



## INVITE Call for applications

(version modified with Rectoral Decree nr. 21692 of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018)

### ART. 1 – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- 1.1 The University of Verona is accepting applications for admission to the 34<sup>th</sup> cycle of PhD programmes (academic year 2018-2019) within the framework of the INVITE project (INnovative Verona university's Inter-disciplinary, Inter-sectoral and International Training Experience). These positions will be funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no. 754345.
- 1.2 Applications will be accepted from 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 until 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 2:00 pm (Central Europe Time).
- 1.3 This call for applications is for 14 positions, i.e. one for each PhD programme run by the University of Verona as specified in Table 1 below. Potential applicants can find the areas of research for each programme at the following link: <http://sites.centri.univr.it/invite/the-call/research-areas/>

**Table 1:** PhD programmes and available positions

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES	Positions available
PhD programme in <b>Applied Life and Health Sciences</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Biomolecular Medicine</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Cardiovascular Sciences</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Clinical and Experimental Biomedical Sciences</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Neuroscience, Psychological and Psychiatric Sciences and Movement Sciences</b>	1
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LEGAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES	
PhD programme in <b>Economics and Management</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>European and International Legal Sciences</b>	1
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND ENGINEERING SCIENCES	
PhD programme in <b>Biotechnology</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Computer Science</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Nanosciences and Advanced Technologies</b>	1
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES	
PhD programme in <b>Foreign Literatures, Languages and Linguistics</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Human Sciences</b>	1
PhD programme in <b>Philology, Literature and Performance Studies</b>	1

- 1.4 This call for applications is published on the INVITE website (<http://www.univr.it/invite>) and the University of Verona's PhD webpage (<http://www.univr.it/phd>). Any additions,

modifications or updates concerning this call for applications will be published on the same webpages. For all intents and purposes, this call for applications constitutes an official notice.

## ART. 2 – DURATION OF PhD PROGRAMMES

- 2.1 The 34<sup>th</sup> cycle of PhD programmes officially begins on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018. PhD study lasts for three years and ends with the defence of the doctoral thesis, which must take place by April 2022.
- 2.2 PhD degrees are conferred by the Rector upon the recommendation of the Examination Panel after PhD students have successfully completed the doctoral programme and passed the final examination (PhD thesis defence).
- 2.3 In order to be awarded the qualification, PhD students must have submitted their full doctoral thesis to the Verona University Open Archive (IRIS), where it shall be available for consultation by the public.

## ART. 3 – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 The call is open to applicants of any age and nationality who meet the following requirements **at the date of the call deadline:**

- a) **Must hold a Master's Degree** (e.g. Master of Science or Master of Arts) or a similar degree equivalent to the Italian *Laurea Magistrale* or *Specialistica* which would grant them access to doctoral level studies in the country where the degree was conferred.
- b) **Must not already hold a PhD and must have less than 4 years (full-time equivalent) of research experience.** Full-time-equivalent research experience is measured starting from the date the applicants obtained their Master's degree or equivalent qualification entitling them to embark on a doctorate, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged.
- c) **Must not have resided or carried out their main activity** (work, studies, etc.) **in Italy for more than 12 months in the 3 years** immediately before the application deadline.

Any time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention (1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol), compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays do not count towards the total.

3.2 If any of the aforementioned prerequisites are not satisfied, the University of Verona reserves the right to exclude applicants from the selection procedure at any time, even after the selection procedure has taken place.

## ART. 4 – ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Applications must be submitted electronically via the PICA submission system at <https://pica.cineca.it/univr/invite/> by the deadline specified in Article 1.2. Applications submitted using any other method will not be considered.
- 4.2 Applicants may apply for more than one PhD position. A separate online application form must be completed for each position of interest and submitted along with the necessary documentation for each application.
- 4.3 The following documents must be provided:
  - Application form
  - ID document
  - Detailed CV

- Copy of Bachelor's and Master's degree certificate and transcript of records
- Motivation and cover letter
- Short proposal for a research project within the specified research areas, including an explanation of how the project is interdisciplinary, inter-sectorial and international
- Declaration on place of activity / residence in the last three years
- Diploma Supplement (optional)
- Up to two reference letters by academic professors at the university where the applicants obtained their Master's degree or by any other legal entity from the academic or non academic sector where the applicants studied or worked (optional).

All documents must be submitted in English. For certificates and other official documents in any other language, a certified English translation of each one must be provided.

4.4 In order to be considered, applications must be:

- Submitted before the deadline using the PICA submission system
- Complete (i.e. all the requested documents correctly sent)
- Written in English
- Readable, accessible and printable.

4.5 Applicants are responsible for ensuring they have carried out and followed the full procedure correctly. The University of Verona is not responsible for any late applications due to technical issues or software malfunctions close to the deadline, the overloading of communications and/or application systems, nor for any loss of communication due to incorrect or missing addresses or late notification of a change of address, nor for any possible misunderstandings or problems caused by third parties, fortuitous cases or force majeure.

Applications with missing compulsory information and/or attachments shall not be considered. Additional material submitted after the deadline will not be accepted, with the exception of any further documents expressly requested by the PhD Office.

## **ART. 5 – EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

5.1 A specific Evaluation Commission will be established for each PhD programme to assess the applicants. Each Evaluation Commission shall be comprised of:

- Three internal faculty members relevant to the PhD Programme
- One external academic expert
- One professional from non-academic sector

The Evaluation Commission will nominate its own Chairperson and Secretary. The Rector's Decrees stating the members of the Evaluation Commissions will be published on the INVITE website (<http://www.univr.it/invite>) and the PhD webpage ([www.univr.it/phd](http://www.univr.it/phd)) once the selection procedures have been completed.

5.2 The PhD selection process will rate the applicants against pre-established criteria to gauge their current skills and aptitude for scientific research. The full selection procedure includes the following steps:

### **STEP 1. Admissibility and eligibility check**

Applicants will be checked against the admissibility and eligibility criteria (see Articles 3 and 4 above).

In the case of obvious clerical errors, the PhD Office may ask the applicant to provide the missing information or supporting documents.

If the additional information or document(s) substantially change the application, the applicant may not be considered.

## STEP 2. Evaluation

**2a) Preliminary selection:** Applicants will be assessed on the basis of the criteria specified in Table 2.

The Evaluation Commissions will draft an evaluation report for each application and assign a final score to each applicant. Applicants who pass the quality threshold for both sub-criteria and the total score will be invited for an interview.

**Table 2:** Evaluation criteria for the preliminary selection

Criteria for the preliminary selection	Score	Weight
<b>1. Excellence of the applicant</b> Coherence and quality of his/her education Experience in research (if any) Quality of scientific outputs (e.g. publications) Any other relevant work experience	<b>Score 1:</b> <i>Range 0-5</i> <i>Threshold 3/5</i>	50%
<b>2. Excellence of the proposed research project</b> Coherence of the proposed research project in the advertised research sector Clarity and pertinence of the objectives Soundness of the concept and credibility of the proposed methodology	<b>Score 2:</b> <i>Range 0-5</i> <i>Threshold 3/5</i>	50%
<b>Total Score (1 + 2)</b> <b>Threshold 6/10</b>		

**2b) Interviews:** Individual interviews will be conducted to gain a better understanding of each applicant's background education and skills, proposed PhD research project and motivation for applying.

All interviews will be conducted by videoconference and will last approximately 30-45 minutes. On the application form, applicants must specify their ID name where they can be contacted for the interview and must guarantee the use of a webcam so that they can be identified by the Evaluation Commission.

The Evaluation Commission will evaluate the interview on the basis of the criteria specified in Table 3. An evaluation report will then be drafted, assigning a final score to each applicant. Applicants passing the quality thresholds for sub-criteria "1. Excellence of the applicant" and "2. Excellence of the proposed research project" and for the total score will be included in the final ranking list.

**Table 3:** Evaluation criteria for the interview

Criteria for the Interview	Score	Weight
<b>1. Excellence of the applicant</b> Coherence and quality of his/her education Experience in research (if any) Quality of scientific outputs (e.g. publications) Any other relevant work experience Knowledge of the subject(s) relevant to the chosen PhD programme	<b>Score 1:</b> <i>Range 0-5</i> <i>Threshold 3/5</i>	40%
<b>2. Excellence of the proposed research project</b> Clarity and pertinence of the objectives Soundness of the concept and credibility of the proposed methodology	<b>Score 2:</b> <i>Range 0-5</i> <i>Threshold 3/5</i>	40%
<b>3. Potential of the applicant</b> Coherence between the applicant's motivation and career prospects Capacity of the applicant to reach a position of professional maturity at the end of the PhD programme	<b>Score 3:</b> <i>Range 0-5</i> <i>No threshold</i>	20%

Evidence of creative independent thinking and originality		
<b>Total Score (1 + 2 + 3)</b> <b>Threshold 6/15</b>		

### **STEP 3. Award decision**

The INVITE Steering Committee will review the evaluation procedures and proposed merit lists and approve the final rankings.

If two or more applicants applying for the same PhD position have the same score, the applicant belonging to the less represented gender (in first instance) or the youngest (in second instance) will be chosen.

If no application for a position passes the quality thresholds, the Steering Committee will assign the position to an applicant ranked in second position in another PhD programme.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection process with an Evaluation Summary Report.

The official rankings lists as approved by the Steering Committee and the Rector will be published on the INVITE website (<http://www.univr.it/invite>) and the PhD webpage ([www.univr.it/phd](http://www.univr.it/phd)).

### **ART. 6 – REDRESS PROCEDURE**

- 6.1 Applicants may submit a request for redress if they believe there was a shortcoming in the way their application was evaluated which may affect the final result of the evaluation, or if they believe the result of the eligibility check was incorrect. Requests for redress can only be based on procedural grounds, with clear evidence of the reasons for complaint.
- 6.2 Redress requests must be sent by email to [phd.invite@ateneo.univr.it](mailto:phd.invite@ateneo.univr.it) within 15 days of the Evaluation Summary Report being sent. If that day is a bank holiday, the deadline shall be postponed to the following working day.
- 6.3 Applicants will be informed as soon as possible of the conclusion of their request for redress.

### **ART. 7 – APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES OR SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

- 7.1 The University of Verona takes specific measures for applicants with disabilities (e.g. blind or deaf applicants or those suffering from any other relevant disability) and applicants with specific learning difficulties (e.g. applicants diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia or dysorthographia). Specific arrangements will be made for the interview to guarantee equal treatment, e.g. interview with the support of a trusted person, a written interview, or any other appropriate alternative.
- 7.2 Applicants must make their clinical condition(s) known on their application form and should provide the University of Verona with clinical certificate(s) issued by the appropriate health care authorities or medical practitioners. If any such documentation is received after the application deadline, the University of Verona cannot guarantee the provision of necessary aid.

### **ART. 8 – ADMISSION TO THE PhD PROGRAMMES**

- 8.1 Successful applicants are admitted to their selected PhD programme following the order of the merit ranking list. Applicants who are successful on more than one ranking list must select only one PhD programme to enrol in.

8.2 The selected applicants must submit an online enrolment form (available at [www.univr.it/enrolmentphd](http://www.univr.it/enrolmentphd)) **within 15 days after the publication of the final merit rankings** in order to register for their PhD programme.

Applicants who fail to meet this deadline will be replaced by the next applicant on the ranking list, who will be informed by email and must enrol within 15 days following the same procedure.

8.3 Applicants who provide false information or documents at any point during the application procedure will automatically lose their place on the ranking lists and sanctions will be imposed. The University of Verona will withdraw any benefits awarded to the applicant (e.g. scholarship or fee concessions) and will not reimburse any fees paid. False declarations may also lead to possible legal action by the interested parties.

## **ART. 9 – EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

9.1 The PhD students will be employed from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 under a 36-month research contract (*assegno di ricerca*) as defined by Art. 22 of Italian Law no. 240/2010. They will be enrolled in the PhD programme starting from the 2018-2019 academic year.

9.2 Salaries are paid on a monthly basis and are composed of the following elements (gross amounts):

- Living allowance: €2000/month for 36 months
- Mobility allowance: €600/month for 36 months
- Family allowance: €150/month for 36 months for students with family obligations as at the deadline of the call for applications, as defined in Article 9.3.

9.3 The family allowance is reserved for PhD students linked to another person by:

- a) Marriage, or
- b) A relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised, by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalised, or
- c) Dependent children currently being maintained by the applicant.

Family obligations must be in place as of the deadline of the call for applications. Any change in family obligations after this date will not be considered.

9.4 If a PhD student who has been admitted to a PhD programme renounces their place within the first three months of the PhD start date, the next applicant on the ranking list will be admitted.

If no other applicant is available in the ranking list for the position, the Steering Committee may decide to assign the position to a qualified applicant in a different PhD programme or launch a special call for applications for the vacant position.

## **ART. 10 – PhD STUDENT RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS AND INCOMPATIBILITIES**

10.1 It is not possible to be simultaneously enrolled in more than one study programme leading to the awarding of a degree (e.g. Bachelor, Masters, Postgraduate Specialisation, short/executive Masters or PhD). In the case of enrolment in one of the aforementioned programmes, successful applicants will be required to suspend or, if not possible, discontinue enrolment in their other degree programme before the commencement of the PhD programme; otherwise the applicant shall be excluded from the PhD programme.

10.2 INVITE PhD students must:

- a) Attend the required PhD modules and seminars
- b) Attend all meta-disciplinary training programmes foreseen by the INVITE project
- c) Spend a period of 3-12 months in a university abroad
- d) Publish their research as an open access article/thesis, with exception of research that must be protected by IP regulations.

## **ART. 11 – INTELLECTUAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

- 11.1 The intellectual and industrial property rights of any results achieved by PhD students – including software, industrial inventions that may or may not be patentable, know-how, models, data and data collections – are governed in accordance with current regulations and statutory laws, University regulations and, where applicable, in compliance with specific agreements signed with universities, enterprises/businesses or other parties involved.
- 11.2 PhD students must promptly notify their supervisor of any achievement of results and must agree not to disclose them or use them without the prior authorisation of the University. If collaborating with research groups, PhD students must sign a specific agreement for the recognition of intellectual property rights, maintaining the utmost confidentiality concerning all reserved information, data, and documents they may come into the possession of while carrying out their activities at or on behalf of the University.
- 11.3 In all cases, PhD students are guaranteed the possibility of undertaking all the normal publication activities provided by the research and study programme, which shall be planned compatibly with the need to protect any possible results.

## **ART. 12 – CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 12.1 Pursuant to Italian Legislative Decree no. 196 of 30 June 2003 regarding the protection of personal data, the University of Verona commits to using applicants' personal information for the implementation of the selection process and institutional purposes only.
- 12.2 In accordance with the aforementioned regulations, participation in the selection process implies the applicant's consent to the use of their personal data and application results by the University of Verona.

## **ART. 13 – FINAL REGULATIONS**

- 13.1 All matters not specified in this call for applications are governed by the University of Verona PhD Regulations and relevant national laws (available at the following URL: <http://www.univr.it/main?ent=catdoc&id=742&idDest=2&sServ=68&serv=65&lang=en#1194>).
- 13.2 A guide for applicants and further information on the application procedure can be found on the INVITE website (<http://www.univr.it/invite>).

The following contacts are available for further help:

- For **technical issues**, please email: [phd.support@ateneo.univr.it](mailto:phd.support@ateneo.univr.it)
- For **administrative issues**, please email: [phd.invite@ateneo.univr.it](mailto: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/>

The Rector  
Professor Nicola Sartor