

	Physics and Astronomy department policy
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Distribution	To be shared with the N&S staff via Teams/email and to be discussed at the Staff Lunch on February 25 th

PhDs and PDs Contract Extensions from the 1st Money Stream on PI Budgets

1. INTRODUCTION

In this document, the management team (MT) of the department of Physics and Astronomy describes a proposal for contract extensions of temporary personnel (PhDs and PDs) **funded by the 1st money stream (1MS) of our budget**, in particular through the so-called **PI budgets**, though the same considerations apply to related types of 1MS income.

There exist other mechanisms to extend PhD/PD contracts on 1MS (in particular, extension of PhD contracts due to move-related delays), and these are not modified by this proposal.

2. VACANCY FREEZE/CONTROL TERMINATED

On January 21st 2025, the Faculty Board informed us that, for the Physics and Astronomy department, the vacancy freeze/control on the 1st money stream (1MS) that had been in place since early 2023 had been terminated. This means that our department has now **autonomy to decide on our 1MS spending**, including extensions of temporary contracts, subject to the strict boundary conditions of **our Strategic Personnel Plan** and our **multi-year budget projections** submitted and approved by the FB.

Given these circumstances, we would like now to propose a new policy stating under which circumstances the extension of contracts of PhDs and PDs covered by 1MS funds of the department can take place. This policy **does not affect contract extensions funded by 2MS and 3MS projects**, which can proceed as usual. In particular, we would like to propose that PI budgets can be used to fund PhD/PD contract extensions.

3. EXTENSION POLICY FOR PHD CANDIDATES

From now on (Feb 2025), it is possible to **extend the contracts of PhDs candidates** using the **PI budget**, subject to the availability of funds. Before such extension can be granted, the following conditions must be met:

- The department manager needs to explicitly confirm that there remain **sufficient funds** in the PI budget to cover the requested extension.
- Our HR advisor also needs to confirm that this extension fits within the requirements of the Collective Labour Agreement and of the Faculty of Science regulations.

4. EXTENSION POLICY FOR POSTDOCS

From now on (Feb 2025), it is possible to **extend the contracts of postdocs** using the **PI budget**, subject to the availability of funds. Before such extension can be granted, the following conditions must be met:

- The department manager needs to explicitly confirm that there remain **sufficient funds** in the PI budget to cover the requested extension.
- Our HR advisor also needs to confirm that this extension fits within the requirements of the Collective Labour Agreement and of the Faculty of Science regulations. In particular, there are limits in the number of times in which a postdoc contract can be extended as well as in the total length of the postdoctoral appointment.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We recall that **PI budgets are determined on a yearly basis**, depending on our income and projected expenses. We cannot predict with certainty the size of these PI budgets for the coming years. Every year, once our budget for the following year has been approved by the Faculty Board, **we will indicate the PI budget which has been allocated per PI**. In 2025, each PI is allocated a personal budget of 20K.

This means that **there is no guarantee** that we will be able to use the mechanism proposed in this document for PhD/PD extensions on 1MS in 2026 and beyond: it will depend on the interplay between our performance and the expenses incurred.

In addition to the PI budget, there exist **other sources of 1MS income** that can be used for such extensions e.g. the add-on that the CvB awards to ERC StG and CoG grantees. The same considerations as for the PI budgets apply in this case.