

TRANSFORMING RESEARCH FUNDING

INSIGHTS FROM GHENT UNIVERSITY'S NON-COMPETITIVE FUNDING MODEL

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GHENT UNIVERSITY

- Top 100 university
- Since 1817
- 11 faculties



BELGIUM



SOUTH KOREA

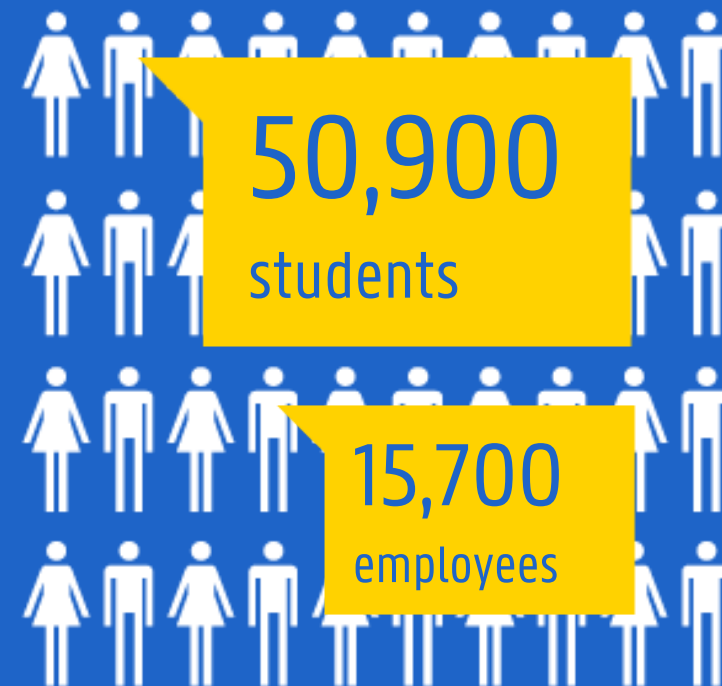


GHENT UNIVERSITY
GLOBAL CAMPUS

The 1st European university
in South Korea.



+200 programmes



69 English-taught
master's
programmes

2,320

Ghent University
students abroad

7,600

International students
at Ghent University



DARE TO THINK

Our credo: critical and
independent minds.



PLURALISM & PARTICIPATION

Open to everyone
irrespective of ideological,
political, cultural or social
background.



SUSTAINABILITY

For a future that is
ecologically, socially and
economically sustainable,
within a local global
context.

11 FACULTIES



 FACULTY OF
LAW AND CRIMINOLOGY



 FACULTY OF ARTS
AND PHILOSOPHY



 FACULTY OF POLITICAL
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



 FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY
AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES



 FACULTY
OF SCIENCES



 FACULTY OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH SCIENCES



 FACULTY OF
VETERINARY MEDICINE
accredited by EAEVE



 FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



 FACULTY OF
PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES



 FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
AND ARCHITECTURE



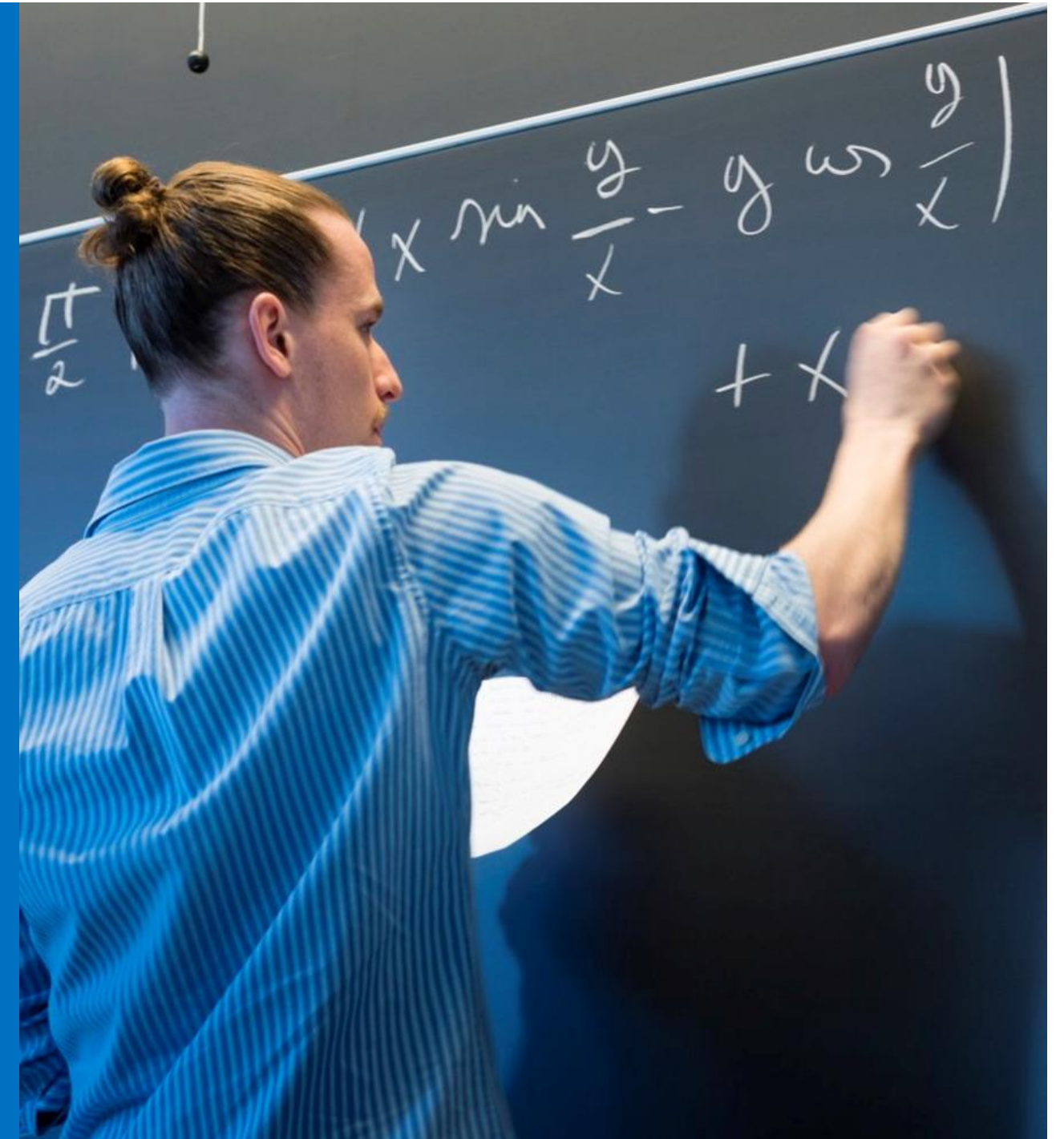
 FACULTY OF
BIOSCIENCE ENGINEERING



Basic Research Funding at Ghent University

Outline

1. Choosing a non-competitive funding model
2. Basic Research Funding (what, for whom & how?)
3. Monitoring



1. Choosing a non-competitive funding model (1)

- Less competitive funding results in fewer projects proposals: labor-intensive and time consuming for all involved, more motivating policy
- Ghent University had already moved away from competitive allocation of staff funding to faculties, which pitted faculties against one another
- Ghent University implemented a new career model for professorial staff, based on trust in the abilities of professorial staff (who after all are recruited after a thorough recruitment process) instead of focusing on highly quantified personalized objectives
- Proposal to introduce non-competitive research funding for professorial staff through Special Research Fund

1. Choosing a non-competitive funding model (2)

- Yearly budget allocated by the Flemish government to all Flemish universities
- To be used for fundamental research
- Each university decides autonomously how to use the budget linked to its research policy
- Special Research Fund
- Intra-university distribution via distinct research initiatives with yearly calls for proposals
- Research council is the advisory board for all allocations: evaluation & selection
- Until 2024: focus on competitive calls (projects & mandates) & some non-competitive calls (Starting Grants & PhD completion bonus)
- As of 2024: more focus on non-competitive calls & some competitive calls (postdoc mandates, research equipment, international collaboration)

1. Choosing a non-competitive funding model (3)

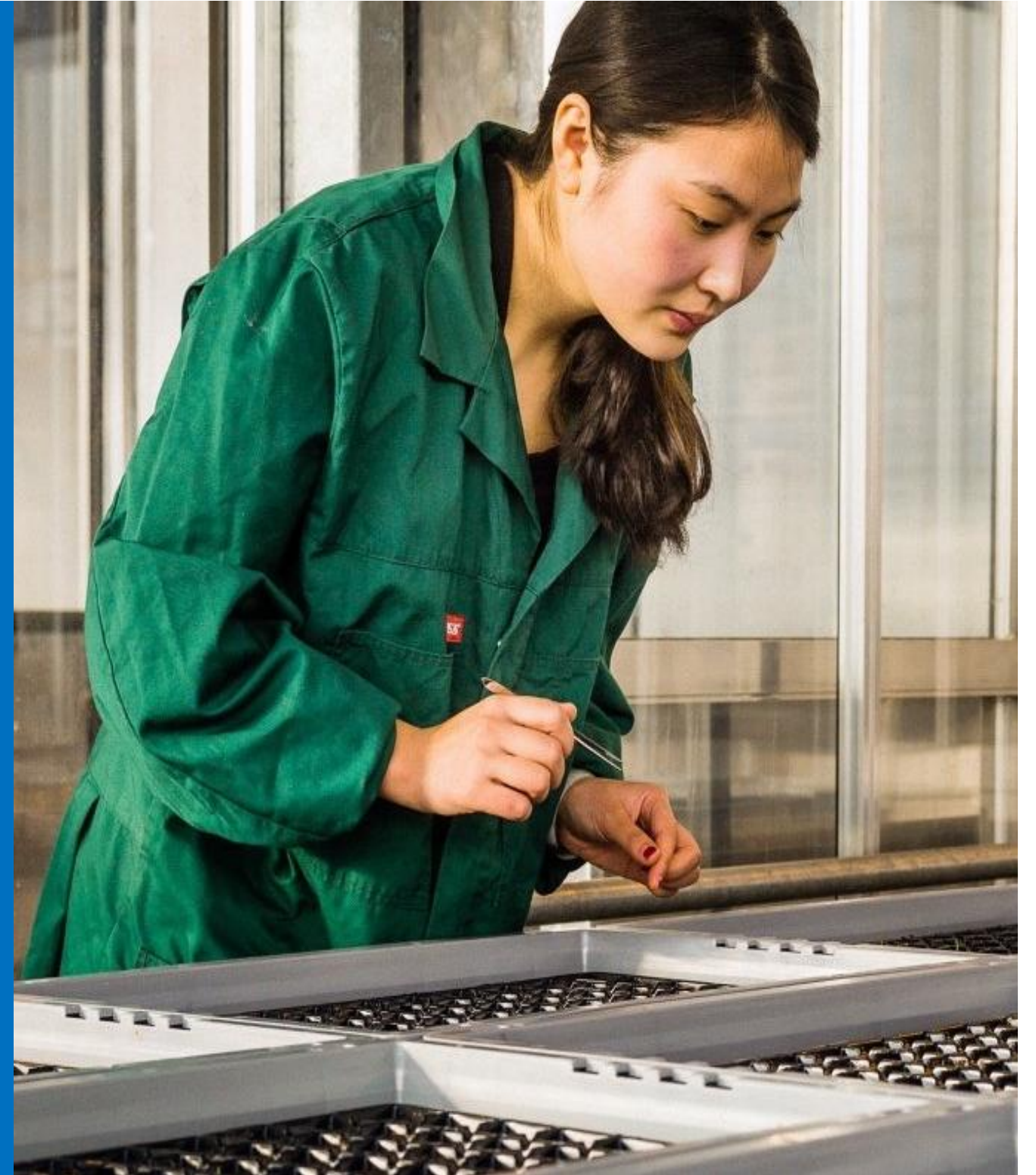
Ghent University research funding

■ First flow of funds ■ Second flow of funds ■ Third flow of funds ■ Fourth flow of funds



2. BASIC RESEARCH FUNDING: WHAT, FOR WHOM & HOW?

(START: SUMMER 2024)



2. Basic Research Funding: What?

- Principle= annual research budget of €30,000 to €35,000 per professor. The amount should always be sufficient for 2 professors to hire 1 PhD student + small operational budget (BUT: actual use of the funding is flexible)
 - This amount is large enough to be useful and impactful, while it is small enough to allocate it to a large number of professors.
- Annual amounts per professor set for the next years:
 - 2024: €29.000
 - 2025: €29.750
 - 2026: €30.250
 - 2027: €31.000
 - 2028: €31.750
 - 2029: €32.500
 - 2030: €33.250

2. Basic Research Funding: for whom (target group)?

- Depending on status of appointment:
 - **All professorial staff with an appointment of at least 50%, but also:**
 - **Part-time professors (5% - 45%) in combination with clinical position at University Hospital Ghent** (combined employment of at least 50%)
 - **Part-time professors (5%-45%) in combination with appointment as professor at Ghent University Global Campus (GUGC)– Korea** (combined employment of at least 50%)
 - **Part-time professors (10% - 45%) in combination with second Ghent University appointment** (combined employment of at least 50%): mainly postdoctoral appointments
 - **Members of the professional staff must belong to this target group for at least 6 months in the calendar year for which the basic research funding is requested**

2. Basic Research Funding: for whom (target group)?

Target group: exclusions - not eligible:

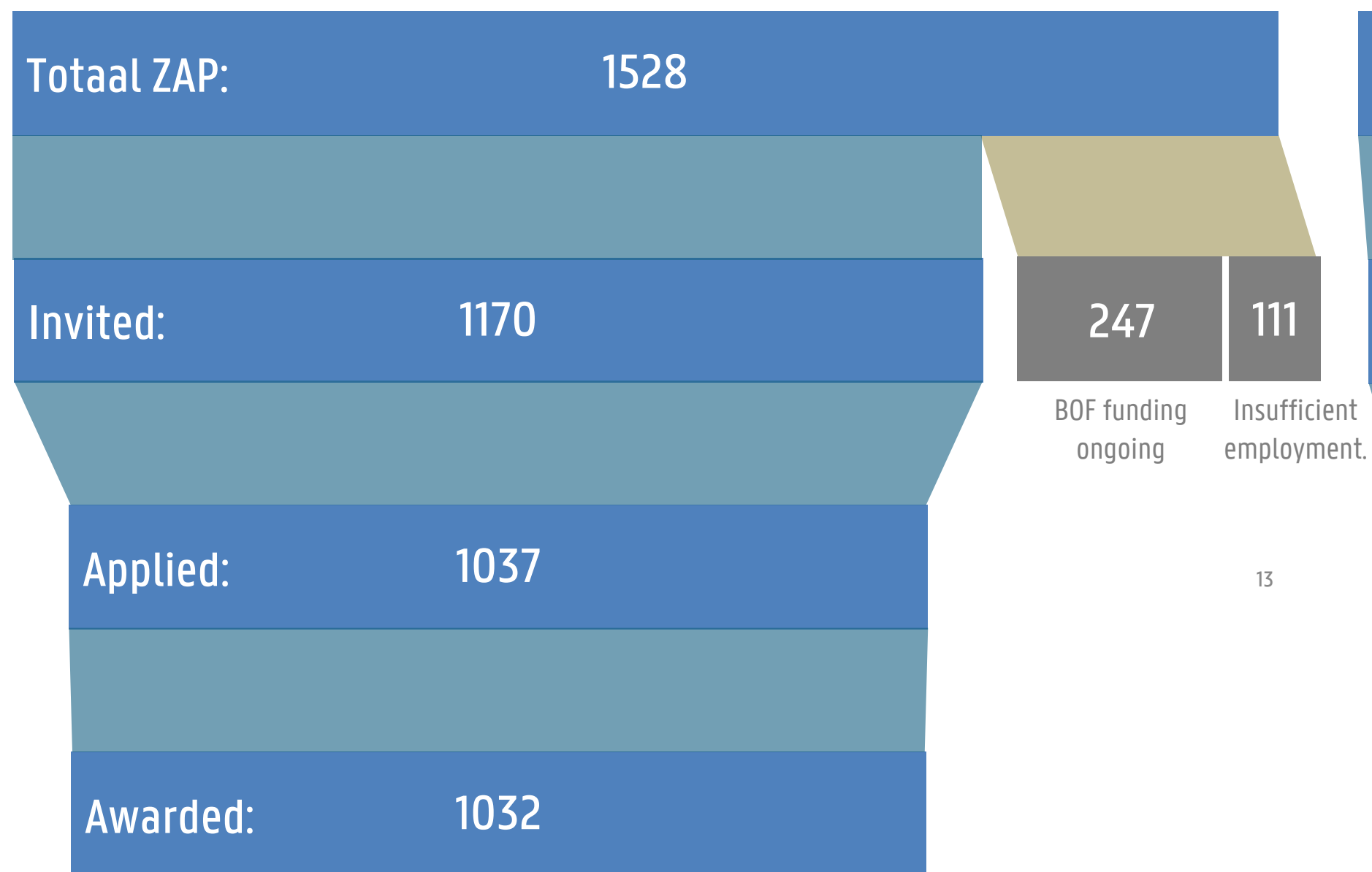
- Guest professors (paid or unpaid)
- Professors who already receive substantial funding: Methusalem funding (Special Research Fund)
- Starting professors who receive a Starting grant (Special Research Fund)

2. Basic Research Funding: for whom (target group)? - 'research active'

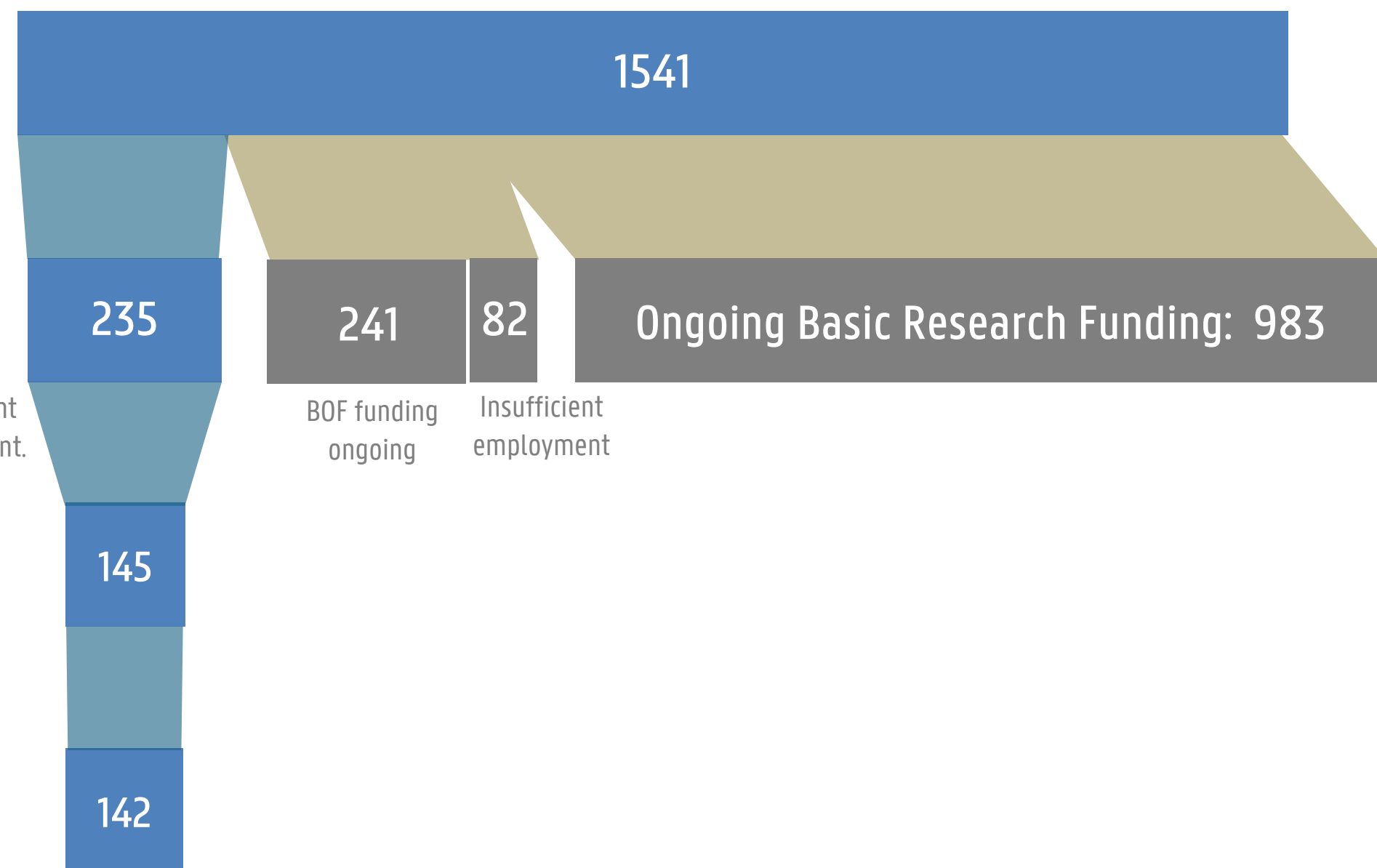
Only professorial staff belonging to the target group & who meet all 3 requirements for research activities are eligible for basic research funding:

1. External, competitive research funding granted or applied for in the past 3 years
2. At least 1 scientific publication in the past 3 years (article in peer-reviewed journal, book or book chapter, patents)
3. Supervision of a PhD in the past 3 years

2024



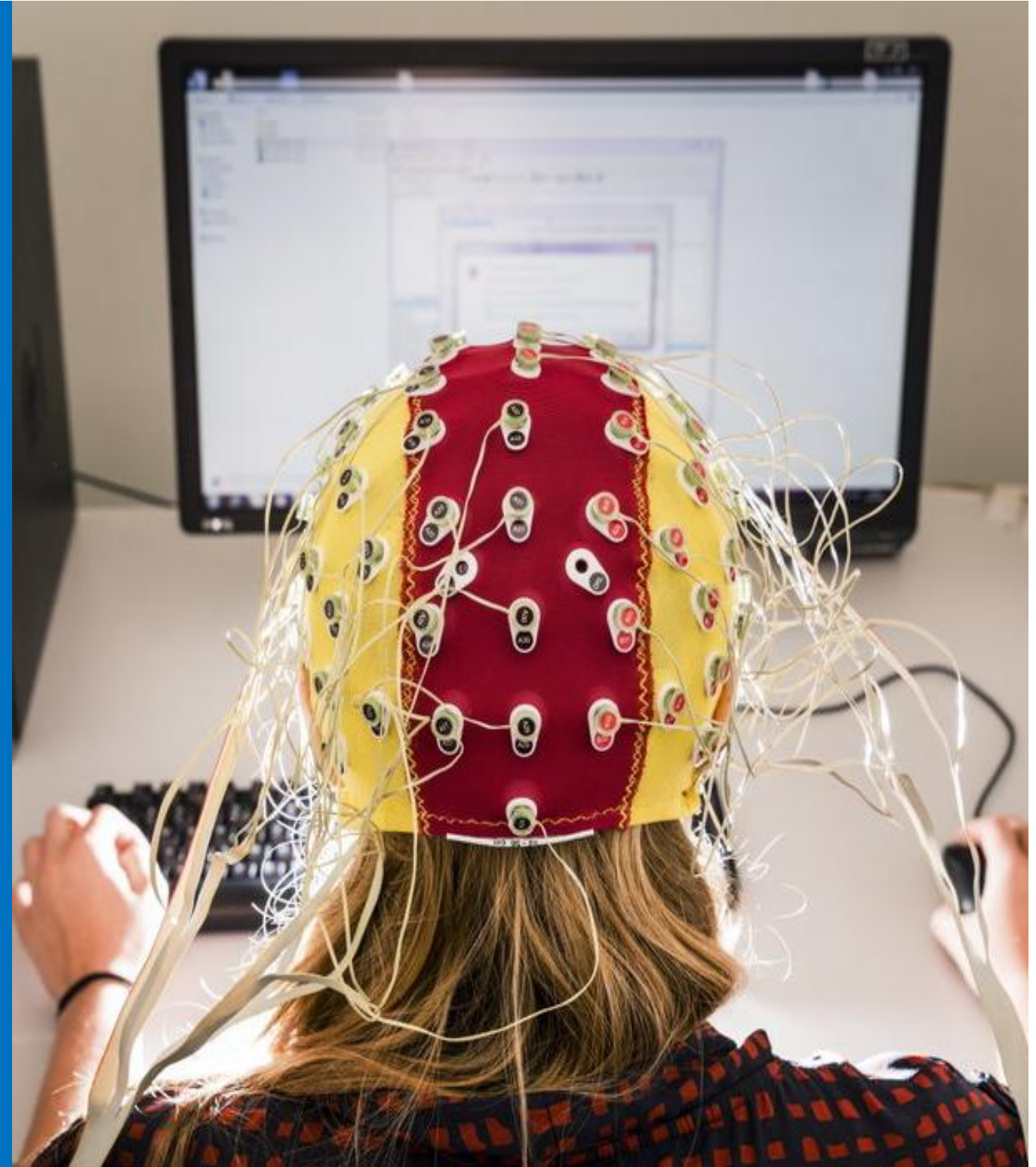
2025



2. Basic Research Funding: How?

- **The target group is invited** to apply for basic research funding
- Based on duration of their appointment: minimum 1 year and maximum 4 years at a time. For the majority this means 1 request for funding every 4 years.
- Administratively light and convenient
- No competition and no time-consuming application (short and simple electronic application)
- Maximum re-use of available data (publications & PhD registrations)
- Two or more professors can combine their basic research funding
- Flexibility in use (research objective)

3. MONITORING



3. Monitoring will be key (1)

- Basic Research Funding is a unique experiment
 - Other Universities in Belgium will follow
- Some concerns and questions:
 - impact on research output?
 - impact on number of PhDs?
 - proliferation of number of part-time professors?
 - more (successful) applications for external research funding?
 - impact on quality of applications?
 - effect on wellbeing of researchers?
 - incentive to collaborate more than before?
 - what is basic research funding used for?
 - ...

3. Monitoring will be key (2)

- Broad monitoring put in place, both quantitatively and qualitatively
 - **Quantitatively:** different indicators are measured annually (2025, 2026 – results are too preliminary to see accurate tendencies and make general conclusions – long term monitoring required)
 - **Qualitatively:** online-survey & depth interviews (will be started up soon)
 - Aim: insight in causal relationships, given that, alongside the introduction of Basic Research Funding, several other trends are currently (re)shaping the research landscape, including a decline in external competitive research funding
- Annual reporting to the Board of Directors

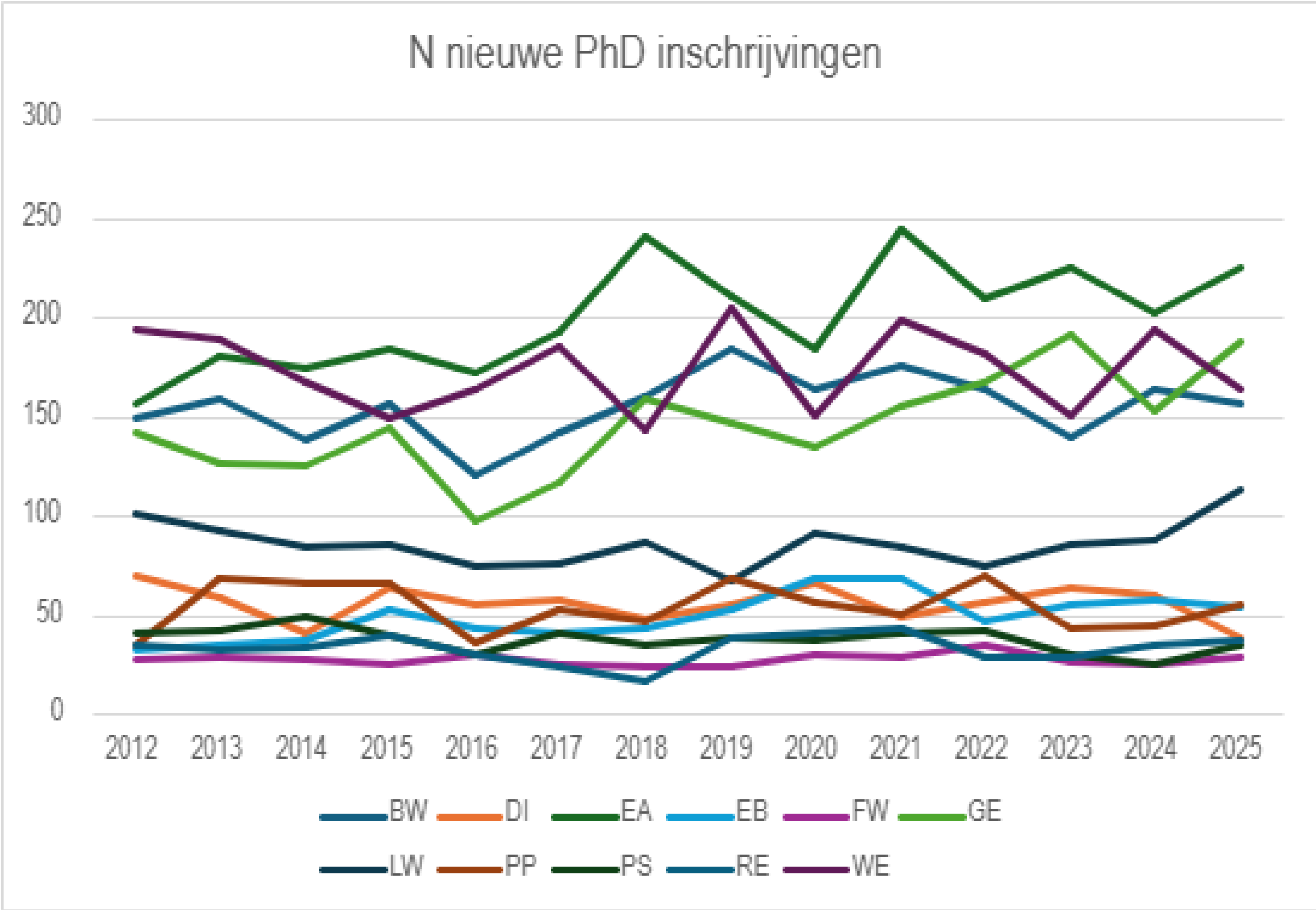
3. Monitoring will be key (3)

- Quantitative monitoring

- 1. Impact on obtaining external research funding
- 2. PhD's & postdocs
 - Number of PhD theses defended and number of newly enrolled PhD students
 - Number of doctoral degrees awarded by Flemish universities
 - PhD completion time
 - PhD success rate
 - Number of interdisciplinary PhD's
 - Number of postdoctoral researchers and source of funding (BOF/other)
- 3. Publications and citations
 - BOF allocation model: based on publications and citations
 - Number of Ghent University publications
- 4. Use of Basic Research Funding
 - Number of PhD researchers (partly) funded through Basic Research Funding
 - Allocation of BOF funding to personnel - operational costs - equipment
 - Purchase of research equipment
- 5. Target group
 - Evolution in the number of part-time ZAP members working 5% and 10%
 - Evolution in the number of co-supervisors of PhD projects

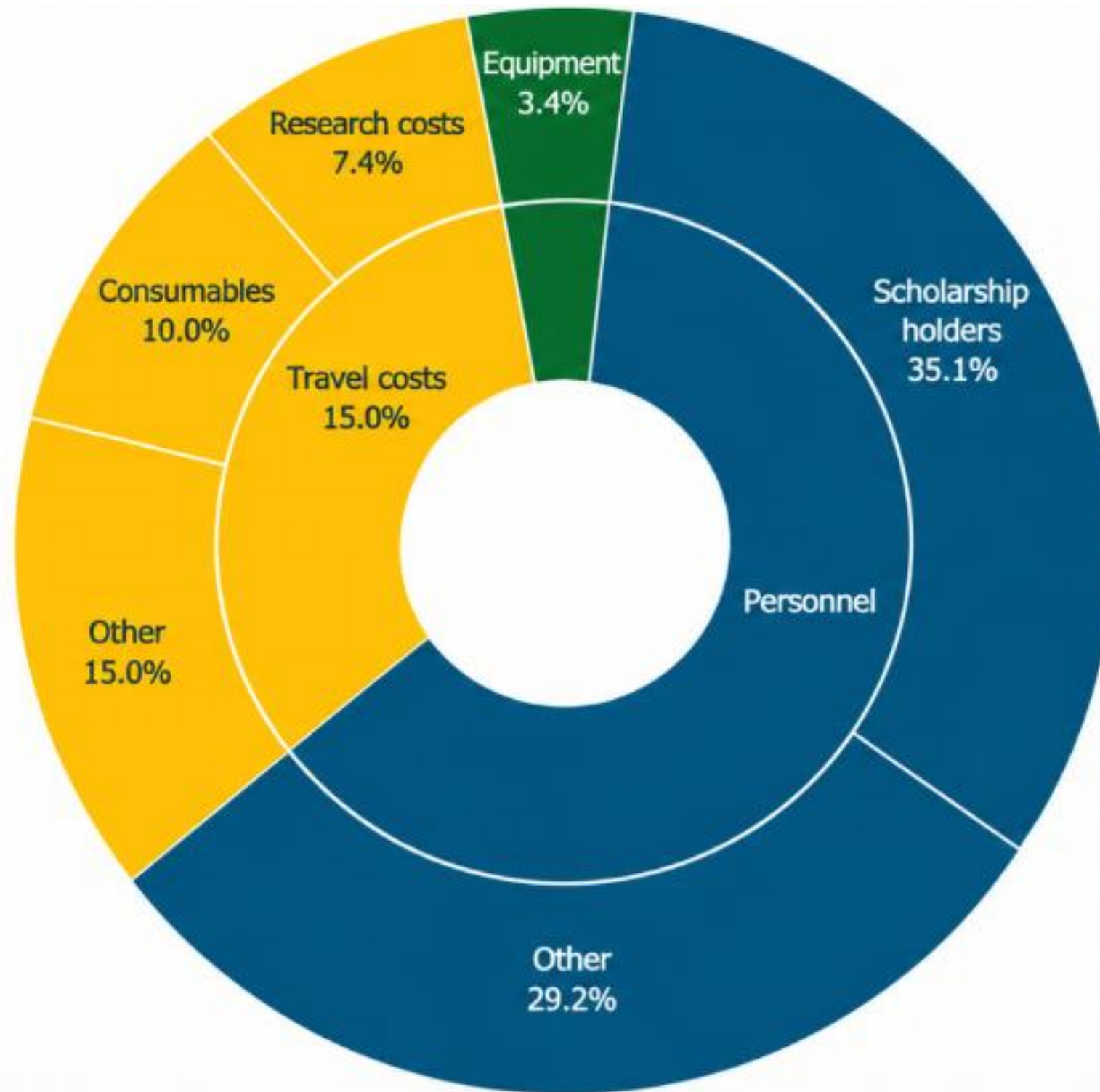
3. Monitoring will be key – some preliminary findings (4)

New PhD enrolments per faculty



3. Monitoring will be key – some preliminary findings (5)

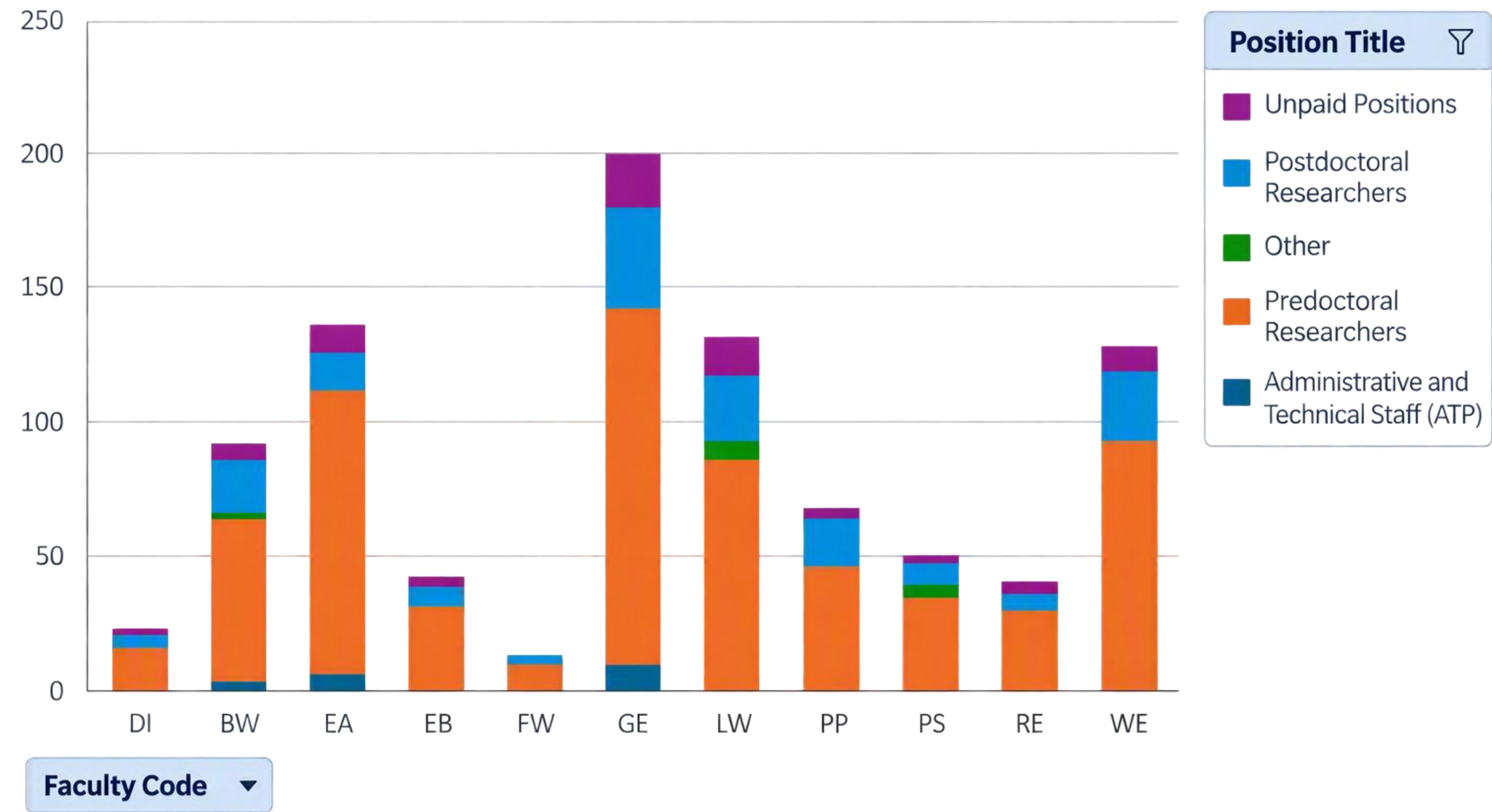
Use of Basic Research Funding (2024-2025)



3. Monitoring will be key – some preliminary findings (6)

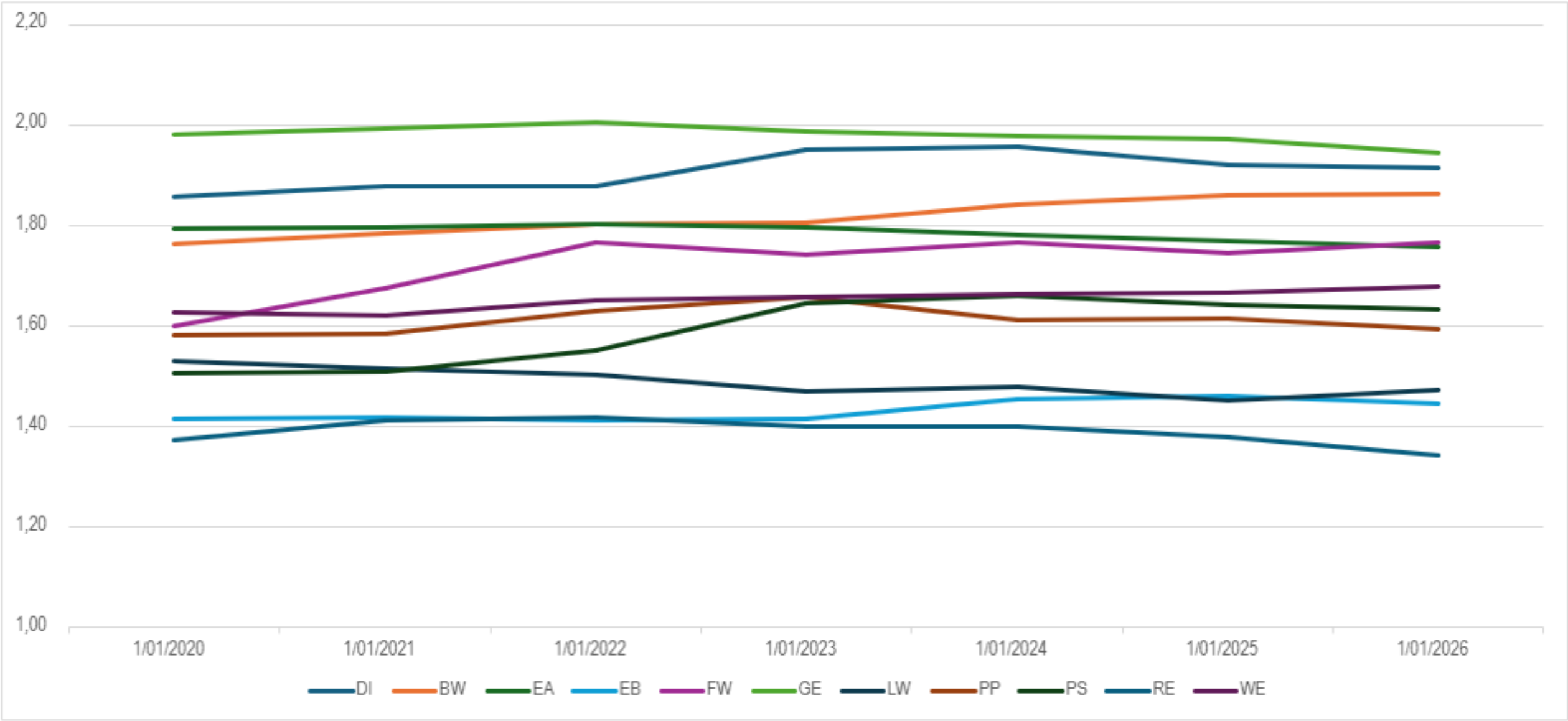
Researchers (partly) funded
through Basic Research Funding (2024-2025)

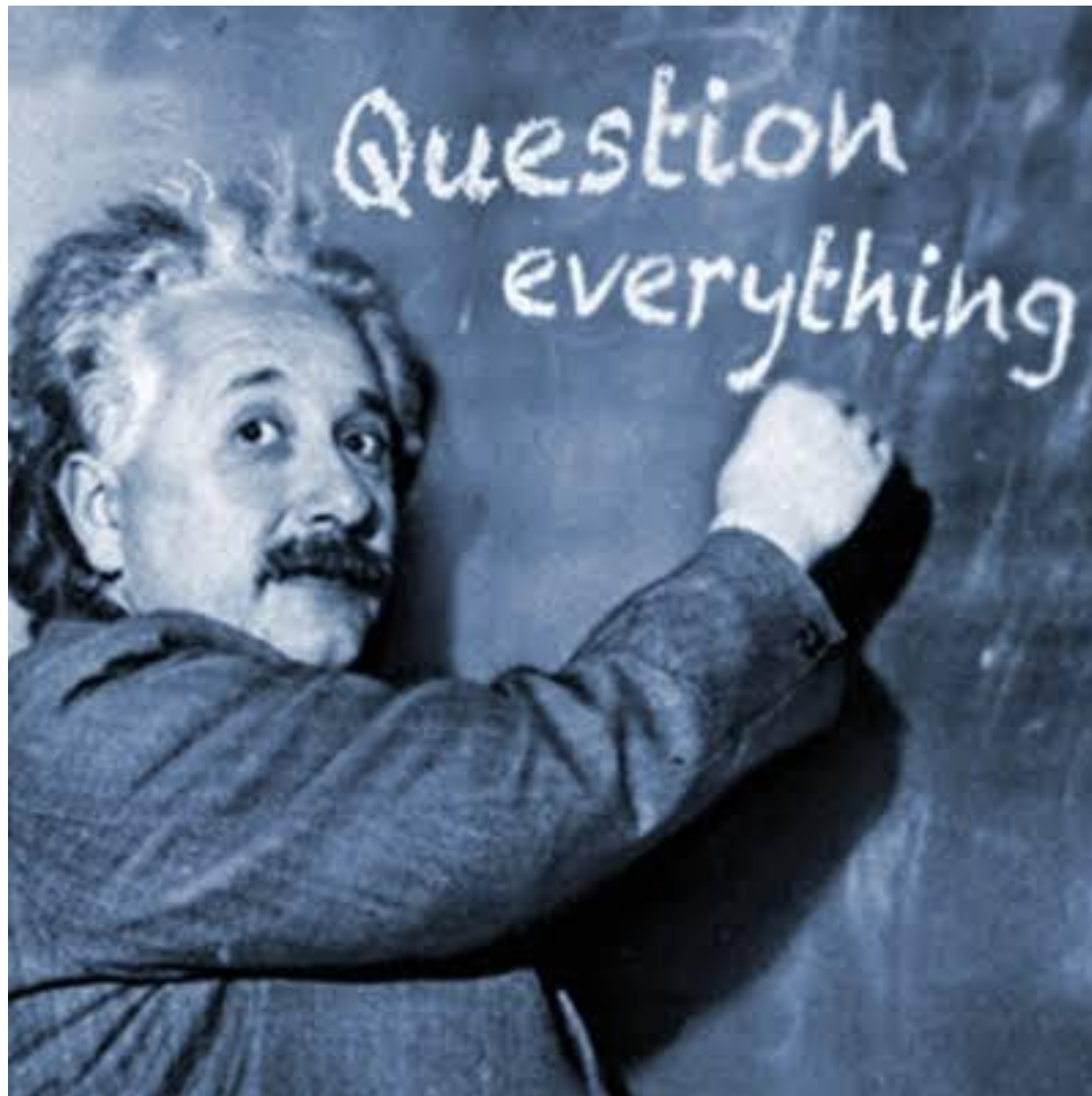
Contracts by Faculty



3. Monitoring will be key – some preliminary findings (7)

Collaboration – average Number of Supervisors per PhD Candidate





Questions?



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