. You can pick up your badge at the servicepoint (Location VUmc: -1<sup>st</sup> floor of the hospital. Location AMC: C0-215.1). You need your badge in order to access certain areas of the hospital depending on your department. Access to certain restricted areas (SEH, Imaging center, RDC building) can be obtained through your supervisor.

PhD salary and contract duration is determined by the type of agreement that you sign and can be dependent on project money or, for example, medical disciplines. The Collective Labor Agreement (CAO) of universities and university medical centers includes an end of the year bonus ('thirteenth month') and a holiday allowance that is dispensed with your salary of May.

To find the salary slip, go to [Youforce](#) and login with your email. You will then be redirected to login with Tigr (see below). By clicking on 'mijn dossier' you will be forwarded to your salary slips.

When starting a PhD at location VUmc you are usually assigned to the OIO (researcher in training) salary scale according to the CAO. In the first year, you generally start at step 0 with an annual increase of 1 step. You should check the latest active CAO for up-to-date levels of payment. CAO agreements are accessible via the [NFU site](#).

When doing a PhD at location AMC, you are generally employed by the AMR (AMC Medical Research BV) who pays your salary. You can check which salary scale you are assigned to in the latest CAO for up-to-date levels of payment.

### Computer account, email and Tigr

With a computer user account, you can log in to the Amsterdam UMC PC's. An account consists of a username and password. You will automatically receive a username when you register as a new employee at the HR service desk. After registration, the password will be ready for you in about one working day at the ICT service desk (personal collection). This is also where you go to download the Tigr app on your smartphone that enables remote working by accessing your account with a 2-step verification. The ICT service desks are located at: location VUmc, -1<sup>st</sup> floor of the hospital building and at location AMC, D0-208. The ICT department also provides many other services and support. You can find more information on [their website](#).

Access to Sectra (the hospital's medical imaging viewing software) can be obtained by sending an email to the secretaries of your department (cc your supervisor). They will be able to guide you through the process. Sectra access costs your department money, so only ask for access when you truly need it.

Access to Epic (electronical medical records software of the hospital) will be needed if you will be using clinical data or performing clinical duties as part of your PhD project. For this, you will need to set up an account for the electronic patient system. A general course and a specific course that is more tailored to your function are required. You can arrange Epic courses through the secretary of your specific department by sending them an email.

### Clothing

Lab coats or required clothing can be registered at the 'linnendienst' (linen department). They will add the corresponding codes to your badge and, after activation, you will be able to pick up your clothing at the dispenser machines. Location for the "linnenkamer" (linen room) location VUmc: ZH

-1F 002 (open from 07:00 - 09:00 and 12:30 - 14:00) and location AMC: G01-226 (from 13:30 - 14:30)

### Traveling to Amsterdam UMC

There is great accessibility of both locations by public transport, train, subway, tram, and busses. Parking at location VUmc is extremely limited. Everyone is advised to travel by bicycle or public transportation. In some situations, it is possible to request a parking pass that gives access to the parking garages and parking lots of VU and VUmc. See [www.parkerenbijvu.nl](http://www.parkerenbijvu.nl). At location AMC, all employees with an AMC pass can park for free at P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7. Parking garage P2 is partially accessible to employees. Travel reimbursement can be requested through the [HR portal](#).



## 3. During your PhD

### 3.1 Research

The largest part of your PhD program will consist of working on your research project. Your supervisor will guide you in what the research project entails and how to set up and perform the experiments. Most likely, the department at which you are employed will have all the necessary facilities and equipment. You may also be asked to cooperate with other departments within or outside of Amsterdam UMC.

For further support, activities and services, a number of central institutes and departments are in place. The most relevant ones are:

#### Cancer Center Amsterdam

On the website of [Cancer Center Amsterdam \(CCA\)](#), you can find the latest news from CCA and information about the research programs, researchers, upcoming events, [grant opportunities](#) and education. You can also [subscribe](#) to the bi-weekly CCA newsletter to stay updated on all news and activities organized. We encourage you to reach out to CCA if you have news about your research that you like to share on the website and the newsletter. Once per month, CCA organizes scientific lectures (CCall) which are open to all PhD students. Furthermore, CCA organizes a yearly conference which is highly appreciated by PhD students. CCA also offers [travel grants](#) to PhD students and financial support for the printing costs of your thesis. If you need help with [grant writing](#) or if you have questions about valorization of your research, contact [cca@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:cca@amsterdamumc.nl).

#### Research Core Facilities

Amsterdam UMC fosters nine research facilities which are accessible to all Amsterdam UMC researchers. These are:

- Animal Research Institute AMC (ARIA)
- Biobanking
- CRISPR
- Functional Genomic screening
- Genomics
- Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells
- Metabolomics
- Microscopy & Cytometry
- OncoProteomics
- Research Imaging

More information about the facilities, services and costs can be found on [their websites](#).

#### Research Roadmap

The [Research roadmap Amsterdam UMC](#) offers all researchers structured information on setting up, carrying out and completing scientific research, including clinical trials. Topics like 'what requirements do you have to meet for each kind of research project?' and 'what kind of support is available from Amsterdam UMC?' are addressed in this roadmap.



## Research Support

Research support aims to contribute to a stimulating research environment and provides hands-on support to Amsterdam UMC researchers. Their services include:

- [Amsterdam UMC Research BV](#)
- [Clinical Research Monitoring](#)
- [Data Science Expert Center](#)
- [Ethical Review](#)
- [Kenniscentrum Geneesmiddelenonderzoek](#)
- [Legal Research Support](#)
- [Medical Library](#)
- [Methodological and statistical support](#)
- [Research Data Management](#)
- [Research Grant support](#)
- [Research Policy Office](#)
- [Valorization](#)

More information about the facilities, services and costs can be found at [their websites](#).

## Amsterdam UMC Research Code, Code of Conduct and Scientific Integrity

Scientific Integrity requires continuous attention by anyone involved in science. The ‘rules of the game’ are described by the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, and are further specified by the Amsterdam UMC [Research Code](#). At Amsterdam UMC, a safe work climate is an important theme. Together, all employees are responsible for doing everything possible to prevent undesirable forms of behavior. You can read this in the Amsterdam UMC [Code of Conduct](#).

The Amsterdam UMC Research Code defines local guidelines and expectations that researchers and staff are expected to follow when conducting research at Amsterdam UMC. Despite efforts to promote responsible conduct of research, situations can arise where research

integrity seems to have been compromised. Falsification and fabrication of research data as well as plagiarism are clearly very serious scientific misconducts while a wide range of research practices are in the “grey zone”. During the compulsory [Course on Research Integrity](#), some of these issues will be addressed. If you suspect or encounter any problems with respect to scientific integrity, please be aware that you can always contact the Amsterdam UMC Scientific Counselor. For contact details, [click here](#).

## Ethical review

Medical research involving human subjects, human material or laboratory animals has to be carried out according to national law and regulations. Dedicated ethical committees review research protocols to ensure human and animal safety and research quality. To set-up a biobank or to conduct research with material from a biobank, approval from the biobank review committee (Commissie Toetsing Biobanken; CBT) is needed. This committee focusses on evaluation of the legal and ethical aspects of the research. For more information: [METC Amsterdam UMC](#), [DEC Amsterdam UMC](#), [Commissie Toetsing Biobanken - CBT](#).

If you are setting up a clinical or animal study as part of your PhD project, you will need to take an obligatory course. See page 15 for information.

## Animal facility AMC

The AMC animal facility is located in the ARIA. To gain access, you have to register as an animal researcher with an [article 9](#) or 13 with the ‘[Instantie voor Dierenwelzijn](#)’. You will then automatically be enrolled for a mandatory information meeting. Prior to this meeting, you must do mandatory e-learning through the “leerportaal” (learning portal; see section Selfservice in the HR portal). You should also register as a project employee with the ‘Biologische VeiligheidsGroep’. After completing these steps, you need to complete an intake that is specific for the area you need access to. The ARIA secretary can help you and they have a step-by-step document to guide you through the access process ([aria-bb@amc.uva.nl](mailto:aria-bb@amc.uva.nl)).

The VUmc animal facility is temporarily closed (due to relocation). Please discuss with your PI where you can do your experiments.

### PURE

Pure is the Current Research Information System (CRIS) of Amsterdam UMC for research management and reporting needs. Researchers at Amsterdam UMC can register and highlight their research content through Pure Amsterdam UMC. The goal is to keep track of your research here. The following steps only work in your digital Amsterdam UMC work environment (accessible via Tigr, see page 11). Click [here](#) to get started with Pure. The research information you enter in Pure will be presented in full on the Amsterdam UMC Research portal and in part on the website Amsterdam UMC Research

### Grants

Most PhD candidates are funded through already awarded grants. However, during your PhD trajectory there might be situations where you have to assist your PI with grant writing or have to write a grant for yourself. If you write a (part of a) grant proposal, you will earn ECTS for that activity.

CCA provides internal grants, including financial grants for thesis publication, travel grants, and to make clinical impact. Please refer to their [grant website](#). The [external grant](#) page contains information about potential grants you can apply for (KWF, NWO, MDL, among others).

The Amsterdam UMC [Young Talent Fund](#) helps you to further develop your skills. For additional questions or information regarding grants, you can visit the Amsterdam UMC [Research Grant Support page](#).

At the end of your PhD program, you can apply for reimbursement for the printing of your thesis through various channels. Click [here](#) for more information

## 3.2 Education

### OOA

The OOA and Doctoral School are the primary graduate schools that provide courses free of charge.

The OOA professional knowledge courses focus on cutting-edge scientific topics and the core research activities at both Amsterdam UMC and NKI, covering specific tumor types and topics within oncology, as well as new groundbreaking technologies which will provide you with the right skills and expertise to apply these methods in your own research. The 'Basic Oncology' course provides you with a solid foundation in the field of oncology. A highlight of the OOA educational program is the annual PhD student retreat at Renesse, which focuses entirely on the PhD research projects. About 200 PhD candidates from Amsterdam UMC and NKI present their work, highlighting the wide range of oncology-related research performed at Amsterdam while also fostering collaboration and interaction between the attendees. The social program features energizing and creative workshops. See [this LinkedIn post](#) for an impression of the 2023 edition.



Each year, the OOA PhD candidate council organizes the PhD day. This day is primarily focused on supporting all OOA PhD candidates to further develop their transferable and soft skills. Click [here](#) for an impression of the 2023 edition.

On the [OOA](#) website, you can check an up-to-date course overview. Make sure that you plan the educational activities well in advance and tailor them to your own interests, needs and background.

### **Doctoral School**

The Doctoral School course program helps PhD candidates in conducting independent, original and scientifically significant research, and critically evaluating their own work and that of others. The course program offers training to develop scientific skills, acquire transferable skills and broaden and deepen scientific understanding. Each Amsterdam UMC PhD candidate follows an individual training program.

A subset of our courses is aimed at improving the 'general skills' of PhD candidates, which will not only help them successfully complete their PhD project, but also better prepare them for a future job.

On the [Doctoral School](#) website, you can check an up-to-date course overview.

### **Courses required by law: animal handling and BROK**

Depending on your research project, you might have to take some courses that are required by law. For instance, if you want to include animal studies in your PhD, you first must follow a course on anatomy and handling of animals, and ethics & integrity. For more information, please see check [this website](#).

If you are setting up a clinical trial as part of your PhD project, you will need to get acquainted with all of the rules and regulations involved. The Basic Course Regulations and Organization for Clinical Researchers (BROK)

provides a nice overview of the laws and guidelines. You can subscribe for the BROK course through the doctoral school. It is advisable to properly prepare and study for this course, since it is expensive and many people do not pass the exam.

On the website [Medisch Ethische Toetsingscommissie Amsterdam UMC](#), you can find information on how to apply for ethical approval of your clinical trial. Coordination of a clinical trial demands that you organize and file your documents properly. The [clinical research unit](#) provides guidelines on how to organize your folder. It is advisable to develop a system for filing your patient information, samples and data before starting the work using a Data Management Plan.



## Amsterdam UMC Academy

The educational program of the [Amsterdam UMC Academy](#) is mainly focused on healthcare topics, but some PhD courses are included as well, like '[individual coaching for PhD candidates](#)', '[integral PhD program: from student to professional](#)' and '[Personal Development and competencies during your PhD](#)'. Please note: the Amsterdam UMC Academy courses are not free of charge.

## Other (educational) organizations

The eight Amsterdam UMC research institutes organize courses according to their specific research areas. Please check the 'PhD education' page on their [websites](#) for more information. In addition, the VU and UvA-affiliated faculties organize a number of courses which might be of interest to you. The VU courses are listed on [a central website](#). The UvA courses can be found on the respective websites of the [UvA-faculties](#). Please note: not all courses are accessible if you are not affiliated with the respective faculty. Contact the course organizer(s) to check if you are eligible to subscribe.

Besides courses offered by the internal organizations, you can also take courses outside of Amsterdam UMC. Next to the OOA basic course in Oncology, PhD candidates can take the (Dutch) 'Basiscursus Oncologie' organized by the [Dutch Society for Oncology](#). OOA closely collaborates with the [Utrecht Clinical and Translational Oncology](#) school and the [Medical Genetics Centre South-West Netherlands](#) (MGC), meaning that you can join their courses, free of charge.

All 18 [Dutch Universities](#) and 7 [University Medical Centers](#) offer PhD courses which might be of interest to you, especially when you are searching for professional courses outside of the oncology field.

If you found an interesting course but have doubts about the quality and validity of the course, please contact via [ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl) for advice.

## Online training GoodHabitZ

Amsterdam UMC offers all employees a large number of online courses via [GoodhabitZ](#). The range of now over 130 training courses is divided into 10 themes: Personal Effectiveness, Management, Productivity, Language, Communication, Commercial, Positive Psychology, Social Media, Safe & Healthy and Office. One course represents a study load of up to 3 hours.

## Portfolio review

Once you've reached the final phase of your doctoral journey, it's time to have your completed training program (portfolio) reviewed. This is necessary to do before you can submit your final manuscript to the dissertation committee. All information about the portfolio requirements and review process can be found on our OOA website. In short:

Educational requirements of the portfolio:

- A total number of 30 ECTS credits
- A Scientific Integrity and Ethics course (2 ECTS)
- At least one scientific conference visit (max 2 ECTS per visit)
- At least 8 ECTS earned in professional knowledge and general skill courses

PhD candidates who will defend their thesis at the VU, can upload their portfolio in Hora Finita. After approval of the first primary promotor, the OOA will assess the portfolio. Once the portfolio is approved by the OOA via HF, the PhD candidate can upload their thesis manuscript in HF. If desired, an official 30 ECTS OOA training certificate can be requested via [ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl).

PhD candidates who will defend their thesis at the UvA have to send their completed training plan (portfolio) to [ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:ooa-tp@amsterdamumc.nl). Please see our website for the portfolio template. OOA will review the portfolio and send their approval by email to the PhD candidate and the deans office of the UvA. If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

### 3.3 Other facilities, services and support

Amsterdam UMC offers various facilities, services and support that may be of interest to you. We suggest first checking the [Tulp Intranet](#). Another good and informative website is [K2 iProva/Zenia](#). Several protocols and manuals can be found here. Other relevant services are listed below.

#### Human Resources portal

The [Human Resources portal](#) coordinates all central employment matters like contract, salary, insurance, pension, etc. Here you can find information regarding your contract and you can file for cost reimbursements for (public) transport or other expenses. At “Mijn bekwaamheden dashboard” (my competences dashboard), you can find which mandatory webinars you have to follow to keep your skills and knowledge up to date. When these expire, you will get an email to update them (on a yearly basis).

You can also visit HR at their service desk (location VUmc: 7th floor of the outpatient clinic (polikliniek). Location AMC: C0-215.1)

All Amsterdam UMC employees register their working hours in an Excel sheet. Via the [HR portal](#), you can download this sheet that comes with guidelines.

Tax refund can be arranged at the “reiskostenregeling” (travel reimbursement policy) tab, where you can select “fiscale uitruil” (tax benefit exchange). At the end of the year, this checks whether you have used the total amount of travel money that Amsterdam UMC has set aside for you. If you used less than the set amount, you will be refunded the difference through taxes. If you spend more travel money than the set amount, this will have no effect.

You can update your travel costs and the number of days you work from home at the section “Reis- en thuiswerkdagen” (travel and work-from-home days). Your workdays at home are financially compensated. This

should be updated every month, preferably before the 15th to receive your travel expenses within that same months’ salary.

You can get a discount by using your bicycle for transportation. Amsterdam UMC has negotiated discounts with several bicycle stores. In addition, through the 'bicycle plan' you can get money back for your bicycle through your salary. See the HR website for more information.

For submitting a claim for other expenses (such as software, monitor cables, poster printing costs, conference costs etc.), you can go to “raadplegen/indienen declaratie” (consult/ submit reimbursement request) at the HR website. Do not claim costs without first discussing this with your supervisors.

#### ICT and research cloud

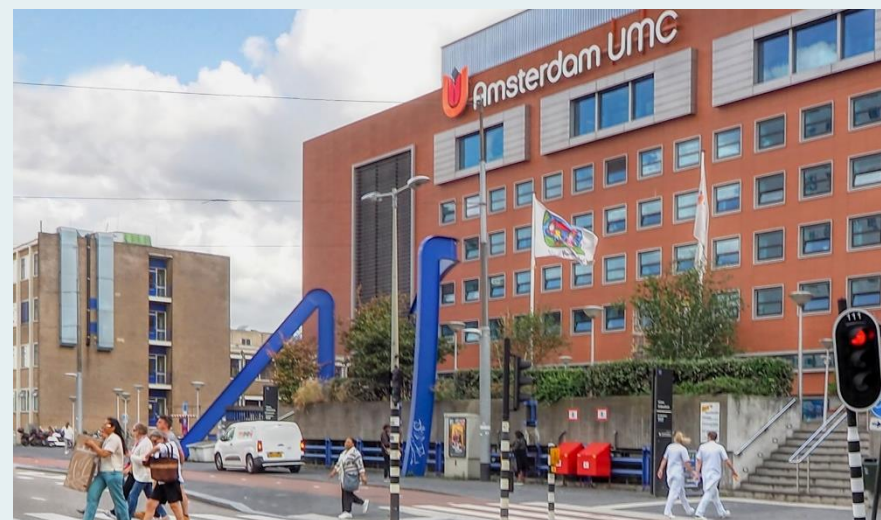
If you want to get relatively cheap software license for your own device, you should check out SURFspot. There, you can either create an account with your Amsterdam UMC email or login using your existing Amsterdam UMC account.



To get software access on your Amsterdam UMC digital working environment, go to the [ICT service portal](#). Here, you can request specific software that the IT department can push to your account. Important: for certain software, such as Adobe, you need to log in with your Amsterdam email address and then choose: 'Enterprise ID'. For software that is not available, you should contact the IT department through a request. Chances are that you need to obtain a workstation. Workstations can be accessed by remote access using 'verbinding met een extern bureaublad'.

### **Office of Doctorate Affairs and Beadle's Office**

The final phase of your PhD will focus on writing and submitting your PhD thesis and the PhD ceremony. All formalities surrounding your doctorate (PhD) are handled by the Office of Doctorate Affairs (Bureau Promotiezaken in Dutch). The Beadle's Office (Pedel in Dutch) takes care of the academic ceremony. On the Amsterdam UMC doctoral school [website](#), you will find information about the steps necessary to complete your PhD degree and the role of the Doctoral School, Office of Doctorate Affairs and Beadle's Office.



## 4. Help, support and advice

### Mental Health and Wellbeing

The road to your PhD is not always an easy one. You might encounter situations that negatively affect your mental health and well-being, such as life/work imbalance, trouble dealing with responsibility, uncertainty, insecurity, or suboptimal communication with your supervisor. We encourage you to discuss those issues directly with (co-)promotor, but please keep in mind that you do not have to deal with these problems on your own. There are many different kinds and levels of support to help you during your PhD. These can include confidential counseling or group-based help sessions. Information on the support available to you can be found on [this page](#). Depending on the type and level of support you are looking for, you can join one or more activities.

Please also refer to your General Practitioner (GP) when you experience (mental) health problems.

### Social safety and undesirable behavior

Amsterdam UMC has an ombudsman and confidential adviser available.

You can approach the Ombudsman in situations involving concerns about employee or patient safety, integrity, privacy or treatment, or when, for example, there are suspicions of abuses, fraud, theft or dishonesty.

You can see a confidential adviser for issues about behavior and communication that have hurt you or caused you to feel unsafe at the workplace. This can be about personal integrity issues, harassment, aggression and violence, discrimination, stalking and bullying.

More information: click [here](#).

### Scientific Integrity

If you suspect or encounter any problems with respect to scientific integrity, please be aware that you can always contact the Amsterdam UMC Scientific Counselor. For contact details, [click here](#).

### Career advice

The Amsterdam UMC has career counseling facilities that can help you to figure out what to do after your PhD. You can approach them by email ([loopbaanontwikkeling@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:loopbaanontwikkeling@amsterdamumc.nl)). They will ask you to fill out a form describing the type of question you need help with and a curriculum vitae.

### PhD Council

The OOA has a council that consists of multiple PhD candidates from the oncology departments throughout Amsterdam UMC and NKI. The council aims to stimulate connections between PhD candidates by organizing various social events like the PhD day, the OOA retreat and various game nights and drinks. They are also willing to help if any guidance is requested. You can reach the OOA council via mail ([OOAcouncil@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:OOAcouncil@amsterdamumc.nl))



### Mentor-mentee program

Amsterdam UMC offers a mentoring program to connect researchers from all levels to help with career advancement. The ultimate goal of this program is to make sure everybody gets most out of their academic careers. Topics may include: how can I improve my CV, how can I be more successful when applying for a grant, and which steps should I take to make that next step in academia. If you want to connect with a mentor (or be a mentor yourself), you can find detailed information [here](#).

### Yearly meeting

It is mandatory to have a yearly progress meeting with your supervisor. In this meeting, you should talk about your personal development (research, communication, skills, learning objectives) and about your relationship with your supervisor and colleagues. This meeting should officially be with at least two people and you may need to initiate it yourself. You can ask the secretary of your department to supply you with the correct forms. Both you and your supervisor have to fill in these forms, which include a section on agreements made for the next yearly meeting. Afterwards, both should sign the form and you should upload it to your HR portal. It is advised to use the consultation forms during this meeting. For location VUmc PhD candidates: agreements made during this meeting can be added to the Hora Finita tracking system.

### Tracking your PhD

The Amsterdam UMC Doctoral School has implemented a PhD progress procedure. The aim of this evaluation is to recognize, avoid, and/or minimize potential threats to the progress and quality of your PhD project at an early stage. Halfway through your PhD program, you will be asked by the Doctoral School to start the procedure. [Click here](#) for more details.

### Important contact details

Each department will have their own office with a secretary. This will be your first point of contact for practical facilities-related issues. Ask your colleagues for the contact details or search on the intranet site. However, there are other general support services for all PhD candidates.



## 5. COMING FROM ABROAD

### Housing

Amsterdam UMC has a limited number of rooms available for PhD candidates coming from abroad. To apply for the rooms, send an e-mail to [immigration@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:immigration@amsterdamumc.nl) with the subject 'room rental'. The rooms they offer are for less than one year's stay and they will tell you the location. If a room is not available, there are some optional websites to find housing yourself. The VUmc and student housing organization 'DUWO' have an agreement to house candidates at the campus. To apply for this agreement you can contact [accommodation@vu.nl](mailto:accommodation@vu.nl). It is important to keep in mind that you will be first allocated to a Short Stay (1 year) accommodation and automatically added to a waiting list for the Long Stay accommodations (4 years). These rooms are limited so it is recommended that you also try to find housing yourself. It is always a big challenge to find affordable housing in Amsterdam when coming from abroad, so it is important to start looking for it as soon as possible, but watch out for scams.

If the room is not available, here are some optional websites you can look at:

- [iamexpat housing](#)
- [Hi Condo](#)
- [Kamernet](#)
- [Holland2Stay](#)
- [Funda](#)

### BSN number

Everyone in the Netherlands has a registration number: the citizen service number (burgerservicenummer, BSN). It is assigned to Dutch citizens at

birth while those arriving in the Netherlands will need to apply for one. A BSN is required in order to be permitted to work, open a bank account, make use of healthcare (a doctor or hospital), and to apply for benefits or an allowance. You need to make an appointment at the city hall. You can find more information [here](#). The registration requires a residential address, so it is important to check when renting a room if it is possible to register as a resident in this place, otherwise you will not be able to get a BSN.

### DigiD

DigiD stands for Digital Identity. It is a personal digital identity which allows the user to obtain service from governmental entities which require online identification. You can find more information [here](#). It is also necessary for a bank account and health insurance.

### Health insurance

During your stay in the Netherlands, you are obliged to take out a Dutch public healthcare insurance within 4 months after you arrive in the Netherlands. You can find more information [here](#).

Amsterdam UMC has made collective agreements with two health insurance companies: [UMC Zorgverzekering](#) and [Zilveren Kruis](#) for additional policies on top of your basic health insurance, but you can arrange any other you prefer.

- The group number for the UMC Zorgverzekering is **13884**
- The group number for the Zilveren Kruis is **207082471**

Once insured, it is important to register with a general practitioner (in Dutch 'huisarts'). Your GP is your first point of contact for any illness except for emergencies. They will direct you to specialists when needed. Seeing a specialist requires a referral (verwijsbrief) from the GP if you want the insurance to cover the specialist's fees. Most doctors speak English. It is advisable to find a GP and register with them as soon as possible because this can take some time as there are often waiting lists.

### In case of emergency

The emergency phone number for fire, police and ambulance service is 112. The accident and emergency department in hospitals is called EHBO (Eerste Hulp Bij ongevallen) or SEH (Spoedeisende Hulp).

### Public transport

To travel by public transport, you can use a travel card ([OV chip card](#)) or your bankcard. You need to upload money on your OV chip card before using the public transportation. There must be at least € 0,01 on the OV chip card to use it. You can buy an anonymous OV chip card at one of the GVB information centers or at the GVB-machines located at various metro stations.

It is possible to apply for a season ticket. For more information about the season ticket, please visit the [NS](#) or [GVB](#) websites.

- Train: [NS](#)
- Metro/Bus/Tram: [GVB](#) (only in Amsterdam)
- To check public transport from one point to another: [9292](#) app
- Bus: [Connexxion](#)

Traveling with public transportation in the Netherlands means that you have to check in and out each time you get on or off. If you forget to check yourself out and you try to check in again, there will be 4 euros subtracted from your card balance. For the NS (trains), you need to have at least 20 euros on your travel card to check in. It is also possible to buy the one-time NS tickets at the ticket desks or from the machines close the train entrance.

### Get a bike!

Everyone cycles in the Netherlands and you can travel almost anywhere on bike lanes and paths. There are many companies that offer a bike rental subscription, so you do not need to buy one if you do not want to. One that is very popular is [Swapfiets](#). For a fixed amount per month, you get a bicycle to use. If it needs to be repaired, you can contact them by their app and

they will repair your bike or swap it for a new one within 48 hours. You can also buy your own bike. Nice, second-hand options are normally available on the internet, via for instance '[Marktplaats](#)'.

### Open a Dutch bank account

In order to receive your salary and to pay for the health insurance, you need to open a Dutch bank account. You will have 10 days to provide your Dutch bank account number to the HR so you can receive the salary.

If you are employed by the AMR, HR can arrange an appointment at the bank for you at the time you sign the contract. You can choose which bank you want, but the most popular ones are [ABN Amro](#) and [ING](#).

### Income tax

If you earn money or are working in the Netherlands, you need to pay tax on your income. You declare your income via your annual tax return (aangifte inkomstenbelasting) which can be done [online](#) or with the help of a Dutch tax advisor. If you are employed by a company, then your income tax will already be withheld from your salary by your employer. This is known as wage tax (which is contained within payroll tax). You only need to declare if you receive a letter from the government asking for it, otherwise it is not mandatory. You can find more information [here](#).

### 30% ruling tax advance

The 30% ruling is a tax advantage for highly skilled migrants working in the Netherlands. Briefly, the taxable amount of a gross Dutch salary is reduced from 100% to 70%, meaning 30% of the wage is tax-free. Click [here](#) to find more information. Does the 30% ruling apply to you? There are strict requirements (e.g. income level, level / area of expertise) to ensure that only eligible expat employees can qualify. The Salary administration will make an appointment with you and together you will see if you meet the requirements to apply for the 30% ruling. AMC Medical Research (AMR)

can help you with this. At the VUmc, you can contact HR to receive a form to apply for this tax ruling.

#### **International Office - Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam**

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam has an international office, which is specialized to support international candidates that want to enroll in any education. In addition to providing information on your stay in the Netherlands, they can also help you out with immigration services, housing and language courses. Check [their website](#) for information.