Doctoral Programme in Society, Technology and Culture

Doctoral Programme in Society, Technology and Culture

Start	Online
23 Sep 2026	100%

Admission to the welcome area: March 19, 2025

Languages: Spanish, Catalan, English

Official qualification

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Presentation

The Society, Technology and Culture (STC) doctoral programme seeks to explain the complex relationships between technology and society. It begins in the 2021-2022 academic year. It is a development of the Information and Knowledge Society programme, which is now being phased out, and picks up the baton from a pioneering research programme focusing on the information and knowledge society

The **Society, Technology and Culture (STC)** doctoral programme provides tools for analysing the complex relationships between technology and society, understanding and contributing to improving the key challenges that define contemporary societies. It is a multidisciplinary doctoral programme halfway between Social Sciences and Humanities. Among other areas, but not exclusively, it focuses on growing inequalities, various forms of discrimination, sustainability, social and economic innovation, civic mobilization and centre-periphery tensions in increasingly digitized cultural contexts. Technology is considered a mediator in social and cultural processes, assuming that it plays a predominant role in the (re)distribution of power.

The focus is on digital technologies and infrastructures, and the non-digital technologies that make up the key infrastructures of contemporary societies are also examined. Technologies (digital and otherwise) are undergoing constant transformation, and it is necessary to continue to study their effects on society and culture in greater depth.

The analysis of different social, political, economic, and cultural systems from the perspective of the intermediation of technology goes beyond the traditional disciplinary fields. The STC doctoral programme is consequently based around integrating various theoretical, epistemological and methodological approaches to create relevant knowledge.

The doctoral programme is linked to the research that takes place in the IN3 research institute and in the Arts and Humanities, Health Sciences, Information and Communication Sciences, Law and Political Sciences, Economics and Business Studies, and Psychology and Education Sciences faculties.

The STC programme is committed to creating accessible and open knowledge that contributes to a more just and sustainable world. In particular, it subscribes to and aims to develop the concepts of Open Science, Creative Commons and Open Data. It also promotes a way of research in accordance with the principles of gender equality and responsible research and innovation (RRI). Finally, the programme shares the transformational goals that are set out in the United Nations sustainable development strategy (the 2030 Agenda).

The STC doctoral programme aims to train professionals with a global and interdisciplinary vision, to work in and influence the fields of social sciences and humanities at an international level, understood in terms of spaces for analysis, participation, decision-making and economic and social production. The Doctoral School and the programme are part of the UOC's strategic objectives that seek to train global professionals and citizens; and to promote transdisciplinarity and open knowledge with everyone and for everyone, creating environments that stimulate the co-creation of knowledge with other agents in society in order to increase its impact.

Competencies:

The doctoral programme develops the following basic competencies (as per Spain's Royal Decrees RD 99/2011 and RD 576/2023):

C1. Systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the research skills and methods related to this field.

C2. Conceiving, designing or creating, putting into practice and adopting a substantial research or creation process.

C3. Contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge through original research.

C4. Developing a critical analysis and assessment and synthesizing new and complex ideas.

C5. Communicating with the academic and scientific community and with society in general regarding the student's areas of knowledge, employing the formats and languages habitually used in their international scientific community.

C6. Fostering scientific, technological, social, artistic or cultural progress in a knowledge-based society, in academic and professional settings.

C7. Fostering open science and citizen science (in accordance with Article 12 of Spain's Organic Law 2/2023, of 22 March) so as to contribute to the status of scientific knowledge as a common good, with assessment of the doctoral student's performance of interdisciplinary activities relating to the different aspects of open science and citizen science, and the development of skills in both disciplines through microcredentials or similar.

Admission profiles:

The PhD programme in Society, Technology and Culture is for social sciences or humanities students who are seeking to complete their understanding of their field of knowledge and make innovative and relevant academic contributions to it.

Career opportunities:

The programme meets students' needs for specialized training, be this in the more theoretical, methodological or applied facets of the field of study. The main professional opportunities it provides are teaching and specialist research careers (university teaching and academic research staff, and research positions in non-academic sectors). There are also opportunities for public- and private-sector professional analysts capable of diagnosing problems and proposing creative and innovative solutions based on in-depth knowledge of selected matters. Finally, it also provides opportunities for professionals in charge of designing public policy.

Download the guide for the doctoral programme in Society, Technology and Culture

Official qualification

The **Society, Technology and Culture** doctoral programme is a programme that has been verified by the University Council, and its implementation has been authorized by the Government of Catalonia in accordance with current legislation.

The UOC's official university programmes are valid throughout Spain. They are fully recognized academically, and where appropriate, allow the holders to engage in regulated professions, in accordance with the regulations in place in each case.

The certificates are issued with a European Diploma Supplement (DS), which provides information on the courses studied by the student, the results obtained, the professional skills acquired and the qualification's level in terms of the Spanish higher education system. The DS helps students and graduates obtain recognition for their qualifications, and enhances their mobility across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In other countries, the validity of the official university qualifications awarded by the UOC will be determined by each country's education laws.

Find out more about:

+ Official recognition

+ Legalization

The UOC, Spain's best online university

We are rated the best online university in Spain by the main university quality rankings.

Programme quality

The quality of this degree programme is endorsed by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU), which ensures that rigorous standards, including those demanded by the EHEA, are met.

- Academic results

- Satisfaction results

AQU quality seal

Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency

At the start of the doctoral programme research period, the UOC will provide a personalized learning pathway for each student, taking into account their research skills and knowledge (particularly in terms of research methodologies) and their research interests. This pathway may involve courses, seminars and other research training activities. If those activities are included on a student's personal learning pathway, they must be taken and passed.

When entering the research period of the doctoral programme, the UOC provides each student with a personalised training itinerary, the preparation of which has taken into account the student's knowledge and research skills (particularly in terms of research methodologies), as well as their research interests. As a result, the itinerary may provide for courses, seminars and other activities aimed at research training. In case they are included in the personal training itinerary, they will necessarily have to be taken and passed by the student.

Programme of study

The training complements will be configured from the offer of University Master's degrees of the University and, if they are incorporated, they must be completed and passed during the first two academic semesters of the doctorate program.

Based on the student's previous studies and research interests, it can be established that he participates in short-term training activities, in support of his research.

Doctoral students will have to study and pass during the first year of the doctoral program (and particularly, during the first semester), if they have not previously done so, the courses in advanced research methodologies that correspond to their research itinerary within the program. Due to its relevance, all students are recommended to take the subject "Research Design".

The UOC also offers research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses in English **for students, researchers and faculty** to support **academic, scientific and business-focused research**.

Research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses can be recognized as free elective credits for students taking a bachelor's degree course. If you are currently studying on a doctoral programme at any university and have obtained a competitive grant, you can also take them as part of your training resources.

You can consult the range of courses:

Academic Writing

Academic Presentations.

How to Give an Effective Talk

Entrepreneurship for researchers

Introduction to patents and intellectual property

Seminars

According to the student's previous studies, his research interests and the regime in which he pursues the doctoral studies (full-time and face-to-face, distance), it can be established that he participates in training activities of short duration, supporting his research.

Doctoral Seminars: Program of debate seminars (1.5 hours per session) on key topics in research on the information and knowledge society and on student research projects. It has two phases. The first is a critical reading that the student proposes with his tutor and that they agree with the teacher responsible for the seminar. Tutors and students lead the session in which the reading they have suggested is discussed, critically. In the second phase, each student submits and discusses a draft of their thesis research plan.

Research seminars: Research seminars where the development and results of the research carried out by the groups linked to the doctoral program are presented and discussed. Organized by the research groups, its objective is to contribute to the development of competences in students from the presentation, discussion and evaluation of the different aspects of the research process within a community of scientific practice. These communities of practice operate on principles of mutual support and replicate broader knowledge communities that function from peer assessment and ongoing debate.

Timeframe	Field of the Society, Technology and Culture	ECTS credits	Type	Language
1st and 2nd. semester	DR-Seminar and Culture	25 hours	Advisible	English
During the investigation period	Research seminars	25 hours	Advisible	English/Catalan/Spa
2nd. semester	Thematic seminar: Interdisciplinary Analysis of the Network Society	125 hours (5 Credit Units)	Advisible	English

The maximum duration of studies will be four years for full-time students and seven years for part-time students, counted from the date of admission to the programme until the doctoral thesis is presented. This period does not include maternity or paternity leave, or any long-term sick leave deemed necessary by the Academic Committee.

The Academic Committee may authorize the extension of these periods, subject to the legally stipulated maximum periods, in specific circumstances defined for each doctoral programme.

After enrolling in the programme, each doctoral student will be given a personalized activity document. This document specifies all the activities set by the Academic Committee for the doctoral student's development.

By the end of the first year, doctoral students must write a research plan that includes the methodology to be used and objectives to be pursued, as well as the means and timetable for completing the thesis.

The Academic Committee will conduct an annual assessment of each doctoral student's research plan and activity document, which will be considered together with reports from the tutor and thesis supervisor. This research plan must receive a positive assessment for the doctoral student to continue in the programme.

Over the course of the programme, each doctoral student must successfully complete the specific training activity (basic, thematic and methodological seminars) stipulated in his/her personalized pathway. In the first year of the programme, doctoral students must also write a research plan and have it approved.

Activities in face-to-face teaching mode

Activities in the organized research period in face-to-face teaching mode

Activities in distance teaching mode

Activities in the organized research period in distance teaching mode

Research lines

Academic team

Director of the Doctoral School

Ferran Adelantado Freixer

Doctoral Programme Coordination

She holds a degree in Sociology from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Bielefeld. Her research focuses on sociological theory, social philosophy, and the sociology of the future, emotions, culture, and memory.

Natàlia Cantó Milà

Academic Committee

Ana Isabel Jimenez Zarco

Ana Maria Clua Infante

Daniel López Gómez

Gabriela Fauth

Natàlia Cantó Milà

Sara Suárez Gonzalo

Tutorial Support

Antonio Cambra Gonzalez

Giulia Giovannini

Thesis directors team

Agusti Canals Parera

Alejandro Paniagua Rodriguez

Alexandre López Borrull

Amalia Susana Creus

Ana Galvez Mozo

Ana Maria Clua Infante

Andrea Rosales Climent

Angels Fitó Bertran

Asuncion Pie Balaguer

Begonya Enguix Grau

Belén Jimenez Alonso

Carme Carrion Ribas

Cristina Cano Bastidas

Daniel López Gómez

Diana Roig Sanz

Eduard Aibar Puentes

Eduard Josep Álvarez Palau

Elsa Santamaria López

Enrique Baleriola Escudero

Eva Ortoll Espinet

Francesc Xavier Medina Luque

Gabriela Fauth

Hug March Corbella

Ignasi Gozalo Salellas

Isaac González Balletbó

Isabel Ruiz Mallén

Israel Rodríguez Giralt

Ivan Serrano Balaguer

Joana Maria Pujadas Mora

Josep Cobarsí Morales

Josep Vivas Elias

Julio Meneses

Manel Jiménez-Morales

Maria Candela Ollé Castellà

Marta Lopera Marmol

Milagros Sáinz Ibáñez

Mireia Fernàndez-Ardèvol

Mireia Montaña Blasco

Mirela Fiori

Montserrat Garcia Alsina

Mònica Cerdán Chiscano

Natalia Cuguero Escofet

Natàlia Cantó Milà

Neus Rotger Cerdà

Nicolás Barbieri Muttis

Pablo Lara Navarra

Pere Suau Sanchez
Ramon Ribera Fumaz

Rosa Borge Bravo

Ruben Nieto Luna

Sara Suárez Gonzalo

Sergi Fàbregues Feijóo

Soledad Morales Pérez

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Call for applications

General requirements

To be admitted to the doctoral programme, applicants must meet both the general requirements stipulated by the UOC and the programme's specific requirements.

First of all, students must submit proof of meeting one of the following sets of requirements:

- Hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and an official university master's degree (or equivalent), having passed at least 300 ECTS credits in the two degree courses.
- Hold an official Spanish university degree that was issued under a former university education system (a licenciatura, arquitectura or ingeniería degree) and corresponds to level 3 of the MECES (Marco español de cualificaciones para la educación superior) framework.
- Hold an official university degree that was issued in a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) country, entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country, and corresponds to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
- Hold an official university degree that was issued in a country outside the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), subject to verification that the qualification is equivalent to an official university master's degree and entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country.
- Hold a doctoral degree.
- Hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree that, in conformity with EU law, comprises at least 300 ECTS credits. In this case, the applicant will have to take the necessary bridging courses, unless the specific doctoral programme includes research training credits that are equivalent in value to the research credits obtained in master's degree studies.
- Hold an official university degree for which, prior to obtaining a place through the corresponding examination for access to a specialized medical training programme, candidates had to have passed with a favourable assessment at least two years of training in a programme to obtain the official certificate in one of the health science specializations.
- Hold an official university degree that corresponds to level 3 of the MECES (Marco español de cualificaciones para la educación superior) framework, in accordance with the procedure set forth in Spain's Royal Decree 967/2014, of 21 November, establishing the requirements and procedure for officially recognizing and declaring equivalence with respect to the official university degree programme and academic level and for validating foreign higher education studies, and the procedure for determining correspondence with the MECES levels of the official arquitectura, ingeniería, licenciatura, arquitectura técnica, ingeniería técnica and diplomatura degrees.

Applicants who have not passed the Introduction to Research credits in a university master's degree will need to take the bridging courses determined by each programme, as appropriate.

In the case of applicants who only have an official university bachelor's degree which, in accordance with the rules of EU law, has a duration of 300 ECTS credits, or have not taken and passed a minimum number of Introduction to Research credits in a university master's degree programme, their continuation in the doctoral programme is conditional upon them passing the bridging courses corresponding to the Introduction to Research module, pathway or courses for the corresponding period of academic training.

According to Decree 822/2021, of September 28, students with a disability equal to 33% or more have a reservation of 5% of the places.

Admission requirements

In addition to the general and additional requirements stipulated by the University itself, the Society, Technology and Culture doctoral programme has the following specific requirements:

- University studies in social science or humanities in a broad sense.
- If you're not a citizen of an English-speaking country, **you must provide proof of a level of English equal to or higher than B2** in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Higher levels of proficiency (C1 or C2) will be valued as a plus.
- If you have attended school or have completed a bachelor's or master's degree (or equivalent qualification with regards to enrolment in the doctorate programme) in English in a country where English is an official language, you will be deemed to have an equivalent level to the one required.
- You may also demonstrate your linguistic competency in English by means of another official certificate that proves you have a level equivalent to or higher than the one required. You can consult this equivalency table to see examples of certificates that correspond to these levels.

The UOC's Centre for Modern Languages offers English courses to attain the minimum level required for admission into the different doctoral programmes.

The UOC offers an online English language proficiency test, which can be accessed via this link, to accredit your knowledge of English. A score of between 72 and 94 accredits a level corresponding to B2 as defined by the CEFR. When taking this test, you must specify the code that corresponds to the UOC (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya): 4418. This code does not exempt the student from paying the corresponding exam cost and fees.

Meeting the above requirements does not guarantee admission to the doctoral programme. These requirements must be met in order to apply for admission to the doctoral programme and for this application to be assessed.

If you apply for a UOC grant, you must accredit a level equal to or higher than B2 from the time of application. For other grants, financial aid or research contracts, please consult the terms and conditions and requirements for each case (level of English and part-time or full-time format).

Admission documents

If you apply for access to a UOC doctoral programme, you must submit the following documentation. Unless otherwise indicated, the documents are compulsory for the candidature to be assessed:

- A photocopy of your national identity document (e.g. national identity document or passport).
- **A <u>cover letter</u>**, including your specific motivations for presenting your candidature, and a **description of your specific research interests** (maximum length: 2,500 words).
- A **letter of endorsement** from a UOC professor or researcher who is a doctor in which he/she explains his/her interest in the project and eventually directing the student's doctoral thesis, which must be identified by name and surname.
- A <u>curriculum vitae</u> with details of the master's degree and postgraduate programmes and courses you have studied that are associated with the research interests mentioned in your letter of presentation and where applicable, any previous scientific production. You must also include your full physical address, telephone number and contact email address.
- A sample of **your recent academic work** (in Catalan, English or Spanish).
- **A letter of recommendation** from faculty and/or research staff stating the full name, affiliation, postal address and email address of the person providing the reference. *It is recommended to include a letter of recommendation from a research professor associated with the STC doctoral programme.* (Optional, maximum 2)
- **Academic certificates** of any studies prior to the doctoral course, showing the courses taken and the mark given, the exam sitting, the type of course, the number of credits and the average grade in the academic record (if these have not already been submitted to meet the access requirements).
- If the academic certificates are from a foreign institution, you must submit the **Declaration of equivalence of average grades** issued by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.
- For any Spanish official university degree certificate, you must provide the record of its entry in the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities' registry of degree certificates, or alternatively provide a copy of the degree certificate and the corresponding transcript or Diploma Supplement.
- Any master's degree certificate issued in another European Higher Education Area (EHEA) country must entitle the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country and must correspond to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). To support this you must provide a copy of the master's degree certificate and the corresponding Diploma Supplement.
- For any university qualifications from higher education systems outside of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that have not obtained official recognition in Spain, you must provide a copy of the master's degree certificate and the corresponding transcript, together with certification from the university that the qualification entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country.

If the certificates and academic records are not written in an official language of Spain or in English, the documentation must be accompanied by a sworn translation into Catalan, Spanish or English.

You will find more information on the corresponding page in the Procedures section of the Virtual Campus > Doctoral programme admissions documentation.

If you fail to provide this documentation or there are significant inconsistencies between it and the information in your application, your application to the doctoral programme may be rejected.

Once your admission documentation has been checked and your application accepted, your admission to the doctoral programme is subject to your submission of the official academic documents, duly legalized in accordance with the country in which they were issued.

Evaluation criteria

All received applications will be evaluated according to the **General Evaluation Criteria**. In addition, applications aiming at a UOC scholarship will also be evaluated according to the **UOC Grants Particular Criteria**.

General Evaluation Criteria:

Criterion	Variable	Total weighting of the criterion

The **minimum score to access the programme** is **50 points.** There may be void positions if not enough applications meet requirement.

UOC Grants Particular Criteria

The Academic Committee of the Doctoral Programme will **pre-select** a maximum of 10 candidates corresponding to **the two best general evaluation criteria in each of the 5 research lines** of the doctoral programme. Only those applications meeting the 50-point threshold established in the previous section will be considered.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the STC programme, the UOC grant's particular criteria exclude undergraduate and graduate academic records from the evaluation.

Selected candidates will have **an interview** with a subcommittee of the PhD Academic Committee. Estimated lenght: 20 minutes.

The interview has two sections:

1. **A presentation of the doctoral research idea**. It is recommended tu use a presentations (PPT or similar). Length: between 5 and 10 minutes.
2. **Open conversation** about the research idea and the elements that constitute the candidacy (previous trajectory, motivations, knowledge of the programme, commitment...). Length: 10 minutes.

Criterion	Source	Total weighting of the criterion

If a pre-selected candidate does not respond to the interview invitation within one week, their application will be replaced by the next best candidate in the same research line.

Calendar

1 December 2025: Start of the application period for admission to the doctoral programmes.

31 January 2026: End of the call for applications for access and admission to doctoral programmes.

4 March 2026: Publication of the provisional lists of submitted applications. The lists will be published on the Doctoral School website.

5 March to 11 March 2026: Period for appeals of submitted applications (documentation subject to amendment).

17 March 2026: Publication of the final lists of submitted applications. The lists will be published on the Doctoral School website.

11 May 2026: Publication of the provisional resolution on the accepted online and granted candidates (Interuniversitay programmes).

12 May to 22 May 2026: Period for appeals of the selection of online and granted candidates (Interuniversitay programmes).

29 May 2025: Publication of the final resolution on the candidates admitted to the doctoral programmes and those who are granted (Interuniversitay programmes). The lists will be published on the Doctoral School website.

July 2026: Start of the enrolment period 2026-27.

September 2026: Start of the academic year 2026-27.

Request access

1 Apply for the Welcome and Information Service

Apply for the Welcome and Information Service is a free, no-obligation procedure that provides you with a user name and password that will allow you to enter the UOC's Virtual Campus, from where you will be able to:

1. Contact experts who will help you settle any doubts you may have about applying.
2. Consult the Campus Secretary's Office for information about the programme of studies, enrolment prices, documentation, etc.

Access requirements

Before requesting access, check that you meet the requirements for the programme you want to be admitted to.

Access form

On the access form, you must give your personal details and the educational level you have attained.

Access Documentation

You will find a list of the documentation you need when you request access and can consult the Campus Secretary's Office.

> #### Discounts
>
> If you are eligible for any of the **discounts** stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

2 Access the Campus and contact the researcher

Virtual campus

After you have requested access, you will receive a user name and password that will allow you to access the Virtual Campus, where you will find all the information and resources you may need.

Researcher

You will find the information to contact the lead researcher in the "research lines" section. The researcher can provide support for preparing your application and will be your sponsor, if he or she agrees. Once you have been admitted to the programme, he or she will advise and guide you in choosing courses, in accordance with your prior academic background, your interests and the amount of time you have.

Virtual Secretary's Office

There is a *Procedure* on the Campus where you can consult and manage all academic matters, such as viewing the programme of studies, payment options or the discounts available.

3 Apply for admission

You can complete the admission form the virtual campus **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation**, where you will have to give your academic details, whether you want to apply for a grant and the research line you are interested in.

You must submit an enrolment proposal after having chosen the courses you want to follow during the semester, which your tutor will analyse so that you can complete enrolment with his or her counselling. It is a step prior to completing enrolment.

4 Send the digital documentation

Having completed the previous step, you must attach the documentation in the same section. You can see which documentation you must attach in the corresponding section within **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation.**

When you have completed all the steps, the doctoral programme's academic committee will assess the applications that have been submitted.

If you pass the first phase of the admission process, you will receive notification confirming that you have entered the second phase and a telephone interview will be scheduled.

If you pass the second phase of the admission process, you will receive notification to confirm that you have been admitted. You will have a maximum of one month (counting from the admission notification) to confirm your acceptance of the place on the doctoral programme; if this confirmation from you is not received, you will not be admitted to the programme.

It is at this point that you will be able to complete enrolment, choosing your preferred payment option from among those available. If you are eligible for any of the discounts stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

Remember that once you have enrolled, you will have ten days to send the admission documentation.

> The Government of Catalonia establishes the public prices for credits and other academic services charged by public universities in Catalonia and the UOC. You can consult the prices in Decree 125/2023, of June 28th.
>
> The fees will be those applicable when enrolment is completed. Subject to annual revisions.

Price and enrolment Fees

Price per credit	32,28€/cr*
Price per learning resources credit	15,16€/cr*

Biannual Fees

Fee for supervision, tutorship and continous assessment of the doctoral thesis	200,56€
Fee for the management of your record	54,54€
Fee for learning support services	101,47€

Fees

Fee for requesting your certificate	**218,15€**
Fee for oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis	**156,87€**
Fee for requesting your record	**54,54€**