



PhD Starter Package

Getting you started as a PhD student

at the NKI-AVL

Version 1.4

Last updated: December 2024

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. This is the contact person for the division. Two council members also take part in the Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (Oncologie Onderzoeksschool Amsterdam, 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, follow our page on MyAntonet (by clicking [here](#)), add us on LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/phd-council-netherlands-cancer-institute/>) and/or join the NKI PhD WhatsApp community (<https://chat.whatsapp.com/KmQVZl4ycn4DZvvJIHkQ6l>).

We tried to summarize policies and procedures at the NKI as carefully as possible. In case there is a discrepancy, the formal policies and procedures will be leading and not this document.

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General

PhD students must enroll in the training and supervision program (TSP) 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.

- All PhD students working at the NKI-AVL have to register at the OOA to take part in the Training and Supervision Program (TSP) of the Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OGSA). PhD students are expected to participate in courses, two OGSA retreats, attend the Friday spotlights, Thursday seminar series and meet with invited speakers. By attending such courses, you can earn points called ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). 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 OGSA committee which, after an initial kick-off meeting, meets yearly with the supervisor and the PhD student to discuss the progress and the plans. At the end of the second year (in case of a 4-year PhD contract), there is a mid-term evaluation meeting during which the performance and potential of the student, the prospect of the project and the expectations for the remaining time frame of the PhD are critically 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 primary task of the OGSA committee is to support a successful PhD trajectory, guard professional education as well as the well-being of the PhD student and provide support and advice to the PhD student and the supervisor. The group leader has final responsibility for the supervision, training 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 Center. 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 the 3rd year 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. Information about the OOA – Oncology Graduate School for NKI-AVL PhD students can be found on *MyAntonet* > *OOA – Oncology Graduate school*, or [here](#).

Contact details OOA

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

In addition, the OOA will send emails to all OOA students regarding courses and important information. After your registration, please check if you receive these emails. If you do not receive them, please contact the OOA at 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. Guidelines for selecting a supervisory committee can be found on *MyAntonet* > *OOA Oncology Graduate School* > *OOA_Documents*, or [here](#).

Checklist for OOA supervisory committee meetings:

At the start of your PhD:

- When you are a new PhD student, send a mail to the council (phd-council@nki.nl) so that we know that we need to include you in the next **meet the dean session**. You also earn

ECTs by attending this meeting (0.2 ECTS). For more information about the meet the dean session see page 8.

- 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 your project has NOT been peer-reviewed externally, you also have to complete the [Non-reviewed project description form](#) together with the [registration form to the OOA](#).

Within 3 months of starting your PhD:

- As soon you have registered, plan a **kick-off meeting** with all members of your supervisory committee to introduce each other and 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, make sure that the [Evaluation form for all meetings](#), marked 'Kick-off' is signed by the chairperson (usually one of the external members), the supervisor and you.
- Send the completed evaluation form which includes the TSP 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, 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 the chairperson, supervisor and you.
 5. The student talks with the committee, project leader/supervisor not being present.
- Send the completed evaluation form which includes the TSP 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, before the two years have finished (in case you have a 4-years PhD contract) of your appointment, to discuss your research progress.

Two years after starting your PhD:

- After two years the OOA committee meeting will be a midterm evaluation. You can find the details and guidelines for this meeting [here](#).
- 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 make sure that the form is signed by the chairperson, supervisor and you.
- Send the completed evaluation form which includes the TSP 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 trajectory, you should contact your supervisor and supervisory committee to discuss the reasoning. In case of a discontinuation the OOA has to be informed.

Meet the dean

The PhD council and the NKI- dean of the OOA, organize every 3-4 months a small event in which we will make sure to explain everything (or almost everything) you need to know. In this event we will discuss what is the PhD council and the OOA school, what can we do for you and some useful information for your experience here. The meeting is not mandatory for your training, but it is highly recommended and can provide 0.2 ECTS after attending it! If you would like to join the meet the dean session, please send a mail to phd-council@nki.nl.

The OOA Training and Supervision Plan (TSP)

In order to be admitted to the thesis defense, the PhD candidate must have completed the obligatory TSP 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 another 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. You are also able to attend courses at the university you are graduating at, see the university website or ask your supervisor for more information. PSOE (Psychosocial Research & Epidemiology) 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 participate at the local graduate school of the university where you will defend your thesis, but early registration is recommended, please ask your promotor for details.

Printing your thesis

PhD students have to organize the printing of their thesis themselves. Printing companies usually give discounts, indicate that you are from the NKI-AVL when you request a quote of the costs and ask for a discount.

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 promotor to which University he or she is affiliated to get this process going. Your supervisor/promotor should 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: At the start of your PhD trajectory, please clarify with your promotor whether registration at the graduate school of the University is also 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 finishing package that the PhD council has established on the PhD council page ([here](#)). It contains a lot of information, but not everything, therefore make sure to 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.

Travel grants

For most universities there is a travel grant for PhD students, these grants can cover travel costs for scientific activities, such as attending a conference or courses abroad. You can apply for this grant at the university where your professor is affiliated to. See the useful links below to find more information about your university.

Useful links per university

Amsterdam UMC/UvA

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

Erasmus University

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

Leiden University

- [General information PhD students](#)
- [PhD regulations](#)
- [Travel grant information](#)

Radboud university

- [General information](#)
- [PhD regulations](#)
- [Travel grant information](#)

TU Delft

- [General information](#)
- [Infographic about the training program](#)
- [Travel grant information](#)

Utrecht University

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

Note: We have included links to various universities and their respective policies. Please note that these links may be subject to updates or changes over time. If you encounter any inaccuracies or see that information needs to be updated, we encourage you to contact us directly (phd-council@nki.nl). Your feedback is invaluable in ensuring that our information remains accurate and up to date.

Rights as a PhD student (or employee of 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 during 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 internal Scientific Advisory Board (*Beleid Voorbereidend Orgaan*, BVO; l.gingnagel@nki.nl). The progress report should include an outline of the thesis and a timeline for completion of the thesis. 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 by your PI.

Pregnancy leave during the PhD program, with the result that the thesis cannot be completed within the contract period, is always a reason for extending the contract of the PhD student by 16 weeks. Alternatively, 6 months support by a part-time roving scientist is offered to continue some of the experiments. The PhD student employment agreement is regarded as a contract for employment 'primarily for education'. This means that the employment contract can be extended without resulting in a permanent employment.

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:

- **Holiday (V) hours/days (*Wettelijk verlof*)** - These are your legal holiday hours. You have 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, 2025, up to and including June 30, 2026.*
- **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 each year.

Note: You should always discuss taking leave with your supervisor.

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 > My personal data > My leave. You will be directed to the rooster.nki.nl site, more information can be found under useful information (rooster.nki.nl) or via [this link](#).

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 supervisor, 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 Zenya (only available from the NKI-AVL network).

During public holidays you do not have to use your V hours.

Sickness

If you are unable to work because of an illness or other reasons, directly contact your supervisor. You are not obliged to give the (medical) details of your absence, but discuss when you will be back, if some of your work should be taken over by others and how to stay in contact during your sickness leave. Also inform your office manager and your absence should be registered (also inform the office manager when you start working again).

In the Netherlands your salary is not affected during the first year of sickness and you also do not lose your holiday (V) hours.

If you would like to speak to the company doctor, you can make an appointment via HR Health services. You can also be invited by the company doctor or one of the other health workers for a meeting. The company doctor has to respect your privacy, and the doctor is not allowed to inform your supervisor about your medical condition. The company doctor gives advice how to return to work. It is up to your supervisor to make arrangements with you about returning to work using the advice of the company doctor.

Financial information

Salary

PhD students have a separate salary. A salary increase within the salary scale is granted every year automatically until you reach the end of the scale. 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'). Clinical PhD students with an MD degree and with significant clinical responsibilities during their whole PhD period 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 [Persoonnel - MyAntonet \(nki.nl\)](#) for more info or contact HR (hrrservices@nki.nl).

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 is 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](#)).

Travelling to work

There are allowances for commuting to the NKI and for working from home. The latest information about this can be found 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 by 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](#).

Apply for additional travel expenses to maximize your end-of-year bonus:

For every kilometre you travel to the NKI you receive 19 eurocents tax free. However, according to Dutch law you can get up to 23 eurocents tax free per kilometre. The difference of 4 eurocents can be used to get a part of your end-of-year bonus tax free as it can be allocated as additional travel expense. To make use of this arrangement, you can fill out a form in your HR portal:

Select 'My personal data, Register and change, Multiple choice employment conditions, Travel expenses (Holiday/end of year), travel expenses VT/EJ. First source is End of year allowance; second source is End of year allowance. Click on 'Create'.

Travel insurance

Are you travelling abroad for business (i.e. conference)? Every employee is insured through the NKI when they go on a business trip for work-related matters. There are various situations in which the employee can make a claim based on the AVL travel insurance. The most common ones are stolen luggage or other personal belongings, cancellation of (part of) the business trip due to illness, etc., or damage to themselves, others, or property. If you have any questions or if you need to make a claim to the AVL travel insurance, please contact verzekeringen@nki.nl. Please note, leisure activities during a business trip are not covered, neither are extra days before or after a business trip.

Important contact persons

Contact with the OOA

The board of the OOA consists of the dean – Heinz Jacobs, plus administrators and coordinators, who can be reached at OOA@nki.nl.

Email groups

There are general email groups used within the NKI to send information to multiple people at once. Please ensure that you are added to these email lists, so you do not miss any important information. If you believe you are missing emails or are not on a list, please send an email to servicecentre@nki.nl. Some of the important groups include:

- General mailing list for PhD students (phdmedewerker@nki.nl)
- General research mailing list for NKI (res-mail@nki.nl)

Confidential counsellors

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 advisors. The information about our internal confidential advisors can be found on *MyAntonet* > *Practical information* > *Whistleblower policy* > *Confidential advisor*, or via [this link](#).

When to consult a confidential advisor: When people work together, one person's behavior or communication could be perceived by another as unsafe, unpleasant, or undesirable. You may also encounter (suspected) wrongdoings that affect the integrity of you or others. Express your feelings is the quickest way to express how you experienced the communication, behavior, or situation. This may be too big of a step, however. You want the feeling to go away, but may not feel comfortable taking that step with your colleague or supervisor? If this is the case for you, our confidential advisors may be able to help you. They are here for everyone at the NKI. You can contact one of the advisors if you want to share your story or share a report or complaint in confidence. Don't wait too long: you are welcome!

Internal confidential advisors

The NKI has five internal confidential advisors. You are free to decide which advisor best fits you and your situation. [Meet the team of internal advisors](#). Or contact them at one of the following email-addresses: Marcel.vertrouwenspersoon@nki.nl, Marc.vertrouwenspersoon@nki.nl, Rita.vertrouwenspersoon@nki.nl, Judith.vertrouwenspersoon@nki.nl // judith.confidentialadvisor@nki.nl

External confidential advisor

Herman van der Wind has been appointed as an external confidential advisor as of January 1, 2021. All employees of the NKI can consult him by emailing h.vanderwind@bezemerschubad.nl or calling (+31) 88 144 0200 (between 08.30 and 18.00) or 06 12 26 50 99. 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 a researcher or secretary when researching inappropriate behavior, and as a mediator in conflicts due to inappropriate behavior.

Confidential Scientific advisors

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

Confidential advisors have a duty of confidentiality

Both the internal and the external confidential advisors have a strict duty of confidentiality and do not act on their own initiative – they always discuss actions with the relevant employee first. The confidential advisor can only approach or engage third parties with the explicit consent of the employee. The confidential advisors are independent.

Health Services

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 6th floor of the H-building.

An appointment with the company doctor 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 represents 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.

Social Workers

If you are struggling with mental health issues in your private or work-life, you can contact the Staff Welfare officers Esmee Claessen via email (e.claessen@nki.nl) or Mariëlle Visser (m.visser@nki.nl) via email. Their goal within the Institute is to prevent sick leave by employees due to mental health issues. They 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. In addition, they can act as a coach to employees. It is important to note that all conversations with the staff welfare officers are confidential and cannot be shared with your supervisor or colleagues without your explicit permission. To make an appointment with the Staff welfare officer, you can visit *MyAntonet > Health services > Company social worker*, or [click here](#).

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 several 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 and safety information. 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, and represents the division at the research council. Generally, but not mandatory, the division head is a 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](#).

Safety

Always adhere to the safety instructions. If you are unsure, please contact your lab manager or supervisor about safety related matters. In case you plan to get or are pregnant, you can request a consultation with the company doctor to discuss your safety and that of your baby in the workplace.

In case the evaluation signals goes off, leave the workplace and follow the instructions of the safety officers.

If you see anything suspicious, you call always call 2222 and ask for assistance (also outside office hours).

Other useful information

Onboarding website

Before you arrive at the NKI, you will be directed to the NKI onboarding website:

<http://onboarding.nki.nl>. This is a useful website containing information for your first days at the NKI. This includes some introduction from NKI colleagues, how to get to the NKI, the maps of the NKI, and much more stuff. Make sure to have a look!

Service center

The service center provides support to all NKI employees. You can find the service center on the first floor of the A-building, and they are open between 7:30 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.
- 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 stay clean and functional.

HR Support

The HR Support team (hrservices@nki.nl) tel. no. 2919, H building 6th floor, can inform you about and support you with questions regarding personnel policy and information.

The expat center (expatcentre@nki.nl, tel. no. 6959) is part of this team: the expat center helps all new NKI 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.

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 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. Or use the PhD community WhatsApp groups to ask other PhD students for help.

Rooster.nki.nl

You can register your holiday request and travel/work allowances through the portal:

<https://rooster.nki.nl>. You can also download the 24/7 Rostar app, see more information on downloading this app [here](#).

On this site you can request your leave and your travel allowance, please ask the office manager of your department for the specifics on requesting and approving leave. Travel allowance is the reimbursement for every traveled km from home to work, you receive €0,19 for each km.

To find more information about the rooster.nki.nl site or on the Rostar app, go to MyAntonet > practical information > Applications > RostarCAS or via [this link](#).

Useful tip: The app is working with 24h days, so if you request your leave do not forget to fill in the specifics of the times you want to take your leave otherwise 24h will be deducted from your verlof hours.

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:

- *Biolmaging 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](#).

Clinical study process

There is an overview of the process of clinical trials available on MyAntonet, including where the “Wetenschappelijke administratie” can support you in those steps ([Hoe ziet het studieproces eruit van begin tot eind? - MyAntonet \(nki.nl\)](#)). For clinical PhD students, this may be a useful guideline during the start of their PhD. Of note, the pages are in Dutch.

Tiffany's

Tiffany's is the restaurant for personnel of the NKI, 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.

PhD WhatsApp community

The PhD council created a [WhatsApp community](#) specifically for PhD students. This community is designed to keep us connected, share ideas, and support one another throughout our academic journey. There are several focused groups within the community, such as:

- **Research Help:** Seek and offer assistance with research-related questions.
- **Lessons Learned:** Share experiences and lessons from challenges or setbacks.
- **Interesting Courses:** Discover and discuss useful courses.
- **Interesting Conferences:** Keep track of relevant conferences.
- **Graduation:** Get help and advice on the graduation process.
- **Job Alerts & Career Events:** Stay informed about job opportunities and career-related events.
- **Socializing:** Find people to hang out with after work.
- **Sport:** Different sport group apps available.
- **Ideas & Suggestions:** Share your thoughts.

You're welcome to join the groups that interest you. You won't receive notifications from the other groups unless you join them. This way, you can stay focused on what matters most to you.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for improving this community, please feel free to reach out to us. We hope this initiative will help us stay connected, share valuable insights, and support each other throughout our PhD journey.

Research Council

The Research Council consists of all heads of divisions 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.nki.nl). MyAntonet is the internal website of the NKI 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). MyAntonet is also available as mobile phone app, visit this [link](#) to find instructions on downloading the app. 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 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 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, most employees use IT a lot. Whether you are simply using your computer, using the NKI network, or downloading applications via the Self-Service app, IT resources are essential. On their [myantonet page](#), you'll find key information, including the [ITshop](#) (where you can install important tools on your MDW yourself). If you encounter any issues, you can reach out to the I&A department by calling 1809 or send a service request through the Service Portal ([click here](#)).

Scientific Information Service / Library

The Scientific Information Service (SIS), or “Wetenschappelijke informatievoorziening (WI)” in Dutch, offers a wide range of services to support your research process. The SIS provides access to literature through journal subscriptions, and if you encounter a paywall, you can [request specific articles](#). You can also [request a literature search](#) for the introduction of your article, or get assistance throughout the process of conducting a systematic review.

They provide data management support, including completing a data management plan, organising folder structures and file naming, and uploading data to the internal NKI repository or external repositories such as the EGA archive.

For reference management, SIS supports the use of EndNote and Zotero. They answer questions, offer courses on how to use EndNote ([EndNote manual](#)), and provide help if you encounter problems with EndNote. There are many more services available, so don't hesitate to ask for help.

If you have any questions regarding research support, feel free to contact them! Scan or click the QR code for a comprehensive list of all the services they offer. Their website ([avl.vakliteratuur.info](#)) contains a lot of information, such as the complete collection, including e-books. You can also visit their [myantonet page “Wetenschappelijke informatievoorziening”](#) for quick links, manuals, and tips, which are also shared on their Instagram [@nki_library](#). Or you can always email them with your questions at [library@nki.nl](#).

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 network from any place, anytime. In order to set up the NKI *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 and need your smartphone.

SCAN ME



Meetings

- **Thursdays / 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.
- **Fridays / Weekly: Friday Spotlights 16:00 – 17:15.** An institute-wide meeting that spans basic, translational, and clinical science, and is followed by the *borrel*. A nice way to start your weekend and get to know colleagues from other divisions!

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.

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 check MyAntonet regularly for the latest news!

Cheers!

NKI PhD Council