Continual calls for applications for PhD positions at GSTS, AU

On 28 April 2021, the faculty management team decided to change the admission process and the financial model for PhD funding at the Graduate School of Technical Sciences (GSTS). The aim is for the faculty to transition from four annual calls for applications to continual calls with effect from 1 June 2021. On average, GSTS admits approx. 80 PhD students per year, and the number is expected to increase over the next few years. Approx. 55% of these are international students.

The change entails a number of adjustments to administrative procedures and financial processes. The changes to the administrative procedures are described in this memo. The administrative process will be as follows:

1. **Nat-Tech Finance**
   - The project owner clarifies and secures funding.

2. **Call for applications**
   - The project owner sends a completed call-for-applications template to the PhD administration.
   - The call for applications is open for at least 14 days.
   - Calls for applications are posted on external platforms via the advertising company Signatur. All advertisements are paid by the project owner/department/school (payment information is on the call for applications template).

3. **Applications**
   - The PhD administration checks the legality of applicants.
   - The PhD administration sends applications to the project owner and programme chairman.

4. **Shortlisting**
   - The project owner makes a shortlist.

5. **Assessment**
   - The project owner and programme chairman complete the academic assessment.
   - Interviews are held.
   - A candidate is selected.
   - Project owner submits recommendation to the PhD administration.

6. **Recommendation**
   - Recommendation is submitted for approval by the admissions committee.

7. **Offer/rejections**
   - The PhD administration sends an offer to the selected candidate (project owner, Nat-Tech Finance, and the programme chairman/secretary are informed).
   - Candidate accepts the offer (project owner, Nat-Tech Finance, and the programme chairman/secretary are informed).
   - Rejections are sent to the remaining applicants.

8. **Admission**
   - Letter of enrolment, and if relevant letter of employment, is prepared and sent.
   - The PhD administration initiates and assists the application process for a work and residence permit, if necessary.
**Time frame (2 months)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process steps</th>
<th>Person responsible</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding secured</td>
<td>Project owner/department/</td>
<td>BEFORE ordering the call for applications. A call for applications cannot be posted until funding has been secured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After receiving a filled in version of the call template the PhD administration will advertise the call on the GSTS website.</td>
<td>Project owner and the PhD administration</td>
<td>Five working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The call for applications is posted on external platforms, paid for by the project owner</td>
<td>Project owner and the advertising agency Signatur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The call for applications is open for minimum 14 days</td>
<td>PhD administration</td>
<td>Minimum 14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legality checks and submission of accepted applications</td>
<td>PhD administration</td>
<td>Five working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortlisting</td>
<td>Project owner</td>
<td>Five working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, interviews and selection/nomination of the candidate. Recommendation submitted to The PhD administration</td>
<td>Project owner and programme chairman</td>
<td>10 working days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candidate approved</td>
<td>GSTS admissions committee</td>
<td>Five working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer/rejections</td>
<td>PhD administration</td>
<td>Five working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of appointment</td>
<td>PhD administration</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If relevant work and residence permit</td>
<td>PhD administration</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clarification of administrative procedures**

1. **Funding**

The funding plan is drawn up by the project owner/department in collaboration with Nat-Tech Finance. This procedure must be clarified directly with Nat-Tech Finance.
In connection with this, please note that the funding plan must be in place and approved before the call for applications can be posted and the assessment process begins.

**In order to guarantee funding for the entire period of enrolment, a signed funding pledge (signed by the head of department) must be submitted before the call for applications is prepared and published.**

**Under the current model, funding data will not be entered into ERNA. We need clarify how to obtain the necessary information about funding – for example, in connection with PhD data for Statistics Denmark.**

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2. **Call for applications**

2.1 **Admission after the call for applications**

The project owner submits a completed call for applications template (incl. payment information for advertising) to the PhD administration.

Together with the project owner, the PhD administration ensures that all formalities and information are in place for the call for applications. Among other things, the qualifications required of the candidate to be considered for the position must be clear.

The template also states the type of PhD position being advertised (Sino-Danish Center for Education and Research, Marie Curie, industrial PhD 5+3, flexible PhD, etc.), as well as the desired start date.

*The position is posted in accordance with current regulations on the area.*

According to section 7 of “Opslagsbekendtgørelsen” (Ministerial Order No. 403 of 22 July 1977), the deadline for applications must be minimum 14 days after the call for applications has been posted.

Please note that it will be possible to advertise cohorts, by which one programme seeks several PhD students under the same call for applications. This makes it possible for programmes that want to continue with X rounds of applications annually to plan this internally.

2.2 **Admission without a call for applications**

In accordance with section 8 of the Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities, if min. 50% of payroll funds for the total PhD process is earmarked for a named candidate, it is not necessary to post a call for applications.

Funding must be granted by a non-government funder, and the candidate must undergo an academic assessment by the institution, see section 4 of the Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities.

*The candidate is assessed as described in the following points (excluding shortlisting).*

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1See Appendix 1: Project information form GSTS
3. **Consideration of applications**

### 3.1 Legality checks
The PhD administration has to check the legality of all applicants before the project owner is given access to the application material via the PhD Planner. This is to ensure equal treatment of applicants – requirements for documentation of level of education and language requirements.

Performing legality checks before the project owner is given access to the application material ensures that the project owner only considers applicants who meet the admission requirements and who can be confirmed for enrolment at GSTS.

This procedure must be adjusted when the recruitment process is transferred to Emply Hire. The transition to Emply Hire is expected to take place during the autumn of 2021 and spring of 2022. A number of sub-processes and procedures will need to be adjusted in connection with the transition.

### 3.2 Shortlisting
After the legality checks, The PhD administration will grant the project owner and the programme chairman access to the application material in PhD Planner (recruitment module).

The project owner has five working days for shortlisting.

### 3.3 Assessment
The project owner and the programme chairman review the candidates.

The programme chairman is responsible for ensuring that all candidates are updated in PhD Planner once they have been assessed, including whether they are deemed to be qualified.

The project owner and the programme chairman select candidates for interview.

The programme chairman informs the PhD Administration once the assessments have been entered into PhD Planner and candidates have been invited for interviews.

According to section 8 of “Opslagsbekendtgørelsen” (Ministerial Order No. 403 of 22 July 1977), the position should be reposted if the appointment committee (programme chairman and project owner) fails to find a qualified candidate, or if the admissions committee assesses that a repost will procure applications from more qualified applicants.

The project owner is responsible for reposting the project.

### 3.4 Recommendation
The project owner and the programme chairman nominate one candidate for appointment. The nomination is submitted to the PhD administration.

The PhD administration sends the nomination to the admissions committee, who then make the final decision on whether to approve the candidate.

The admissions committee receives an e-mail with:
- Link to the application and CV
- The academic assessment (attached).
If the PhD administration does not receive a response from the admissions committee and Head of School within five working days, this will be considered tacit consent.

3.5 Offer of admission
The PhD administration sends an admission offer to the selected candidate. The candidate has one week to accept (project owner, programme chairman/secretary and Nat-Tech Finance are informed).

If the candidate does not accept the offer, one of the following will happen:

1. The position is reposted.
2. The appointment committee (project owner and programme chair) nominate a new candidate from the existing group of applicants. After this, a new offer is sent and the new candidate has one week to accept.

Once the candidate has accepted the offer, letters of rejection are sent to the remaining applicants.

The PhD administration informs the project owner, programme chairman/secretary and Nat-Tech Finance of the approval.

3.6 Enrolment and if relevant employment
The PhD administration prepares a letter of enrolment and if relevant letter of employment and provides accounts information as directed by Nat-Tech Finance. Enrolment and employment letters are sent to the candidate, programme secretary, Nat-Tech Finance and Payroll.

Payroll enters the positions in MSK.

A procedure has to be established for how accounts information is to be submitted to The PhD administration in connection with the specific appointment (without using ERNA).

PhD recruitment is expected to be transferred from the current system (PhD Planner) to Empty Hire in mid 2022 (project 817). Procedures and work processes will be revisited in connection with implementation of the new system.