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Let's put an end to precarity and inequalities among PhD students at UNIL now!

Did you know that SNSF doctoral students earn between 18'000 and 22'000 francs less per year than graduate assistants on full-time contracts?

Did you know that, on average, graduate assistants can only work on their thesis for two years out of the five years of their contract?

ACIDUL and the Public Services Union (SSP/VPOD) denounce the inequalities in status, salary and working conditions between PhD students at the University of Lausanne. To correct these inequalities, we demand that:

- **PhD students on external funding automatically receive an allowance of 1500 francs per month to compensate for the wage gap with graduate assistants.**

  In 2022, the salary scale gap between first-year SNSF doctoral students and first-year graduate assistants amounted to 18'000 francs per year and reached 22'000 francs in the fourth year. UNIL already compensates for about half of this gap thanks to a monthly allowance of 750 francs that is granted to almost all PhD students on external funding. To erase this gap, we ask that the current allowance be doubled and periodically increased in accordance with the salary scale (e.g., wage indexation).

- **Graduate assistants be employed on full-time contracts and that 70% of their time be spent on their PhD thesis, to offer equal research conditions.**

  In 2021, the average employment rate of graduate assistants was 84% at UNIL. Besides, graduate assistants can spend up to 50% of their working hours on other tasks than their PhD. This means that they only have two years to write their PhD out of the five years of their contract. In comparison, SNSF doctoral students, who are on full-time contracts for four years, spend 85% of their time working on their PhD. Consequently, they have an additional 11 months to complete their work. To compensate for this disparity, we ask that graduate assistant positions only be advertised as full-time, that the rectorate offer an employment rate increase to those whose contracts have already started, and that the *cahier des charges* of all graduate assistants specify that a minimum of 70% of their working hours be spent on their doctoral thesis.

- **The salaries of PhD students on external funding be guaranteed by UNIL, as is the case for graduate assistants.**

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Currently, the contracts signed between UNIL and its employees on external funding are only binding for UNIL if the funding continues. Consequently, PhD students on external funding can lose their jobs if their funding disappears for reasons external to them (e.g., their supervisor leaves UNIL). This situation, which is fortunately rare, is not acceptable for a public institution. We ask that UNIL guarantee the salaries of these employees.

- **Graduate assistants be employed on five-year contracts and SNSF doctoral students on four-year contracts, instead of multiple successive contracts.**

  According to the Loi sur l'Université de Lausanne (LUL), graduate assistants sign three different contracts during their five years of employment at UNIL. SNSF doctoral students also sign several contracts, with the exact number depending on the project and faculty. This system exposes PhD students to arbitrariness and pressure. We therefore demand that contracts be signed for the full duration of the PhD. A three-month probation period is already provided by law when the first contract is signed and should suffice for a contract of four or five years.

N°	*Family name, first name*	*Status at UNIL*	*Faculty*	*Signature*
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Signature sheets must be returned to the SSP Vaud secretariat, Avenue Louis-Ruchonnet 45, CP 1324, 1001 Lausanne or by e-mail to vaud@ssp-vpod.ch