

Call for Applications Funding for International Exchanges —

Mobility for Young Researchers

Issued by the University of Florence, with the contribution of Fondazione CR Firenze

Art. 1 – Purpose and Financial Allocation

The call, issued by the University of Florence with the contribution of Fondazione CR Firenze, aims to support **young researchers** to foster the widespread and inclusive growth of the research system, strengthen interdisciplinary research, accompany the development of a new generation of researchers, and promote the international dimension of higher education and research.

International mobility represents an essential element for the academic and professional growth of young researchers, as well as a key factor in strengthening the network of scientific collaborations between UNIFI and the most prestigious international research centres.

This call defines the procedures for submitting applications and awarding **2 (two) Post-Doc Research Positions** (pursuant to Art. 22-bis of Italian Law 240/2010) and, concurrently, **Outgoing Visiting Researcher** grants. This offers an additional contribution to outgoing mobility intended for conducting high-profile research activities at a foreign Host Institution (university or research institution).

The call is designed to fund a project and a dedicated mobility program structured into **18-month contracts**: the first 9 months are to be carried out at an international centre of excellence abroad, followed by 9 months at the University of Florence to continue and finalize the research activity. The program guarantees the return of advanced skills acquired abroad, which will be applied within the local academic and industrial context.

The total available budget to fund the two winning project proposals is **€160,000.00**.

Art. 2 – Eligible Applicants

Applications can be submitted by young researchers (Italian or foreign) holding a PhD (or equivalent degree obtained abroad) or, for the relevant fields, a Medical Specialization diploma, obtained **no more than 5 (five) years prior** to the application deadline. Eligibility is calculated from the date of the PhD thesis defense.

Exceptions to the 5-year limit are allowed in cases of adequately documented career breaks occurring before the publication date of the call. Eligible career breaks include:

- Maternity leave: The time limit for obtaining the first PhD is extended by 18 months for each child born before or after obtaining the PhD.
- Paternity leave: The time limit is extended by the actual duration of paternity leave taken for each child born before or after obtaining the PhD.
- Long-term illness (over 90 days) or national civil service: The time limit is extended by the actual duration of leave or service prior to the application deadline for each event occurring after obtaining the PhD.
- Clinical training: The time limit is extended by the period of clinical training received after obtaining the first eligible degree and before the deadline, up to a maximum of 4 years.

Ineligibility Criteria: Applicants are not eligible if, on the application deadline, they:

- Hold permanent employment at universities, public research bodies, or institutions whose scientific specialization diploma is recognized as equivalent to a PhD.
- Have held fixed-term Researcher contracts (RTT) pursuant to Art. 24 of Law 240/2010.
- Have a relationship by blood or marriage up to the 4th degree with the President, Board Members, or steering committee of Fondazione CR Firenze.
- Have a relationship by blood or marriage up to the 4th degree with a Professor belonging to the hosting Department, or with the Rector, Director General, or a member of the Board of Directors of UNIFI.
- Fall under any incompatibility situations specified in Art. 5 of the University Regulations for Post-Doc positions.
- Have been dismissed, dispensed from employment in a Public Administration, or declared lapsed from public employment.
- Are excluded from the enjoyment of civil and political rights.

Failure to meet eligibility requirements will lead to exclusion.

Art. 3 – Project Characteristics

Projects must have a **non-extendable duration of 18 months**, be multidisciplinary in nature, and cover topics in any research field under the three ERC macro-sectors (SH: Social Sciences and Humanities; PE: Physical Sciences and Engineering; LS: Life Sciences). Applicants will define their research

topics, with explicit reference to the cross-cutting themes of the National Research Plan (PNR 2021–2027): Health, Humanities, Creativity, Social Transformations, Inclusive Society, Security for Social Systems, Digital, Industry, Aerospace, Climate, Energy, Sustainable Mobility, Food Products, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environment.

Gender dimensions must be integrated into the research content, where relevant.

Mobility Breakdown:

Abroad: A continuous research period between **6 and 9 months** must be carried out at a foreign Host Institution (not located in areas flagged as high-risk by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs MAECI viaggiare sicuri (<https://www.viaggiaresicuri.it/home>) upon invitation by the institution. Stays must start between **01/01/2027 and 31/03/2027** and conclude by **31/12/2027** at the latest.

UNIFI Return Phase: The remaining period (at least 9 months) will be conducted at the University of Florence within a designated host Department.

Required Annexes:

- A signed **Letter of Intent** from the legal representative or delegated contact of the foreign host institution, confirming availability to host the researcher, feasibility of the project, and intellectual property management terms.
- A **Declaration of Feasibility** signed by the UNIFI Department Director and approved by the Department Board.

Both documents must use the provided templates.

Art. 4– Project Proposal and Application Submission

Applications to be submitted via the dedicated platform (the link to which is provided on the page <https://www.unifi.it/it/node/12321>) and accompanied by letters of intent (from the Host Institution and the Head of Department, respectively) and a copy of a valid personal identity document, must include the following information:

- Project proposal
- Destination location
- Period of stay
- Description of research activities at the foreign institution
- Description of research activities at UNIFI

- Expected positive impacts for the UNIFI Department and University

The project proposal must include:

- Title and Acronym
- CV highlighting scientific track record and relevant publications from the 5 years prior to the call deadline
- Target PNR 2021–2027 theme
- Main ERC sector, sub-sectors, and at least 4 keywords
- Project description (max 2 pages): objectives, work plan, expected impacts

The proposal must be written in **English**. Projects must comply with the "**Do No Significant Harm**" **DNSH**) environmental principle (Reg. EU 2020/852). Projects must provide **open access** (at least green access) to peer-reviewed publications resulting from the research, unless protected by IP laws.

Art. 5– Start Date and Eligible Expenses

Successful candidates will enter into a contract for an 18-month post-doctoral research position (pursuant to Art. 22-bis of Law no. 240/2010), effective from the start date of project activities at the chosen foreign location.

Each researcher will have access to a budget of up to €20,000 to cover mobility and research expenses.

The mobility allowance will be paid as reimbursement for travel, subsistence, and accommodation expenses - in accordance with the University's Regulations - up to the maximum amount. Upon completion of the mobility period, and no later than 60 days thereafter, proof of expenditure must be submitted to the relevant Department. Furthermore, reimbursement is conditional upon the submission of a report detailing the activities carried out at the foreign host institution; this report must be sent to both the relevant Department and the Settore Ricerca Nazionale.

The research funding will be used to reimburse expenses that are directly attributable, reasonable, consistent, relevant, and connected to the activities outlined in the approved proposal, in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Eligible expenses must relate to **costs actually incurred** by the project deadline for the implementation of the proposed initiative.

Art. 6 – Application Deadline and Procedures

The application, drafted in English, must be submitted starting at 10:00 AM on September 2, 2026, via the dedicated online platform available at the following web address: <https://www.unifi.it/it/node/12321>

The deadline for submitting the application is November 3 at 1:00 PM.

The submission date is certified by the IT system, which will not allow any further modifications once the submission deadline has passed. No other methods of submitting or sending the funding application are permitted.

Art. 7 – Evaluation Committee

The evaluation procedure referred to in Art. 9 below shall be carried out by an Evaluation Committee appointed by Rectoral Decree upon the proposal of the Vice-Rector for Research.

The Evaluation Committee shall consist of five members - one for each of the University's research areas (with at least one representing each ERC macro-domain) - among whom the member with the greatest seniority in their role shall serve as coordinator. Members shall be selected from the permanent academic staff affiliated with the University of Florence.

Committee members must submit a declaration stating that there are no conflicts of interest and affirming their adherence to ethical principles and confidentiality requirements (pursuant to Articles 46 and 47 of Presidential Decree no. 445 of 28 December 2000). Furthermore, Committee members must not:

- have engaged in research collaborations with the applicants during the five years prior to the publication of this call for applications;
- have co-authored scientific publications with the applicants during the five years prior to the publication of this call for applications.

The Committee shall assess whether the requirements set out in Art. 2 of this call for applications are met. For academic qualifications obtained abroad, the Committee shall verify their equivalence to the corresponding Italian qualifications solely for the purpose of participation in this specific selection process.

Art. 8 - Evaluation Criteria

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Maximum score
1. Quality of the research project	50 passing threshold 30/50
a) Alignment of the proposed topics with the strategic areas identified in the PNR 2021/27	5
b) Innovativeness of the project idea and interdisciplinary aspects	20
c) Scientific and professional background suitable for conducting the research activity	15
d) Expected impacts	10
2. Outgoing Visiting Research	50 passing threshold 30/50
a) Scientific relevance of activities at host institution;	20
b) Significance of the chosen destination for the research project (field work, unique infrastructure)	15
c) Positive impacts for Department/UNIFI (expertise, capacity, partnerships)	15
TOTAL SCORE	100

Art. 9 – Selection Process

The evaluation process is carried out by the Evaluation Committee with the support of staff from the National Research Sector.

The committee reviews applications for formal eligibility. An evaluation sheet highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and scores will be produced.

In case of equal total scores, priority will be given to the project with the highest score in **Criterion 2**

(Outgoing Visiting Research). If still equal, the **youngest applicant by birth date** will be selected.

The final ranking list is approved via Rectoral Decree.

Articolo 10 - Contract Signature and Incompatibilities

Upon the signing of the individual fixed-term employment contract, the Administration requests the appointee to submit the documentation required under current regulations.

The employment contract is signed by the post-doc appointee and the Rector.

In the event of contract termination, remuneration is paid up to the last day of actual service.

Regarding the legal framework of the contract, reference is made to the University Regulations governing post-doc appointments pursuant to Art. 22-bis of Law no. 240 of 30 December 2010 (available at <https://www.unifi.it/it/ateneo/chi-siamo/statuto-e-normativa>).

Incompatibility Rules: Post-Doc contracts **cannot** be held concurrently with:

- Degree courses, PhDs, or medical specialization courses (unless within MSCA programs).
- PhD scholarships or other educational grants (unless intended for international mobility).
- Other fixed-term research contracts (Art. 22, 22-ter, or 24 of Law 240/2010).
- Any public or private employment (public employees must take unpaid leave).
- Commercial, industrial, trade, or corporate managerial activities.
- Professional freelance practice.

The applicable remuneration is established in accordance with Article 22-bis, paragraph 5, of Law no. 240 of 2010 and is equal to the starting salary of a tenured researcher employed on a fixed-term basis: €28,456.48 (gross annual amount).

Art. 11 – Renunciation and use of the ranking list

If a winner waives the position before starting, the ranking list will be scrolled. Early termination after starting cannot be replaced.

Art. 12 – Reporting and evaluation of results

A **final scientific report** must be submitted within 30 days of the project's completion date.

Art. 13 – Data Protection

In compliance with the principles of lawfulness, fairness, transparency, adequacy, relevance, and necessity

set forth in Article 5, paragraph 1 of the GDPR (EU Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data, which establishes the protection of natural persons regarding the processing of personal data as a fundamental right), the University of Florence, acting as the Data Controller, will process the personal data provided by candidates at the time of registration for the selection procedure solely to enable the conduct of said procedure in accordance with applicable regulations. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is Dr. Massimo Benedetti, Head of the General and Legal Affairs Area (located at Via G. La Pira 4, Florence; tel. 0552757667; e-mail: privacy@adm.unifi.it)

Art. 14 – Responsible Unit

For the purposes of this call for applications, the competent organizational unit is identified as the National Research Sector – Research Infrastructure and Services Area, Viale Morgagni 40-44, 50134 Florence (contact tel. 055/2751750 – 055/2751742; e-mail: serviziallaricerca@unifi.it).

The person in charge of the procedure is Dr. Silvia Borselli. The IT procedure has been developed by the University of Florence's IT System.

Art. 15 – Publication

The decree of issuance is published on the Official Notice Registry of the University of Florence: <https://www.unifi.it/albo-ufficiale.html>

The call for applications and the relevant forms are available on the University website at the following address: <https://www.unifi.it/it/node/12321>

The Rector
Prof.ssa Alessandra Petrucci