

2.7. Programme to conduct doctoral theses in enterprises

This action seeks to foment the presence of PhD holders in the agrifood business sector by permitting PhD candidates to undertake their theses in enterprises. The action requires establishing collaboration with enterprises from the beginning of candidates' training and is linked to other actions promoted by the *ceiA3*.

A professional working at an agrifood company who is interested in doing a doctoral thesis must first complete a master's programme at one of the five universities of the *ceiA3*. The company must agree to finance the cost of the master's programme by continuing to pay the candidate's salary as stipulated under his/her job contract. Upon completion of the master's programme, the *ceiA3* will award the candidate €30,000 to undertake a PhD thesis.

Under this action, the *ceiA3* will provide the company a temporary substitute with the proper qualifications and previous experience gained from an internship placement in the same company to carry out the job duties it deems appropriate.

Upon obtaining the master's degree (the programme is one year in duration), the candidate will return to his/her workplace to undertake a PhD thesis for a period of three years. The thesis will be co-directed by a researcher of the *ceiA3* and the company (provided the company has a PhD holder on staff), or directed by a *ceiA3* researcher on a topic of interest to the company that has been agreed upon previously.

The company will decide the working hours of the professional in such a way as to permit him/her to reconcile completion of the thesis with professional duties. The candidate will continue to work in the company under a programme such as the Torres Quevedo Programme, i.e. contracts co-financed by university-industry. In the 2nd year 75% of the contract will be funded by the *ceiA3* (€30,000) and 25% by the company, 50%-50% in the 3rd year and 25%-75% in the 4th year.

This action therefore involves a cost of €75,000 over a period of 4 years for the *ceiA3*, and €45,000 over 4 years for the company.

The action will also require an additional €5,000 per activity to cover the cost of workplace accident and injury insurance for the candidate, registration in the master's programme and any other expenses that may arise over the course of the action.