FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) on short-term support for parents in the finishing phases of their (doctoral) degree program:

Questions on how to apply:

How much funding can I apply for and for how long will funding be granted?
You can apply for a maximum of EUR 400.00 per month for a maximum period of six months. As funds are earmarked for childcare purposes, we advise you to carefully consider whether you will be using the maximum amount of funding. However, it is also possible to apply for a smaller subsidy or a shorter period of time from the outset. You will need to plausibly justify the requested amount upon application. At the end of your funding period, you will be required to submit proof of use for all disbursed funds (see final report). This is why you can also apply for smaller amounts of funding and/or shorter periods of funding.

For what purposes can I use these funds and how many times can I apply for funding?
Funding is earmarked exclusively for additional childcare (e.g. au-pair help, babysitting, etc.) or domestic help (e.g. in short-term mini-job employment). Funding is to allow parents with childcare responsibilities to dedicate time to their studies/thesis (BA, MA, doctorate). Funding can be applied for once per household only, even if both parents are eligible for funding.

How can I find/employ additional childcare or domestic help?
Examples:
- Information on minor employment at Minijob-Zentrale: http://minijob-zentrale.de/
- Job board for domestic help by Minijob-Zentrale: https://www.haushaltsjob-boerse.de/DE/Home/home_node.html
- The Office for Family Services at the University of Bonn maintains a small pool of student babysitters with extensive experience in childcare who can be individually booked by members of the University. The Office for Family Services only provides the babysitters’ contact information and is not liable for their independent services. Please make sure to contact the Office for Family Services two weeks before you actually need a babysitter.

What does “The livelihood of applicants and their children must be secured” mean?
Funding must not be used for general living expenses but is exclusively earmarked for childcare or domestic help. Therefore, the submitted documents should show that the funds will not be used for rent, food or clothing, for example. The application must, however, show that without the requested funds, additional childcare or domestic help would not be or hardly be affordable. Families with a low total income are given priority here.
Which documents are recognized as “proof of income for all members of the household”?

Among others, we recognize salary statements, child/parental benefits notices, alimony payments, BaFöG, scholarships as well as proof of other income that contributes to securing the livelihood of all persons living in the household.

Why do I need a letter of endorsement from my doctoral advisor and what information should such a letter contain?

As funding is aimed at supporting parents in completing their doctorate, the letter of endorsement should include a brief outline of the current state of the doctorate as well as a confirmation that the doctoral student has reached the finishing phase of the doctoral thesis. Finishing phase means the time of finalizing the doctoral thesis for submission and/or preparing for the doctoral defense.

When can I expect funds to be disbursed?

For short-term support in 2022, applications are due by January 31st, May 31st, or September 30th. The approval period is approximately 4 weeks, so the respective payment start date is correspondingly later.

Questions regarding proof of use:

What does “At the end of the funding period, you will be required to submit a report on use of funds“ mean?

You will be required to submit a written final report within four weeks of the final disbursement of funds. Please submit your report and relevant documents via post to the Gender Equality Office at the University of Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 3, 53115 Bonn, Germany, to the attention of Dr. Martina Pottek, or via e-mail to sekretariat@zgb.uni-bonn.de.

Which information should I include in the report?

The report must clearly outline the use of provided funds as well as their benefit to advancing the thesis. During which time and at which intervals did additional childcare take place? For how many hours a week was domestic help employed? What is the current state of the finishing phase?

Which documents must be submitted?

Among others, employment contracts (for mini jobs) or other payment documents (e.g. bank transfers or payment receipts) for childcare or domestic help can serve as proof of use.