Guide for applicants
(Version 2.0)

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FOR INFORMATION
Visit the project website www.univr.it/invite/

For administrative issues, please email: phd.invite@ateneo.univr.it

For information about the research areas, please email the relevant academic contact provided on the specific page of the INVITE website at the following URL: http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/research-areas/
## History of changes

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<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>15/1/2018</td>
<td>First version of the Guide for applicants</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Included a presentation of the procedure to withdraw the application</td>
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How to register

The applicant who applies for the Invite PhD programme should first register on Pica-Cineca Portal following the instructions reported here below:

- Go to the website [https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/](https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/) and click on “Login” on the upper right corner (Figure 1)
Choose the language of interest (Italian or English) and click on “New registration” at the bottom of the page (Figure 2).

- Insert a valid email address, choose your Username and Password and take note of them. Click on “New registration” after entering all the details.
- After successful registration, an email will be sent to the applicant’s registered email. Please, open your email and click on the activation link to activate the account. If you do not receive the email, please, check your spam folder.
- Go back to https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/ to start filling out the online application form.
How to fill out the online application form

- Go [https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/](https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/) and click on “Gestisci le domande” at bottom on the page (Figure 3). Login with the account

![Figure 3](image)

- Click on “Compila una nuova domanda / New Submission” at the bottom of the page (Fig. 4)

![Figure 4](image)

- An index page will appear with a list of sections that you will be required to fill in order to be able to submit your application (Figure 5).

![Figure 5](image)
The application form is made up of 6 sections.

**Section 1 - PhD Programme**

In this section, applicants are required to:

- click on the Graduate School
- select the PhD Programme from a drop-down menu
- select the research area(s) they intend to apply for.

All fields are mandatory. 
Save to proceed.

**Section 2 – Personal data and contact details**

In this section, applicants are required to provide their personal data and contact details. Most of this data is loaded from the registration form but applicants can update this section clicking on “Profilo utente” on top left menu.

However, applicants have to fill in the following sections / fields:

- Residence
- Contact address (if different from the residence)
- Phone number with international prefix
- Skype ID.

**REMARK:** “Skype ID” is used to contact you for the interview at the second stage of the selection procedure.

After checking the correctness of the information reported in this section, click on “Save and proceed”.

**Section 3 – Admission requirements**

In this section, applicants are required to provide information on their university degree(s), research experience, place of residence/activity during the previous three years, according to the eligibility criteria reported in the INVITE Call for applications, and upload the relevant documentation.

**University degree giving access to PhD:** For each degree declared by the applicant, he/she must upload both a copy of the original degree and the transcript of records in a single pdf. If these documents are written in another language than English, a certified translation in English is needed.

**REMARK:** The field “Upload a translation in English of your Master's Degree certificate and transcript of records” is mandatory. For this reason, if your documentation is in English in order to be able to proceed please re-upload here the same documentation already uploaded in the field “Upload the copy of the Master's Degree certificate and transcript of records in original language”.

Same rule applies to the documentation related to your Bachelor's degree.

**Full-time research experience:** Insert the number of months of experience in research as full-time equivalent (FTE).

If you have worked with a full-time contract or fellowship, the FTE research experience is exactly the number of months you have worked in research.
If you have worked part-time, you have to calculate the FTE months pro-rata. For example, a part-time worker employed for 20 hours a week where full-time work consists of 40 hours, is counted as 0.5 FTE. Therefore, if you have worked for 10 months, your research experience is equal to 5 FTE months (i.e. 10 months × 0.5).

Only research experiences after the degree entitling you to embark on a doctorate must be considered.

The information provided here must be consistent with the information in your CV.

Place of activity/place of residence (previous 3 years): Go to the INVITE Website, fill in a table with information about your recent places of activity/residence and generate a Declaration on Places of activity/residence on PDF (for further details see chapter “Declaration on Places of activity and residence” here below).

Then, insert the number of days as indicated in the Declaration and upload the document.

**REMARK:** Unless you have applied or you are applying for refugee status in Italy, you must have spent maximum 365 days in Italy in the last 3 years.

At the end click on “Save and proceed”.

**Section 4 – Additional notes**

This section must be completed with additional information related to the applicants’ specific conditions:

- status of refugee or asylum seeker
- disability
- family status.

**REMARK:** Applicants with refugee status obtained or pending in Italy must upload the documents certifying their status or their request for asylum, possibly in English. If documents are not available, they must upload a self-declaration and contact the University of Verona for support (phd.invite@ateneo.univr.it).

**Section 5 – Attachments**

The present guide for applicants provides detailed information about the format, minimum standards and maximum total length of the documents.

Please refer to the details reported in the next pages to know how to write your motivation and presentation letter, curriculum vitae and research project.

**Section 6 – Declarations**

After compiling this section click on save and go back to the dashboard.
How to submit your application

Once the applicants have filled out the application form, they can proceed and submit it following these instructions.

- From the dashboard, applicants will have the possibility to edit (button “Modica/Edit”), verify the content of their application or submit it (Figure 6). Click on “Presenta/Submit” to start the submission.

![Figure 6](image)

- A new window will appear with the summary information. You must check that all the information and declarations are correct; if they are, click on “Presenta/Submit” (Figure 7), otherwise you have the possibility to modify them going back clicking on “Cruscotto/dashboard” (Figure 8).

**IMPORTANT:** You cannot edit/modify your application once you have submitted it therefore before submitting ensure that all information and supporting documents are correct.

![Figure 7](image)
The following screen will appear: click on “Firma il documento manualmente / Sign the application (no digital signature)” (Figure 9).

Click on “Scarica PDF / Download PDF” and download your application form in pdf (Figure 10).
Print the file out, sign the last page and scan your signed application.
Finally, upload your signed application form on step 5 (Figure 10).
To conclude the process and submit your application, click on “Invia la domanda / send the application” (Figure 10).
At the end of your application procedure, the following window will appear with the **status of your application** and its **ID number** (Figure 11). The applicants will receive a confirmation email. If they do not receive any email, they have to check your spam folder. Applicants must keep the application ID for further questions or information about the call.

![Figure 11](image)

Applicants who would like to apply for another PhD programme must repeat the application process starting from **“How to fill out the online application form”** (page 4).
How to withdraw your application

If you have already submitted an application but you wish to correct some mistakes, you must withdraw your incorrect application and submit a new one. Following this procedure you can delete your application from the system and submit a new application.

REMARK: If you have not submitted your application yet, you can modify it clicking on “Modifica/Edit”.

- Go to https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/domande and log in with your username and password. The page will show you the status of your application(s).
- If you want to withdraw your application, click on “Ritira/Withdraw” (Figure 12)
A page will appear with the details of your application. Select the option “I want to withdraw my application”, write a reason and click on “Salva e torna al cruscotto / Save and back to dashboard” to proceed with the withdrawal procedure (Figure 13).

Select the option “Firma il documento manualmente /Sign the application (no digital signature)” (Figure 14)
The system will re-address you to the “cruscotto / dashboard” automatically. Click on “Firma il ritiro / sign withdraw” (Figure 15)

To conclude the withdrawal procedure (Figure 16, next page) you are required to:

- Download your withdrawal application clicking on “Scarica PDF / Download PDF”
- Print the withdrawal application
- Sign it
- Upload your signed withdrawal application in pdf
- Once you have uploaded the PDF of your withdrawal application click on “Invia la domanda / Send the application”
The system will re-address you to the "cruscotto / dashboard" where you can check the status of your application. If the withdrawal procedure has been concluded successfully, the status of your application will be "ritirata / withdrawn" with the indication of date and time of withdrawal (Figure 17).

Now, you can re-submit your application starting from “How to fill out the online application form” (page 4).
Declaration on Places of activity and residence

To create a declaration on the country/countries in which you have legally resided and/or had your main activity (work, studies, etc.) during the last 3 years, please, go to the INVITE website at http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/place-activity-residence-calculator/ and fill in the form.

1. Insert first and last names. (See Figure 1)
2. For each period, select a country and indicate the dates and then click on “Insert period”.
   
   You are required to cover the last three years up to the call deadline, i.e. from 17/04/2015 to 16/04/2018.
3. Repeat Step 2 for each period to declare.
4. The system will insert all periods in a table.
5. To change any piece of information of a period already included (e.g. country, start date and end date), click on “Remove” and then repeat Step 2 to insert a new period with the correct information.

Figure 1

1. Insert first and last names. (See Figure 1)
2. For each period, select a country and indicate the dates and then click on “Insert period”.
   
   You are required to cover the last three years up to the call deadline, i.e. from 17/04/2015 to 16/04/2018.
3. Repeat Step 2 for each period to declare.
4. The system will insert all periods in a table.
5. To change any piece of information of a period already included (e.g. country, start date and end date), click on “Remove” and then repeat Step 2 to insert a new period with the correct information.
6. Once inserted all periods, click on “Click here to generate the Declaration”. The system will check the information and, if no error occurs, it will create a PDF file. See Figure 2 for an example.

![Declaration on Places of activity / residence in the last three years](image)

**Figure 2**

- Save the file on your computer.
- Go back to the online application form, section “Admission requirements”, question “Place of activity/Place of residence (previous 3 years)”. (see Figure 3)

![Declaration on Places of activity / residence in the last three years](image)

**Figure 3**

- Include the number of days spent in Italy as shown in the Declaration in the field “Total days in Italy” (See Figure 2).
- Upload the Declaration (PDF file) in “Carica/Upload”.

Value to be used in the online submission system
Motivation and presentation letter

The motivation and presentation letter must respect the following **minimum standards**:

- A4 page size,
- margins (top, bottom, left, right) of at least 20 mm (not including any footers or headers)
- a clearly readable font (e.g. Arial or Times New Roman),
- a minimum font size of 11 points,
- at least a single line spacing.

**The maximum total length for this document is 2 pages.**

No template is provided for the motivation and presentation letter.
Curriculum Vitae

Formatting restrictions
CVs must respect the following **minimum standards**: 
- A4 page size,
- margins (top, bottom, left, right) of at least 20 mm (not including any footers or headers)
- a clearly readable font (e.g. Arial or Times New Roman),
- a minimum font size of 11 points
- single line spacing at least.

The maximum total length for this document is 5 pages.
The overall page limit will be strictly applied and experts will be strictly instructed to disregard content above this limit.

How to write your CV
You can download a template inspired by Europass CV and specifically adapted to INVITE at the following URL: [http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/documents/](http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/documents/)
You can delete all sections that do not apply to you or add new sections for relevant information.
If you prefer, you can use another template, provided it includes all relevant information necessary to evaluate your professional profile.
Please, include at least your last name either in the CV header or footer and number all pages.
We strongly suggest you to:
- include all relevant information
- organise the information in a **tidy and clean style**
- follow **anti-chronological order**, from the most to the less recent event or item
- adopt a coherent **citation style** for publications and other research achievements.

Information required
You can divide the CV in the following sections:

**Personal information**
- First and last names
- Contact details (email, phone number)
- Any professional website or network profile (LinkedIn, Academia, Research Gate…)
- Gender
- Birth place and date.

**Narrative résumé**
Provide a summary (10-15 lines) about your professional profile.
Here you have to present yourself, your **professional strengths** and your professional prospects and
plans for the future. You can stress the overall **coherence of your study and professional career** up to now.

You can also use this part to better explain some **weaknesses of your career path** as career breaks or reduced scientific production.

**Education and training**

List all your diplomas, providing at least the following information:

- Dates
- Type of Diploma and grade
- Higher Education Institution awarding the diploma
- City and Country.

**Work experience**

List all your work experience, providing at least the following information:

- Dates
- Name of the employer
- City and Country
- Role and tasks.

**Career breaks (if applicable)**

If you have had any career break (e.g. for maternity or paternity leave, for long-lasting illness, military service, or any other significant event), please indicate the exact dates of the break and the reason. This will help the evaluators to correctly assess your CV.

**Personal skills**

Please, provide information about professional skills you have acquired, like

- Language(s)
- Digital skills
- Communication skills
- Organisational skills

Where relevant, include the reference to recognised certifications you have gained: e.g. TOEFL, Diplôme d’études en langue française (DELF) for linguistic competences or ECDL for ICT skills.

**Research achievements**

Please list all the achievements related to your academic and research path in **anti-chronological order** (from the most to the less recent one).

Organise the list of achievements in the sub-sections like:

- Publications
- Presentations
- Organisation of scientific conferences
- Prizes, awards and fellowships
- Funding
- Industrial innovation and patents
- Research expeditions

**PUBLICATIONS**

This section includes

- articles
- research monographs
- chapters in collective volumes
- and any translations thereof.

You can organise the section with these four sub-headings and list your publications in anti-chronological order.

Please, use the same citation style all along this section.

Stress in bold your name in multi-author publications.

If relevant, add the impact factor of the journal.

For publications in any language other than English, provide a translation in English of the title in squared brackets. **Remark:** In some disciplines (for instance in some Humanities disciplines), other languages (like German or French) are commonly used and no translation is needed.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Include all oral and written presentations at scientific conferences and seminars.

For each item, provide:

- paper / poster title
- conference title
- city, country, and dates of the conference
- conference website (if available).

**ORGANISATION OF SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES**

List the scientific conferences, seminars or workshops in which you have been involved as an organiser (e.g. communication and press office, secretariat,..)

For each item, provide:

- paper / poster title
- conference title
- city, country, and dates of the event
- the conference website (if available)
- your role in the organisation of the event.

**PRIZES, AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

It includes:

- recognitions like Best Poster Award, Best Oral Presentation Award, Best Paper Award, etc.
- prizes for research achievements (e.g. for your Master Dissertation)
- fellowships (e.g. Erasmus fellowship)
- travel grants for your research and training activities.

**RESEARCH PROJECTS**

List all research projects you have been involved in.

For each project, provide the following information:
- title and/or acronym
- funding organization and funding programme
- period of the project (start and end dates)
- amount of the grant received (included the currency – a conversion in Euro is recommended)
- your role in the project
- project website.

INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION AND PATENTS
It includes the involvement in spin-offs, start-ups, and more in general in collaboration with private companies and enterprises, but also with public non-academic bodies and non-profit organisations.
It might be used also as an example of social innovation and, more in general, for the involvement in the application to public/non-profit sectors of research results.
It also includes registered and granted patents.

RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS
It includes all expeditions you have participated in.
Please, specify period and place(s) of the expeditions and purposes.
Research Project

Formatting restrictions

Please, download and use the research project template, available on the INVITE website at:
http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/documents/

Proposals must respect the following minimum standards:
  ▪ A4 page size,
  ▪ margins (top, bottom, left, right) of at least 20 mm (not including any footers or headers)
  ▪ a clearly readable font (e.g. Arial or Times New Roman),
  ▪ a minimum font size of 11 points, except for the tables and footnotes where the minimum font size is 8 points,
  ▪ single line spacing.

The maximum total length for this document is 5 pages.
The overall page limit will be strictly applied and experts will be strictly instructed to disregard content above this limit.

How to write your research project

We suggest you to:
  ▪ be concise and use plain English
  ▪ use a clear structure:
    • Feel free to divide the text with headings / sections
    • Use ordered and unordered lists
    • Stress main concept with typographical styles: bold, underline, colour…
  ▪ use charts, figures, pictures or tables when they express a concept in a more concise and clear way than a paragraph.

How to structure your research proposal

You are free to present your research project as you prefer.
If you don’t know how to write your research project, you can find here some suggestions.

You can structure your document according to these sections
  ▪ Objectives
  ▪ Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
  ▪ Research methodology and approach
  ▪ Originality and innovative aspects
  ▪ Interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral aspects
  ▪ Coherence with the selected INVITE research area
  ▪ Work plan
  ▪ References.
Objectives
List your (FEW!) objectives in a concrete and measurable manner. Do not exaggerate with the number of objectives, nor in ambitiousness.
You should be in a position to answer the following questions:
- What is/are the problem/s you intend to explore?
- Can the proposed research improve the current situation?

Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
Formulate the main question of your research project and expose the available solutions/theories (with their strong and weak points). References to bibliography are essential here.
Explain how your project will go beyond the state-of-the-art, and the extent the proposed research project is ambitious. Try to highlight the timeliness and relevance of your project.

Research methodology and approach
Highlight key concepts of the chosen methodology to provide a solution to your research question. Describe the approaches you will adopt. If relevant, include experimental validation, applications and protocols.

Originality and innovative aspects
Why is your research project original or innovative? How could it go beyond the actual state of the art?
Originality, novelty and innovation might refer to:
- Basic / fundamental concepts and ideas;
- Methodologies;
- Final expected results.
Please, be sure – after a careful overview of the most recent and qualified literature – that your proposal is really original and/or innovative.

Interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral aspects
Explain whether your project implies the cooperation between different scientific disciplines.
Describe the cooperation with companies or other organisations (public authorities, NGOs, etcetera), if applicable.

Coherence with the selected INVITE research area
Demonstrate how your research project fits with the INVITE research area(s) you can have selected.
The full list of research areas is available on the INVITE website at:
http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/research-areas/

Expected impact
Describe how your project’s results might be useful for other investigation and application areas and open the way to new research fields.
Explain how your project will contribute to the cooperation with companies, public authorities, NGOs or any other non-academic sector.
Explain how our economy and society will benefit from your research project.

**Work plan**

Describe the work plan of your research project, providing a list of work packages or phases of your work plan. Explain what is the logical / temporal structure of your project.

Include a description of methods or experimental strategies and of the materials to be used (if applicable).

List the main results and outputs you expect to reach at the end of the project.

**References**

List all publications you have mentioned, adopting the citation style most common in your disciplinary field.
Reference letters

The reference letters must respect the following minimum standards:

- A4 page size,
- margins (top, bottom, left, right) of at least 20 mm (not including any footers or headers)
- a clearly readable font (e.g. Arial or Times New Roman),
- a minimum font size of 11 points,
- at least a single line spacing.

The maximum total length for this document is 2 pages.

These should be on headed paper and signed by the academic professors at the university where you obtained your master’s degree or by any other legal entity from the academic or non-academic sector where you studied or worked.

No template is provided for reference letter.