

# SofinaBoël Fellowships 2026

## FAQ

- 1) **Article 3, other funding:** any false and/or incomplete information provided by the applicant regarding other sources of funding for the same research project during the same period may be considered as an integrity breach which could lead to further investigation and could end up in cancelling the SofinaBoël Fellowship including the partial or total reimbursement of the sum received.
- 2) **Article 4, candidates are encouraged to look for a host institution where they have not stayed before:** the SofinaBoël Fund for Education and Talent will not fund candidates returning to their home country, unless it is relevant for their research project and it is clear that they will return to Belgium after their stay, so that the results of their stay also benefit Belgium. Applicants should clearly motivate why they choose to return to an institution where they have already stayed before.
- 3) **Article 4, exclusion of the USA as a destination:** for applicants willing to undertake a research stay in the USA, a dedicated funding scheme exists at the Belgian American Education Foundation (BAEF). For more information, see [www.baef.be](http://www.baef.be).
- 4) **Article 4, number of destinations:** In the framework of the SofinaBoël Fellowships the candidates can stay at one (1) host institution abroad. Combinations of different host institutions, even if they are in the same country, are not allowed.
- 5) **Article 5, duration of stay:** The SofinaBoël Fellowships fund stays of either 6 or 12 months abroad. Other periods are not allowed. Minor deviations (e.g. a few days) from these periods, e.g. because of flight schedules are possible. Candidates have to clearly indicate the period they intend to stay abroad in their application form.
- 6) **Article 5, interpretation of the term “paid affiliation”:** applicants need to receive a salary or income. The source of the income can vary. It could be in the form of a fellowship from FWO, FNRS or similar, by the university (e.g. academic assistant), through project funding etc. but it should be clear from the application that the applicant has a fully paid affiliation (100% remunerated). Applicants are expected to maintain their paid affiliation for the entire duration of their stay. The SofinaBoël Fellowship provides an additional allowance to cover accommodation, daily living expenses, expenses related to the research or training undertaken in the course of the Fellowship, and local transportation.
- 7) **Article 7, transfer of knowledge:** candidates should indicate how they plan to disseminate the knowledge that will be obtained during their stay abroad in their Belgian research group after returning to Belgium so that the results of their stay also benefit Belgium.
- 8) **Article 7, contribution of the project to the realisation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals:** The the SofinaBoël Fund for Education and Talent attaches great importance and wishes to contribute to the realisation of the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/) (SDGs). From the 2026 call onwards the jury will evaluate if and to what extent the project carried out by the candidate contributes to the realisation of one or more SDGs. In their application, candidates should explicitly mention the appropriate SDG indicator(s) and adequately substantiate the improvement to the targeted SDG indicator that is expected to result from their research in quantitative and/or qualitative terms. If there is no relevant

SDG indicator, candidates should indicate 'not applicable'. The complete list of SDGs and their description is available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals>.

- 9) **Sustainable travel, climate change, carbon footprint:** The SofinaBoël Fund for Education and Talent attaches great importance and wishes to contribute to the realisation of the [SDGs](#). The carbon footprint caused by travelling to the host institution is not an evaluation criterion per se. However, fellows are encouraged to take the UN SDGs and sustainable travel policy into account when making their travel plans and opt for sustainable modes of transport insofar possible.
- 10) **Eligibility of applications in the framework of a joint PhD:** Applicants who perform research in the framework of a joint PhD can be eligible for the SofinaBoël fellowships. However, a point of attention is to which extent a joint PhD already finances part or total of the expenses which are covered by the SofinaBoël fellowships. The SofinaBoël Fund for Education and Talent does not want to provide double funding for these expenses. Applicants are expected to indicate in their application form if certain expenses are already financed in the framework of their joint PhD.
- 11) **Academic or industrial perspectives:** the most important criterion is excellence; excellence of the candidate, excellence of the project and excellence of the host institution. In case of equal quality, the industrial and practical utility can exceptionally be taken into account.
- 12) **Societal impact:** The SofinaBoël Fund for Education and Talent considers all disciplines, provided the candidate and the application are excellent. Whether a research topic has a short-term societal impact is not considered an eligibility or evaluation criterion.