



IBTS Centre PhD Research Programme

The PhD Research Programme of IBTS Centre is orientated towards those who are practically involved in leadership, ministry and mission in the European region and beyond. Doctoral research makes an important contribution to the mission of the church as it engages with significant social, cultural and political change. IBTS Centre is working closely with the European Baptist Federation (EBF) to establish an IBTS Centre Research Community that will foster long term research around some of the key issues in ministry and mission. We see the PhD programme as an apprenticeship for life-long engagement in research and education and welcome applicants who are interested in being involved in such a community.

The Centre's programmes focus on the major areas of Identity (Anabaptist and Baptist History and Theology), Mission, and Practice (Practical Theology and Qualitative Research).

IBTS Centre is a collaborative centre within the Faculty of Religion and Theology of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. When students are formally accepted on to the Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam programme they will have both IBTS Centre and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam supervisors. In this way the Centre seeks to provide an international baptistic context for study as researchers work towards an award of a state accredited PhD degree with this major European university. For details of the Vrije Universiteit doctoral regulations within which IBTS Centre works, see:

http://issuu.com/vuuniversity/docs/23388_promotiereglement_eng?bron=banner

The Post Graduate Research Certificate in Theology

PhD studies at the Centre begins with the IBTS Centre one year Post Graduate Research Certificate in Theology (PGCert). The Certificate programme allows participants to demonstrate their capacity in terms of quality and quantity of work and to develop their areas of research interest. During this programme, applicants have their abilities to do PhD research tested, their skills developed, their project focused, their ideas and work advanced and they are supported in producing a PhD proposal which, if successful, will have them enrolled in the VU Faculty of Religion and Theology Graduate School with IBTS Centre and VU supervisors in place. Progression through the PhD programme and requirements to proceed beyond the PGCert are outlined in the 'Research Journey' section of the Research Handbook. There are two mandatory parts to the PGCert programme – the Induction Week and the online line seminars as outlined below.

Please note, however, that becoming a student of IBTS Centre does not guarantee formal acceptance onto the Vrije Universiteit doctoral programme, as this depends upon the satisfactory production of work and the development of an acceptable proposal with a supervisory team in place.

If, due to lack of progress, failure to meet satisfactory academic standards or to achieve a developed proposal, a student is not registered in the Graduate School within two years they

will not normally be allowed to remain on PhD the programme or an annual charge for supervision may be levied.

Graduate School Requirements

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam requires that all applicants who do not have a Bologna 120 EC (European Credits) Research Master's Degree, or the equivalent, obtain an additional 30 ECs as part of a 'Training and Supervision Plan' (TSP). Even students with such a degree may be required to fulfil certain taught components as part of their initial training, in keeping with requirements set by the faculty. Successful completion of the Post Graduate Certificate the Centre will enable students to meet many of the 30 EC requirements.

Induction Week and Online Seminars

All students are required to attend an initial Induction Week and the annual IBTS Centre Colloquium. The Induction Week serves as an introduction to the three modules of Certificate programme, the balance of which will be delivered by online seminars throughout the rest of the year. Full details are in the Research Handbook available at <https://www.ibts.eu/programmes/phd/>

The dates for the induction week in 2021 are: **Monday 11 January - Friday 15 January 2021.**

Please also note that the online seminars are mandatory, are held on the Zoom platform and take place on selected dates during the year (usually a Monday or Wednesday) **at 15:00 Amsterdam time.** Please be sure you can arrange to participate in these seminars. Actual dates will be confirmed during the Induction Week.

Attendance at the IBTS Centre Annual Colloquium

In addition to the Certificate Induction Week, all new students are expected to attend the annual IBTS Centre Research Colloquium and participate in IBTS Centre online seminars throughout the year. Attendance at the annual Colloquium **is a requirement for all research students throughout their studies.** The annual colloquium in 2021 will run from Monday 19 – Saturday 24 January. **As this is the only formal attendance requirement, potential applicants should consider whether or not they can meet this annual commitment, as we consider it an essential component of the PhD programme.**

The Colloquium and online seminars allow participants to receive peer and team tutor feedback on their proposals and the development of their work and to contribute to the Centre research community. During the annual Colloquium in Amsterdam there are also opportunities for participants to attend seminars to meet any obligatory and/or outstanding requirements as part of their training plans.

Admission Requirements

Applicants will normally be required to hold a Master's degree in theology (MTh, MPhil, ThM) from an accredited institution in an Anglo-American context or a two-year Bologna type academic Master's degree from an accredited Continental European University. Those

accepted who do not hold a Master's in theology may be required to do additional reading or auditing of modules in biblical theology.

Fees

All successful applications have a one-off administration fee of €250 payable at the point of acceptance.

The cost for the Post Graduate Certificate programme is €4000

€1500 of the above is required to be paid at the commencement of the programme. The remainder can be paid in instalments but should be paid within two years of starting. A payment plan can be agreed with the Director/Administrator at IBTS Centre during the first intensive period.

Once the Centre has successfully registered a student with the Graduate School of the Vrije Universiteit following the completion of the Post Graduate Certificate, the student will not be required to pay tuition fees to the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. However, there will be an ongoing annual service charge which for 2020 will be €1200 payable to IBTS Centre to cover administration, library and electronic resources and the annual Colloquium.

Additional Important Information

Students are responsible for their own travel, accommodation, insurance, food, and living costs while attending intensive teaching periods, Colloquia, and any additional activities in which they choose to participate. Applicants are advised to explore the likely costs of their travel and accommodation in Amsterdam at an early stage to ensure they can sustain the expenditure over the period of their studies.

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam has an annual registration fee of €500 for those in the Graduate School. At present IBTS Centre students are not required to pay this, although this will be reviewed in 2020 and students should be aware that they may at that point become eligible for these annual charges.

The Vrije Universiteit has an annual €675 fee for access to their electronic resources. If students when registered desire such resources, they may be eligible to pay this annual amount to the Vrije Universiteit. However, IBTS Centre provides its students with access to an excellent range of electronic resources independent of the Vrije Universiteit and most of our students gain no benefit from access to the university's facilities.

When participants are formally registered with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the university will expect them to produce regular satisfactory work and within two years (part-time students may be granted an additional two years) to produce an acceptable chapter or they will not be allowed to continue.

A part-time student can normally expect, if required, up to 30 hours of supervision a year from their primary IBTS Centre supervisor (in addition to the face-to-face supervision given at the annual Colloquium). It is also recognised that additional supervision may have to be given during the final stages in relation to reading the full text of a dissertation. If students were to frequently require more supervision each year than that specified, an additional charge per hour for supervision may be levied. This would not be done without prior consultation.

Supervisors will concentrate on the substance of work and, while they may make some comments regarding English language issues and the quality of the text, students should seek such proof-reading help privately. The Centre may be able to recommend suitable proof readers if required.

At the point of the public defence of the thesis (also referred to as the Promotion) successful students will be expected to pay the transport (within Europe) and overnight accommodation costs of their IBTS Centre primary supervisor to attend this event and any other student costs as required by the Vrije Universiteit.

Application

- Applicants should complete the application available for download on the website. The number of places available may vary annually.
- Applications submitted after 31st August will only be considered if there are still places on the programme. Applicants will be notified of the panel's decision as soon as practically possible.
- For the application process, photocopied records of academic awards are acceptable, but actual validated documents will be required at the point of commencement.
- Applicants should include a colour photograph at the point of application.
- The Centre will seek to assist gain any necessary visa if required, but success in this area cannot be guaranteed by IBTS Centre.
- If an applicant is offered a place and defers by agreement with the Director, their acceptance will become subject to any fee and policy regulations in operation at the time when they commence.

Admissions Criteria

- **Academic competency** – evidenced by previous undergraduate and post graduate awards as required and approved by the Vrije Universiteit.
- **Competency in English** – if English is not the first language, evidence of proficiency will be required. The Vrije Universiteit requires a score of 580 or above (237 or above in the computer version, and 92 in the Internet Based Test) in the [Test of English as a Foreign Language \(TOEFL\)](#), or an [equivalent score](#) in another accepted language test.
- **Research interest** – must fit within the Centre's research profile of identity, mission and practice.
- **Capacity to finance the research** – there must be some credible evidence of financial means or means of support. The Director has the discretion to waive elements of the costs in certain circumstances.
- **Active in ministry** – the Centre will give priority to those actively involved in Baptist ministry or other forms of ministry (e.g. mission, theological education, leadership).
- **Gender balance** – the Centre wishes to encourage more women to engage in theological research.
- **Ministry context** – priority will be given in the following order to applicants from
 - EBF member Unions

- Members of our partner support agencies
 - Applicants from other ministry contexts
- **Study commitment** – must be able to show a work/study balance that creates a reasonable possibility of completing the PhD in 6-7 years part-time.
- **Research community** – must be willing to continue to engage post-graduation in the life of the Centre's research community.