

Saint-Martin-d'Hères, Wednesday 18 november 2025

Application for the Thesis Award 2026

Note to PhD candidates

The 2026 Université Grenoble Alpes Thesis Award will be granted to nine or ten PhD graduates enrolled in one of the 13 Doctoral Schools and who defended their PhD thesis in 2025.

Academic and interdisciplinary academic thesis prizes

The aim of the academic thesis Prize is to honor seven PhD graduates whose thesis work is judged to be of exceptional quality in line with the criteria of excellence specific to each disciplinary field represented in the Université Grenoble Alpes Doctoral Schools and research centers.

An eighth thesis award will recognize a piece of interdisciplinary research work covering at least two significantly different PhD specialties.

Thesis Prizes for Technological Innovation and Social Innovation

Two innovation thesis prizes will be awarded to thesis work deemed to be of exceptional quality, involving an approach or project for promotion and transfer with the candidate playing a central role in this transfer. The first prize will reward technological innovation and the second will reward social innovation.

Ecological Transformation Thesis Prize

An Ecological Transformation Thesis Prize (TREC) will be awarded among candidates for the Academic Thesis and Innovation Thesis Prizes, including the interdisciplinary mention. Produce a summary argument specifying how the thesis contributes in an exemplary way to ecological transformation, understood as all the social, economic, technological, cultural and environmental changes necessary for a sustainable society, respectful of planetary boundaries.

Dear PhD graduates,

You are about to apply for the 2026 thesis Prizes at the Université Grenoble Alpes. In order to best assist you in putting together your application, please take note of the following information.

1. DOCUMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR APPLICATION

○ **For all thesis Prizes:**

- ✓ In a separate document, provide a high definition passport photo in jpg format.

Provide the documents below in the same order in a PDF document. Do not fill in the "scientific quality assessment" which will be filled in at a later date by the Doctoral School management

Use the relevant application file template:

- Academic Thesis Prizes: 2a-PTA-Dossier-Candidature-2026.docx
- Interdisciplinary Academic Thesis Prize: 2b-PTA-interdisciplinaire-Dossier-candidature-2026.docx
- Innovation Thesis Prizes: 2c-PTI-Dossier-Candidature-2026.docx

- ✓ A header page with the type of award applied for, the first and last name of the PhD graduate applicant, the doctoral school to which the applicant belongs, and the research center associated with the application (except for the interdisciplinary academic thesis award and the innovation thesis award);
- ✓ The scientific quality assessment written by the Doctoral School management including an appreciation of its interdisciplinary nature if this award is being applied for;
- ✓ A resume, with the scientific work related to the thesis research;
- ✓ The defense file (pre-defense reports, thesis defense record (PV) and/or the final defense report depending on the discipline);
- ✓ A two-page maximum summary presenting the thesis research in an educational manner, accessible to non-specialists of the subject, considering the assessment criteria defined in part of 2 of this document. Please note that applications for the Interdisciplinary and Innovation Thesis Awards must meet both the criteria for these awards as well as the criteria for the Academic Thesis Award.

○ **To apply for the Ecological Transformation Thesis Prize:**

- ✓ Add a summary argument explaining how the thesis contributes in an exemplary manner to ecological transformation, understood as the set of social, economic, technological, cultural, and environmental changes necessary for a sustainable society that respects planetary boundaries according to the criteria defined below.

✓ **For the Interdisciplinary Academic Thesis Award:**

- ✓ An extra page justifying the interdisciplinary nature of the research carried out (refer to

- **For the Innovation Thesis Award:**

- ✓ Add the form specific to the Innovation Thesis Prizes (included in the document 2c-PTI-Dossier-candidature-2026.docx)

The application file can be written in French or English.

2. CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION FILES

► For the Academic and Interdisciplinary Academic Thesis Prizes

For all academic thesis awards including the interdisciplinary award

The scientific quality assessment of applications will be based on the following 3 criteria:

1. The application's scientific excellence is unanimously approved:
 - ✓ by the external referees (rapporteurs);
 - ✓ by the jury;
 - ✓ justified by the Doctoral School Dean's grade.
2. Capacity of the PhD graduate to present his/her thesis work in a clear, concise and appealing manner.
3. Interest and scientific impact for the discipline.

Additional criteria

If applicable and depending on the discipline, the scientific quality of the work (articles, intellectual property) during the PhD thesis

For the Interdisciplinary Academic Thesis Award

An interdisciplinary academic thesis award will be granted based on the quality of the application (same criteria as above) and an assessment of the interdisciplinary nature of the research conducted.

► For the Technological Innovation Thesis Award and Social Innovation Thesis Prizes

In addition to the criteria for the Academic Thesis Award, the assessment will be based on the 4 criteria below, with a list of factual elements considered for each:

1. Potential of promotion associated with the thesis conclusions

- Ambition and scope of the project

- The scientific and/or technical complexity of the project is significant / The project opens up new issues and opportunities;
- The innovation meets a societal issue or an important unsatisfied social need / The market potential is important;
- Positionning
 - The core of the innovation and the differentiation it provides from the state of the art are identified;
 - The context is favorable (regulatory, etc.);
- Intellectual Property and other form of promotion
 - There are unpublished or secret conclusions;
 - There is a declaration of invention based on the conclusions;
 - An intellectual property title exists (patent, trademark, registered software, formalized know-how, etc.);
 - There is a potential for "non-proprietary" promotion through free and participative dissemination;

2. Maturity of research conclusions

- Maturity level: an experiment has demonstrated the feasibility of the innovative solution (e.g., the technology or method has been validated in a laboratory environment; the mechanism of action has been validated *in vitro/in vivo*; the viability of new organizational modes and new uses has been demonstrated, etc.).
- There is a lab model/functional demonstrator/application demonstrator/participatory device for its development.
- A leap in maturity was achieved during the thesis (specify the delta between the start and the thesis defense using the TRL/SRL scales, ref. Appendix 1).

3. Degree of dissemination progress

- One or more applications have been identified;
- There are expressions of interest from businesses / communities / associations / end users;
- Economic viability is credible, with or without a market dimension;
- The results are used by a socio-economic stakeholder in the framework of dissemination / participatory or collaborative approach with stakeholders/users;
- A new socio-economic structure or start-up has been created in the context of conclusion dissemination;

4. Background and motivation of the PhD graduate in the field of promotion

- The candidate's vision of innovation is clear, his/her role in the valorization process or project is major with well identified contributions;
- The candidate's motivation to valorize is strong and his/her career path in terms of valorization is coherent (CV, career path, labels followed in relation to innovation (marketing, valorization, innovation, company creation), context of the thesis in collaboration/co-construction with socio-economic or cultural actors);
- The valorization dynamic continues after the thesis and the doctor is involved in these developments.

In the event of questions about innovation, candidates may contact the Université Grenoble Alpes "Innovation et Transfert Office" (ITO@UGA).

► For the Ecological Transformation Thesis Prize

An Ecological Transformation prize will be awarded to one of the candidates of the academic and innovation thesis prizes, including the interdisciplinary prize.

The latter will reward a doctoral thesis that makes an exemplary contribution to ecological transformation, understood as the set of social, economic, technological, cultural, and environmental changes necessary for a sustainable society that respects planetary boundaries.

Evaluation criteria for the Ecological Transformation Thesis Prize (TREC)

1. Scientific quality and originality of the thesis

Objective: to promote the scientific quality, innovation, and interdisciplinary nature of the research work.

Factors taken into account:

- Scientific excellence of the thesis and methodological rigor recognized by peers in the relevant discipline (assessed in advance by the doctoral schools)
- Original and innovative nature of the research question and/or method
- Ability to produce new knowledge or conceptual frameworks useful for the transition
- Ability to combine several disciplinary fields

2. Relevance of the subject covered in the thesis to ecological transformation

Objective: to measure the direct or indirect contribution of the thesis to understanding, supporting, and/or accelerating ecological transition

Factors taken into account:

- The thesis explicitly addresses one or more major environmental issues (climate, biodiversity, natural resources, pollution, environmental health, etc.).
- The thesis proposes analyses, solutions, or innovations likely to promote the transformation of practices, policies, or behaviors.
- The thesis contributes to understanding or reducing environmental impacts.
- The thesis incorporates the systemic dimension of the transition (linking environmental, social, economic, political, and other aspects).

3. Potential societal and operational impact of the research

Objective: to assess the scope of the thesis beyond the academic circle

Elements taken into account:

- Potential for application, transfer, or dissemination of research results: contribution to public policy, professional practices, social and industrial innovations, etc.
- Leverage effect for awareness-raising, training, public participation, and/or collective action

4. Socio-environmental responsibility of research

Objective: to promote a responsible research approach

Elements taken into account:

- Reflection on reducing the socio-environmental impacts of the research project itself (e.g., carbon footprint, ethics of experimentation, digital sobriety, etc.).
- Open and responsible research approach (shared data, reproducibility, open data and results).
- Commitment of the doctoral candidate to scientific dissemination and awareness-raising initiatives on TREC aspects within society (dissemination, popularization of science, etc.).

3. SCHEDULE SUMMARY FOR THE THESIS AWARD 2026:

- February 6th 2026 (noon): deadline for receipt of applications at ED ISCE School
- Monday May 11 2026: results announced to PhD graduates
- **Tuesday, June 9 2026, 5:00 pm: Awards ceremony during the PhD Ceremony**

PLEASE NOTE the ceremony date in order to be available if you are a winner. We also advise you to inform your thesis supervisor of the date as they are invited to the ceremony.

We remain at your disposal for any further information.

Contact: phd-events@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr

PLEASE NOTE: we remind you that your application file must be sent to your doctoral school

APPENDIX 1 (in French)

ÉCHELLES DE L'INNOVATION SRL et TRL



Echelle "Societal Readiness Level - SRL"
(Source : Laboratoire commun Destins)

Echelle "Technology Readiness Levels - TRL"
(Source CloudWatch)

Note :

Le système peut être vu comme un dispositif.

Le démonstrateur peut être une expérimentation une implémentation qui permet de vérifier le concept.
d'apporter une preuve de concept.