

Appendix to Resolution nr. 4/ RN/P1/2025

Appendix 1

to the Regulations of the Scientific Council of the Nencki Institute approved at the meeting on January 24th, 2025.

Modes of procedure for conferring doctoral degrees

With regard to the regulations in force to date [Law of March 18, 2011. (Journal of Laws of 2011, No. 84, item 455, as amended in the Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1198) on the amendment of the Law on Higher Education, the Law on Scientific Degrees and Academic Title and Degrees in the Field of Art, and the amendment of certain other laws, together with Regulations] and the current regulations [Law of July 20, 2018: Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1668, as amended) and the Law of July 3, 2018: Regulations introducing the Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws 2018, item 1669, with amendments), there are **four modes of the** procedure for conferring doctoral degrees:

Mode I was based on the 2003 Law and the Law of July 3, 2018: Regulations introducing the Law on Higher Education and Science, with amendments; it expired December 31, 2024.

Modes II-IV are based on the Law of July 20, 2018: the Law on Higher Education and Science, with amendments; with Mode II also taking into account the provisions of the Law of July 3, 2018: Provisions introducing the Law on Higher Education and Science with amendments.

Meetings of the panels conducting doctoral procedures and conferring PhD degree can be held in person, remotely or in a hybrid way.

Mode I - applied to those who opened a doctoral procedure before May 1, 2019- expired on December 31, 2024.

2. Mode II - applies to those who began their doctoral studies before October 1, 2019, and have not opened a doctoral procedure.

Appointment of supervisor(s) - initiation of the procedure for conferring the doctoral degree

2.1. The Scientific Council of the Nencki Institute, at the written request of the person concerned, submitted to the Secretariat of the Council and addressed to the Director of the Institute, appoints, by way of **decision**, a supervisor or supervisors (no more than two) or a supervisor and an assistant supervisors (a model application/questionnaire A can be found on the website of the Nencki Institute intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee). The application should include, among other things, information on whether the dissertation will be prepared in Polish or English, the consent of the candidates for supervisor/supervisors, and a copy of the applicant's master's degree diploma or an equivalent. **The appointment of the supervisor/supervisors is equivalent to initiation of the procedure for conferring the doctoral degree.**

The supervisor of a doctoral thesis should possess a habilitation degree or the professor title, and an assistant supervisor should have a doctoral degree. A person who, in the last 5 years, was a

supervisor of 4 doctoral students removed from the doctoral student list due to negative mid-term evaluation, or supervised at least 2 doctoral students whose dissertations did not receive positive reviews, cannot serve as a supervisor of doctoral dissertation..

2.2. The appointment of the supervisor(s) should take place no later than at the meeting of the Scientific Council preceding the submission of the dissertation and the appointment of reviewers.

2.3. In justified cases, a change of the supervisor or supervisors, or of a supervisor and assistant supervisor, can be made by the Scientific Council at the request of the current supervisor, the Director of the Nencki Institute or the Presidium of the Scientific Council. This should not take place after the dissertation has been submitted and reviewers have been appointed, save in exceptional cases

2.4. For the appointment of a supervisor or supervisors – initiation of the procedure, the doctoral student should:

- Be the author/co-author of at least one article published in a scientific journal (from the list compiled pursuant to Article 267(2)(2)(b) of the Law),
- Present a seminar as part of the Doctoral Seminars or a "long-talk" as part of the Doctoral Conference,
- Provide proof of English language proficiency at, at least, the B2 level or pass the English language exam before the appropriate examining board of the Scientific Council (composed of a representative of the entity authorized to examine and two members of the Doctoral Committee); grading scale - passed or failed. If the doctoral student completed his/her higher education in English (certified by diploma) he/she is exempted from the exam.
- Pass the exam in the basic discipline (in Polish or English) before an examining board; grading scale - passed, passed with honors or failed.

The examining board is appointed by the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee at the request of the doctoral student and upon approval by the Doctoral Committee. The members of the examining board are: the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee or his/her deputy, at least one member of the Doctoral Committee appointed by the Chairman, and at least two persons possessing a habilitation degree or professor title and conducting research on the same or similar topic. Members of the examining board should not have a conflict of interest with the doctoral student and the proposed supervisor(s) (i.e., no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications at least 5 preceding years).

In the event of failing one of the doctoral exams, the Scientific Council, at the request of the doctoral student, may allow the student to retake it, but not earlier than three months after taking the exam for the first time and not more than once.

2.5. The Scientific Council refuses to initiate the procedure for those who do not meet the requirements specified above. A decision refusing initiation of the doctoral procedure may be appealed to the Council for Scientific Excellence.

Submission of dissertation and appointment of reviewers

2.6. Doctoral dissertation prepared under the direction of the supervisor(s), or the supervisor and assistant supervisor, should be an original solution to a scientific problem.

Doctoral dissertation may take the form of:

- a typescript of a book,
- a published book,
- a thematically coherent set of chapters in published books,
- a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals,
- an independent or separate part of a collective work if it shows the individual contribution of the candidate in developing the concept, performing the experimental part, elaborating and interpreting results of this work.

The dissertation should be accompanied by abstracts in Polish and English.

When the doctoral dissertation is a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals, the doctoral student shall submit to the Doctoral Committee a list of these publications, statements of the co-authors specifying the individual contribution of each co-author to the work, the supervisor's opinion on the contribution of the doctoral student to those publications, and a scientific curriculum vitae. When a publication has more than five co-authors, the doctoral student shall submit not only a statement specifying his individual contribution to the work, but also statements of at least four other co-authors, including the corresponding author. The Doctoral Committee, after reviewing the documents provided by the doctoral student, gives an opinion on whether they meet the conditions for a doctoral defense on the basis of publications. If the opinion is positive the doctoral student shall provide a summary of his/her professional accomplishments, which comprehensively describes the obtained results and their interpretation against the background of the subject literature.

If more than one candidate applies to the conferral of a doctoral degree on the basis of a dissertation that is part of thematically coherent collection of articles in the same organizational unit, the defense shall be conducted simultaneously for all candidates.

The doctoral students presents the completed dissertation to the supervisor

2.7. The doctoral student submits the dissertation, positively approved by the supervisor, together with the abstracts (1 hard copy) and title page (specimen on the website of the Nencki Institute: intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee), to the Doctoral Committee of the Scientific Council, whose meeting is held on the date preceding the meeting of the Presidium of the Council.

The dissertation should be scanned once or twice by the uniform anti-plagiarism system (JSA). The general report of the anti-plagiarism test should be attached to the dissertation. At the same time, the dissertation supervisor shall submit to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a signed letter addressed to the Chairman of the Scientific Council containing the following information:

- Title of the dissertation and names of all supervisors.
- A statement that the dissertation is complete and that it represents an original solution to a scientific problem.

- A statement that none of the results presented in the dissertation is or will be included in another dissertation.
- An opinion on the dissertation and a brief description of the topic it concerns.
- Names of at least two proposed reviewers (NOTE: reviewers are appointed from among persons holding a habilitation degree or professor title, employed in a unit other than the one of which the applicant is an employee or doctoral student and who are not members of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Experimental Biology) along with their affiliations, e-mail addresses and a brief justification.
- A statement that the proposed reviewers are employed in a research unit.
- A statement that there is no conflict of interest (i.e., no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications during at least 5 preceding years) between the doctoral student or the supervisor and the proposed reviewers.

An editable version of this letter (without signature) should be sent to the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee.

The Doctoral Committee reviews the dissertation and assesses the completeness of the application. If formal deficiencies are found, it calls on the doctoral student to complete the application within two weeks. If this deadline is not met, the application will be returned to the applicant and will not be proceeded at the subsequent meeting of the Scientific Council.

If the dissertation is approved by the Doctoral Committee, the doctoral student submits 3 copies of the final version of the dissertation to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council no later than **at 12 noon** on the day before the meeting of the Scientific Council. One of the submitted copies should include, before the title page, a statement on the availability of the dissertation at the Nencki Institute library (a sample statement can be found on the Nencki Institute website, intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee tab). At the same time, the supervisor submits a printed and signed general report of the JSA system test of the dissertation, together with a letter evaluating the result of the test and the originality of the dissertation. In addition, the doctoral student shall send to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council (rn@nencki.edu.pl) electronic versions of: the dissertation, abstracts in Polish and English (up to 4,000 characters each) along with keywords (maximum 6), intended for inclusion in the digital repository of the Nencki Institute, as well as an electronic version of the detailed test in the JSA system.

2.8. At the meeting of the Scientific Council, at which reviewers are appointed, the doctoral student presents the assumptions and selected results of the dissertation in a 5 minute speech.

The Scientific Council, after reviewing the application, resolves on the appointment of 3 reviewers, with voting taking place on each candidate separately.

2.9. Reviewers are required to prepare reviews within two months and to deliver them to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council both electronically and in hard copy (two signed copies).

Defense and conferral of doctoral degree

2.10. After receipt of the reviews, when at least two of the reviews are positive, the Doctoral Committee decides to approve the dissertation for public defense. If more than one negative

review is received, the decision to approve (or not to approve) the dissertation for public defense is taken by the Scientific Council. At the request of a reviewer, the Scientific Council may return the dissertation for improvement. After resubmission, the dissertation is sent for review to the same reviewers.

- 2.11. The reviews and the dissertation shall be made available on the Institute's BIP website no later than 30 days before the scheduled date of the public defense. The dissertation, abstracts and reviews should also be immediately placed in the POL-on system. The date, location and the mode in which the defense will be held should be announced no later than 10 days before the defense date.
- 2.12. The defense of the dissertation is held at an open meeting of the Doctoral Committee attended, besides the general public, by members of the Doctoral Committee, the promoter/promoters, reviewers, members of the Council who are not part of the Doctoral Committee, and others present during the defense with a habilitation degree and the title of professor in the discipline of biological sciences or related disciplines; these persons constitute the evaluation team. The presence of the promoter and at least two reviewers is required at the defense.

During the open part of the defense:

- The supervisor presents the background, experience and achievements of the doctoral student,
- The doctoral student, in a 20-minute speech, presents the main theses of the dissertation and the results obtained,
- Reviewers present their reviews; it is not obligatory to read the review *in extenso* unless the reviewer is absent; in such case the review must be read in full by another person,
- The doctoral student responds to the reviewers' comments,
- The doctoral student answers questions from those attending the dissertation defense.

During the closed part, which involves the evaluation team:

- The reviewers present their opinion on the doctoral student's response to their comments and his/her responses in an open discussion,
- Other participants in this part of the meeting express their opinion on the course of the defense,
- There is a secret vote on the approval of the public defense of the dissertation and, if the criteria are met, on the distinction of the dissertation; the criteria and procedure for voting on the distinction are described in Appendix 2 to the Regulations of the Scientific Council. The supervisor(s) do not participate in the voting.

Minutes are prepared from the meeting of the Doctoral Committee, the attachments of which are a summary of the doctoral student's speech and his responses to the reviewers' comments contained in the submitted reviews. The minutes are signed by the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee and the supervisor. If two supervisors are present at the defense, only one of them signs the minutes; the assistant promoter does not sign the minutes.

- 2.13. The Scientific Council, after reviewing the record of the defense, decides on conferring the doctoral degree in the discipline of biological sciences.

- 2.14. If the decision on the conferral of the doctoral degree is negative, the same dissertation cannot be the basis for reapplying for a doctoral degree.
Appeals against a negative decision are filed with the Council for Scientific Excellence (see Article 193. of the Law of July 4, 2018, with amendments).
- 2.15. Issuing of the doctoral degree certificate in the discipline of biological sciences is commissioned by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.
- 2.16. Documentation of the proceedings for the conferred of doctoral degrees and records of degrees conferred are kept by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.

3. Mode III - *applies to students of the doctoral school*

Appointment of supervisor(s)

3.1. The Scientific Council, upon the proposal of the Institute Director or the Head of the doctoral school, preceded by the submission of Questionnaire B by the doctoral student, appoints by **way of decision** a supervisor or supervisors (no more than two) or a supervisor and an assistant supervisor. A template of Questionnaire B can be found at intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee tab.

The supervisor of a doctoral thesis should possess a habilitation degree or the professor title, and an assistant supervisor should possess a doctoral degree.

A person who, in the last 5 years, was a supervisor of 4 doctoral students removed from the doctoral student list due to negative mid-term evaluation, or supervised at least 2 doctoral students whose dissertations did not receive positive reviews, cannot serve as a supervisor of a doctoral dissertation.

3.2. The appointment of the supervisor(s) should be made within three months from the beginning of studies at the doctoral school run by the Nencki Institute.

3.3. In justified cases, the Scientific Council, at the request of the current supervisor, the Director of the Nencki Institute or the Presidium of the Scientific Council, can change the supervisor or supervisors, or the supervisor and assistant supervisor. This change should not take place after the dissertation has been submitted and reviewers have been appointed, save in exceptional cases.

Initiation of procedure and appointment of reviewers

3.4. Before initiation of the procedure and appointment of reviewers, the doctoral student should:

- Be the author/co-author of **at least one article** published in a scientific journal (from the list compiled pursuant to Article 267(2)(2)(b) of the Law),
- Present a seminar as part of the Doctoral Seminars or a "long-talk" as part of the Doctoral Conference,
- Provide proof of proficiency in English at, at least, the B2 level or pass the English language examination before the appropriate examination committee of the Scientific Council (composed of a representative of the entity authorized to examine and two members of the Doctoral Committee); grading scale - passed or failed. If the doctoral student completed his/her higher education in English (certified by diploma) he/she is exempted from the exam.
- Pass the exam in basic discipline; grading scale - passed, passed with honors or failed,
- Submit questionnaire C confirming the fulfillment of the above conditions to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council

The exam in the basic discipline is conducted by an examining board, appointed by the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee at the request of the supervisor and approved by the Doctoral Committee. The members of the examining board are: the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee or his/her deputy, at least one member of the Doctoral Committee appointed by the Chairman of the Committee, and at least two persons possessing a

habilitation degree or a professor title and conducting research on the same or similar topic. Members of the examining board should not have a conflict of interest with the doctoral student and the proposed supervisor(s) (i.e., no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications during at least 5 preceding years).

In the event of failure to pass the exam in the basic discipline, the Scientific Council, at the request of the doctoral student, may allow the student to retake it, but not earlier than three months after taking the exam for the first time and not more than once.

- 3.5. The dissertation, prepared under the supervision of the supervisor(s) or supervisor and assistant supervisor, should be an original solution to a scientific problem.

Doctoral dissertation may take the form of:

- a typescript of a book,
- a published book,
- a thematically coherent set of chapters in published books,
- a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals,
- an independent or separate part of a collective work, if it shows the individual contribution of the candidate in developing the concept, performing the experimental part, elaborating and interpreting results of this work.

The dissertation should be accompanied by abstracts in Polish and English.

When the doctoral dissertation is a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals, the doctoral student shall submit to the Doctoral Committee a list of these publications, statements of the co-authors specifying the individual contribution of each co-author to the work, the supervisor's opinion on the contribution of the doctoral student to those publications, and a scientific curriculum vitae. When a publication has more than five co-authors, the doctoral student shall submit not only a statement specifying his individual contribution to the work, but also statements of at least four other co-authors, including the corresponding author. The Doctoral Committee, after reviewing the documents provided by the doctoral student, gives an opinion on whether they meet the conditions for a doctoral defense on the basis of publications. If the opinion is positive the doctoral student shall provide a summary of his/her professional accomplishments, which comprehensively describes the obtained results and their interpretation against the background of the subject literature.

If more than one candidate applies for the conferral of a doctoral degree on the basis of a dissertation that is part of a thematically coherent collection of articles in the same organizational unit, the defense shall be conducted simultaneously for all candidates.

The doctoral student presents the completed dissertation to the supervisor

- 3.6. Once positively approved by the supervisor, the dissertation, together with the abstract (1 copy) and title page (specimen on the website of the Nencki Institute intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee), shall be submitted by the doctoral student to the Doctoral Committee of the Scientific Council, whose meeting is held on the date

preceding the meeting of the Presidium of the Council. The dissertation should be scanned once or twice by the uniform anti-plagiarism system (JSA). The general report of the anti-plagiarism test should be attached to the dissertation. At the same time, the dissertation supervisor shall submit to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a signed letter addressed to the Chairman of the Scientific Council containing the following information:

- Title of dissertation and names of all supervisors.
- A statement that the work is completed and represents an original solution to a scientific problem.
- A statement that none of the results presented in the dissertation is or will be included in another dissertation.
- An opinion on the work and a brief description of the topic it concerns.
- Names of at least three reviewers (NOTE: reviewers are appointed from among persons holding a habilitation degree or professor title, employed in a unit other than the one of which the applicant for the doctoral degree is an employee or doctoral student and who are not members of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Experimental Biology), together with their affiliations, e-mail addresses and a brief justification.
- A statement that the proposed reviewers are employed in a research unit.
- A statement that there is no conflict of interest between the doctoral student or the promoter(s) (i.e., no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications during at least 5 preceding years).

An editable version of this letter (without signature) should be sent to the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee.

The Doctoral Committee reviews the dissertation and assesses the completeness of the application. If formal deficiencies are found, it calls on the doctoral student to complete the application within two weeks. If this deadline is not met, the application will be returned to the applicant and will not be proceeded at the subsequent meeting of the Scientific Council.

3.7. If the dissertation is approved by the Doctoral Committee, the doctoral student submits 4 hard copies of the final version of the dissertation to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council no later than at 12 noon on the day before the meeting of the Scientific Council (~~by 12:00 pm~~). One of the submitted copies should include, before the title page, a statement on the availability of the dissertation at the Nencki library (the template of the statement can be found on the website of the Nencki Institute: intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee). At the same time, the supervisor submits a printed and signed general report of the JSA system test of the dissertation, together with a letter evaluating the result of the test and the originality of the dissertation. In addition, the doctoral student shall send to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council (rn@nencki.edu.pl) electronic versions of: the dissertation, abstracts in Polish and English (up to 4,000 characters each) along with keywords (maximum 6), intended for inclusion in the digital repository of the Nencki Institute, as well as an electronic version of the detailed test in the JSA system.

3.8. At the meeting of the Scientific Council, the doctoral candidate presents the assumptions and selected results of the dissertation in a 5 minute speech. Then, the Scientific Council, after

reviewing the application, resolves on the appointment of 3 reviewers in a separate voting on each candidate.

- 3.9. The Scientific Council refuses to initiate the procedure for those who do not meet the above requirements. The decision to deny initiating the procedure may be appealed to the Council for Scientific Excellence.
- 3.10. Reviewers are required to prepare reviews within two months and to deliver them to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council both electronically and in hard copy (two signed copies).

Defense and conferral of doctoral degree

- 3.11. After receipt of reviews, when at least two of the reviews are positive, the Doctoral Committee decides whether to approve the dissertation for public defense. If more than one negative review is received, the decision to approve (or not to approve) is made by the Scientific Council. At the request of the reviewer, the Scientific Council may return the dissertation for improvement. The corrected dissertation is sent for review to the same reviewers.
- 3.12. The reviews and the dissertation shall be made available on the Institute's BIP website no later than 30 days before the scheduled date of the public defense. The date, location and the mode in which the defense will be held should be announced no later than 10 days before the defense date.
- 3.13. The defense of the doctoral dissertation is held at an open meeting of the Doctoral Committee, which is attended, besides the general public, by members of the Doctoral Committee, the supervisor/supervisors, reviewers, members of the Scientific Council who are not part of the Doctoral Committee, and other persons with a habilitation degree and the title of professor in the discipline of biological sciences or related disciplines; all of these persons constitute the evaluation team. The presence of the supervisor and of at least two reviewers is mandatory.

During the open part of the defense:

- The promoter presents the background, experience and achievements of the doctoral student,
- The doctoral student, in a 20-minute speech, presents the main theses of the dissertation and the results obtained,
- reviewers present their reviews; it is not obligatory to read the review *in extenso* unless the reviewer is absent; in such case the review must be read in full by another person.
- The doctoral student responds to the reviewers' comments,
- The doctoral student answers questions from those attending the dissertation defense.

During the closed part, which involves the evaluation team:

- The reviewers present their opinion on the doctoral student's response to their comments and his/her responses in the open discussion,
- Other participants in this part of the meeting express their opinion on the course of the defense,

- there is a secret vote on the approval of the public defense of the dissertation and, if the criteria are met, on the distinction of the dissertation; the criteria and procedure for voting on the distinction are described in Appendix 2 to the Regulations of the Scientific Council. The supervisor(s) do not participate in the voting.
- 3.14. Minutes are prepared from the meeting of the Doctoral Committee, the attachments of which are a summary of the doctoral student's speech and his responses to the reviewers' comments contained in the submitted reviews. The minutes are signed by the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee and the promoter. In the case of two promoters present at the defense, only one of them signs the minutes; the assistant promoter does not sign the minutes.
 - 3.15. The Scientific Council, after reviewing the record of the defense, decides on the conferral of the doctoral degree in the discipline of biological sciences.
 - 3.16. If the decision on the conferral of the doctoral degree is negative, the same dissertation cannot be the basis for reapplying for a doctoral degree.
Appeals against a negative decision are filed with the Council for Scientific Excellence (see Article 193 of the Law of July 4, 2018, with amendments).
 - 3.17. Issuing of a doctoral degree certificate in the discipline of biological sciences is commissioned by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.
 - 3.18. Documentation of the proceedings for the conferred of doctoral degrees and records of degrees conferred are kept by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.

4. Mode IV - *applies to those who wish to obtain a doctoral degree in extramural mode*

Appointment of supervisors(s)

- 4.1. An applicant for an extramural doctoral degree shall, prior to the initiation of the procedure, submits to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a request, addressed to the Chairman of the Council, to consider the possibility of conducting proceedings for conferring the doctoral degree at the Nencki Institute. This request should include the names of the proposed supervisor(s) (not more than two) or of a supervisor and assistant supervisor, and information on the language in which the doctoral dissertation will be prepared. The application should be accompanied by:
- a research plan taking into account the needs and conditions for the use of the research and IT infrastructure, reviewed by the potential supervisor(s),
 - information about the source of funding of the research and the cost of the doctoral proceedings,
 - CV and a list of publications,
 - A copy of the master's degree certificate or an equivalent,
 - consent of promoter/promoter candidates.
- 4.2. The Presidium of the Scientific Council appoints, for each request submitted, a committee of two persons from among the staff of the Nencki Institute with a professor title or habilitation degree, who deal with topics similar to the proposed research. This committee recommends to the Presidium of the Scientific Council whether the request/application should be approved or denied. In case of doubt, this committee may meet with the applicant and/or potential supervisor(s). If the opinion of the Presidium is positive, the applicant delivers to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a filled Questionnaire B, the template of which can be found on the website of the Nencki Institute: intra.nencki.gov.pl, under the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee and, at the meeting of the Scientific Council, in a 5-minute speech, presents the assumptions, goals and research plans, as well as the needs and conditions for the use of the research and IT infrastructure.
- 4.3. The Scientific Council appoints, by **way of decision**, the supervisor(s) or the supervisor and assistant supervisor, and adopts a resolution to approve the research plan and the conditions for using the Institute's research and IT infrastructure.
- A supervisor should possess a habilitation degree or professor title, and an assistant supervisor - a doctoral degree. A person who, in the last 5 years, was a supervisor of 4 doctoral students removed from the doctoral student list due to negative mid-term evaluation, or supervised at least 2 doctoral students whose dissertations did not receive positive reviews, cannot serve as a supervisor of a doctoral dissertation.
- 4.4. The appointment of the supervisor(s) should, at the latest, take place at the meeting of the Scientific Council preceding the initiation of the procedure for conferring the doctoral degree. In justified cases, the Scientific Council, at the request of the current supervisor, the Director or the Presidium of the Scientific Council, may change the supervisor(s) or the supervisor and assistant supervisor. This should not take place after the dissertation has been submitted and reviewers have been appointed, save in exceptional cases.

4.5. At the request of the supervisor, the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee appoints a verification committee to confirm that the candidate has acquired qualifications corresponding to level 8 of the Polish Qualification Framework (PRK) (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of November 14, 2018 on the characteristics of the second level of learning outcomes for qualifications at levels 6-8 of the Polish Qualification Framework, PRK, Journal of Laws. 2018 item 2218). The method of verification of these qualifications is determined by the Committee on the basis of the candidate's written reference to the requirements listed in the PRK questionnaire, the template of which can be found on the website of the Nencki Institute intra.nencki.gov.pl, under the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee. Then, the verification committee conducts an exam in the basic discipline. The members of the verification committee are: the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee or his deputy, at least one member of the Doctoral Committee appointed by the Committee Chairman, and two persons with a habilitation degree or professor title, dealing with the same or similar research topic. The members of the verification committee should not have a conflict of interest with the doctoral student and the supervisor(s) (i.e., no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications during at least 5 preceding years). In the event of failure to pass the verification the Scientific Council, at the request of the doctoral student, may agree to repeat the verification procedure but not earlier than three months after the first verification and not more than once.

Initiation of the procedure

4.6. Before initiating the procedure and appointing reviewers, the doctoral student should:

- Be the author/co-author of **at least one article** published in a scientific journal (from the list compiled pursuant to Article 267(2)(2)(b) of the Law),
- present a seminar as part of the Doctoral Seminar or a "long-talk" as part of the Doctoral Conference,
- Provide proof of English language proficiency at, at least, the B2 level or pass the English language proficiency exam before the appropriate examination board of the Scientific Council (composed of a representative of the entity authorized to examine and two members of the Doctoral Committee); grading scale - passed or failed. If the doctoral student completed his/her higher education in English (certified by diploma) he/she is exempted from the exam.
- Undergo verification before the verification board defined in section 4.4. (if the above conditions are met); grading scale – passed or passed with distinction or failed.
- submit to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a filled questionnaire C confirming the fulfillment of the above conditions.

4.7. The Scientific Council refuses to initiate the procedure for those who do not meet the above requirements. The decision to deny the initiation of the procedure may be appealed to the Council for Scientific Excellence.

4.8. The doctoral dissertation prepared under the supervision of the supervisor(s) or the supervisor and assistant supervisor should be an original solution to a scientific problem. The dissertation may take the form of:

- A typescript of the book,
- A published book,
- A thematically coherent set of chapters in books published,
- a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals,
- an independent or isolated part of a collective work, if it demonstrates the individual contribution of the candidate in developing the concept, performing the experimental part, elaborating and interpreting the results of this work.

The dissertation should include abstracts in Polish and English.

When a doctoral dissertation is part of a thematically coherent collection of articles published or accepted for publication in scientific journals, the doctoral student shall submit to the Doctoral Committee a list of these publications, statements of the co-authors specifying the individual co-contribution of each co-author to the work, the supervisor's opinion on the contribution of the doctoral student to those publications, and a scientific curriculum vitae. When a publication has more than five co-authors, the doctoral student shall submit not only a statement specifying his individual contribution to the work, but also statements from at least four other co-authors, including the correspondence author. The Doctoral Committee, after reviewing the documents provided by the doctoral student, decides as to whether they meet the conditions for a doctoral defense on the basis of publications. If the decision is positive, the doctoral student shall provide a summary of his/her professional accomplishments, which comprehensively presents the results obtained and their interpretation against the background of the subject literature.

If more than one candidate applies for the conferral of a doctoral degree on the basis of a thematically coherent collection of articles in the same organizational unit, the defense shall be conducted simultaneously for all candidates.

The completed dissertation, together with abstracts, is submitted by the doctoral student to the supervisor(s), who is/are required to prepare a written opinion on the dissertation within two months of receipt.

4.9. The dissertation, positively approved by the supervisor(s), together with the abstract (1 copy) and title page (template on the website of the Nencki Institute intra.nencki.gov.pl, tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee), is submitted by the doctoral student to the Doctoral Committee of the Scientific Council, whose meeting is held on the date preceding the meeting of the Presidium of the Council. The dissertation should be scanned once or twice by the uniform anti-plagiarism system (JSA). The general report of the anti-plagiarism test should be attached to the dissertation. At the same time, the dissertation supervisor shall submit to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council a signed letter addressed to the Chairman of the Scientific Council containing the following information:

- Title of dissertation and names of all supervisors.
- A statement that the work is completed and represents an original solution to a scientific problem.

- A statement that none of the results presented in the dissertation is or will be included in another dissertation.
- An opinion on the work and a brief description of the topic it concerns.
- Names of at least three proposed reviewers (NOTE: reviewers are appointed from among persons holding a habilitation degree or professor title, employed in a unit other than the one of which the applicant is an employee or doctoral student, and who are not members of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Experimental Biology), along with their affiliations, e-mail addresses and a brief justification.
- A statement that the proposed reviewers are employed in a research unit.
- A statement that there is no conflict of interest between the doctoral student or the supervisor(s) and the proposed reviewers (i.e. no family relations, even distant ones, no professional dependency, no research conducted under joint grants or joint publications during at least 5 preceding years).

An editable version of this letter (without signature) should be sent to the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee.

The Doctoral Committee reviews the dissertation and assesses the completeness of the application. If formal deficiencies are found, it calls on the doctoral student to complete the application within two weeks. If this deadline is not met, the application will be returned to the applicant and will not be proceeded at the Scientific Council meeting.

- 4.10. If the dissertation is approved by the Doctoral Committee, the doctoral student submits 4 copies of the final version of the dissertation to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council no later than at 12:00 noon on the day before the meeting of the Scientific Council (by 12:00 pm). In one of the copies, before the title page, there should be a statement regarding the availability of the dissertation at the Nencki Institute library (the template of the statement can be found on the website of the Nencki Institute intra.nencki.gov.pl, in the tab Scientific Council/Doctoral Committee). At the same time, the supervisor submits a printed and signed general report of the JSA system test of the dissertation, together with a letter evaluating the result of the test and the originality of the dissertation. In addition, the doctoral student shall send to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council (rn@nencki.edu.pl) electronic versions of: the dissertation, abstracts in Polish and English (up to 4,000 characters each) along with keywords (maximum 6), intended for inclusion in the digital repository of the Nencki Institute, as well as an electronic version of the detailed test in the JSA system.
- 4.11. At the meeting of the Scientific Council of the Scientific Council, the doctoral candidate presents the assumptions and selected results of the dissertation in a 5 minute speech. Then, the Scientific Council, after reviewing the application, resolves on the appointment of 3 reviewers in a separate voting on each candidate.
- 4.12. The costs of the proceedings for the conferral of the doctoral degree in the case of an applicant and supervisor from outside the Institute shall be borne by the applicant or the delegating institution (in accordance with the Institute Director's Order No. 20/2019).
- 4.13. Reviewers are required to prepare reviews within two months and to deliver them to the Secretariat of the Scientific Council both electronically and in hard copy (two signed copies).

Defense and conferral of doctoral degree

- 4.14. After receipt of reviews, when at least two reviews are positive, the Doctoral Committee decides whether to approve the dissertation to public defense. If more than one negative review is received, the decision to approve (or not to approve) is made by the Scientific Council. At the request of the reviewer, the Scientific Council may return the dissertation for improvement. The corrected dissertation is sent for review to the same reviewers.
- 4.15. The reviews and the dissertation shall be made available on the Institute's BIP website no later than 30 days before the scheduled date of the public defense. The dissertation, abstracts and reviews should also be immediately placed in the POL-on system. The date, location and the mode in which the defense will be held should be announced no later than 10 days before the defense date.
- 4.16. The defense of the dissertation is held at an open meeting of the Doctoral Committee, which besides the general public, is attended by: members of the Doctoral Committee, the supervisor/supervisors, reviewers, members of the Scientific Council who are not part of the Doctoral Committee, and other persons with a habilitation degree and the title of professor in the discipline of biological sciences or related disciplines; all of these persons constitute the evaluation team. The presence of the supervisor and of at least two reviewers is mandatory.

During the open part of the defense:

- The promoter presents the background, experience and achievements of the doctoral student,
- The doctoral student, in a 20-minute speech, presents the main theses of the dissertation and the results obtained,
- reviewers present their reviews; it is not obligatory to read the review *in extenso* unless the reviewer is absent; in such case the review must be read in full by another person.
- The doctoral student responds to the reviewers' comments,
- The doctoral student answers questions from those attending the dissertation defense.

During the closed part, which involves the evaluation team:

- The reviewers present their opinion on the doctoral student's response to their comments and his responses in an open discussion,
- Other participants in this part of the meeting express their opinions on the course of the defense,
- There is a secret vote on the approval of the public defense of the dissertation and, if the criteria are met, on the distinction of the dissertation; the criteria and procedure for voting on the distinction are described in Appendix 2 to the Regulations of the Scientific Council. The supervisor(s) do not participate in the voting.

Minutes are prepared from the meeting of the Doctoral Committee, the attachments to which are a summary of the doctoral student's speech and his/her responses to the reviewers' comments contained in the submitted reviews. The minutes are signed by the Chairman of the Doctoral Committee and the supervisor. If there are two supervisors present at the defense, only one of them signs the minutes; the assistant supervisor does not sign the minutes.

- 4.17. The Scientific Council, after reviewing the record of the defense, **decides on the conferral** of the doctoral degree in the discipline of biological sciences.
- 4.18. If the decision on the conferral of the doctoral degree is negative, the same dissertation cannot be the basis for reapplying for a doctoral degree.
Appeals against a negative decision are filed with the Council for Scientific Excellence (see Article 193 of the Law of July 4, 2018, with amendments).
- 4.19. Issuing of a doctoral degree certificate in the discipline of biological sciences is commissioned by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.
- 4.20. Documentation of the proceedings for the conferred of doctoral degrees of degrees conferred are kept by the Secretariat of the Scientific Council.