

PhD Course
“System Dynamics”

HANDBOOK



**Università
degli Studi
di Palermo**





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1. General presentation of the PhD course in “*System Dynamics*”

The PhD programme in “Systems Dynamics” is based on an integrated multidisciplinary approach. This approach aims to develop research-intervention skills that allow the student to acquire a “key to interpretation” on the relationships between the phenomenal dynamics observed in different cases in social systems and the causal structures underlying them. This “key to interpretation” focuses on the use of a methodology called “System Dynamics”. This methodology allows the student to acquire analysis-diagnosis skills that lend themselves to supporting the processes of communication, learning, alignment and improvement of mental models and the adoption of regulatory systems, rules and decision-making tools, such as to lead to the formulation of “sustainable” policies, in time and space. That is, such as to improve not only results in the short term but also in the long term; and also such as to make the solution of the problems compatible with the results related to other similar problem areas.

The doctoral program, in this way, trains a new professional figure: that of the “facilitator” of learning processes and decision-making processes that involve different social actors called upon to respond to systemic and “global” problems; problems that do not lend themselves to a sectoral, monodisciplinary and static approach. Among these problems, a particular role is occupied by what literature has defined as *wicked problems*, that is, by those multifaceted themes in time and space that – especially today – pose unprecedented challenges to society and its institutions. For example: the regulation of migration flows, terrorism, the globalization of markets, the aging of the population, the prevention and control of crime, the improvement of the quality of life in metropolitan urban areas and suburbs, health, pollution, natural disasters, social marginalization. Especially in the last decade, the dynamics generated by this ‘family’ of problems have demonstrated the unpredictability of a series of phenomena to which a plurality of decision-makers operating in different institutions are called upon to provide answers.

In this context, traditional interpretative models, regulations, processes and decision-making tools have proved to be obsolete. These approaches to governance and decision-making tend, for the most part, to be characterized by a static perspective (i.e., such as not to consider the weight of the variable “time” and the implications of “trade-offs” that derive from it), sectoral (i.e., mono-disciplinary), and atomistic (i.e., such as to divide government into the single bed of policies and decisions formulated within individual institutions or individual components of an institution, thus losing sight of the perspective of the system underlying the problems themselves). An example, in this regard, is provided by the financial recovery policies that, in various countries of the world, the administrations of municipalities that are the capital of metropolitan urban areas have adopted. In order to recover levels of efficiency in public spending, and to restore a balance in municipal budgets, these policies have sometimes been focused on the adoption of “cross-cutting cuts” in the same, and especially on the contraction of the so-called “development expenditures” (such as, for example, those for infrastructure, for public green areas, for social assistance, for risk prevention). This policy has



gradually led to a worsening of the “quality of life” and attractiveness of the territories covered by these municipalities, thus giving rise to further financial problems for the financial administration of the institutions.

In the perspective described, certain decision-making areas concerning the public sector, and traditionally uniquely identified with reference to the authority and responsibility of specific institutions or agencies – with reference, for example, to infrastructure, education, transport, waste disposal, enhancement of cultural heritage – do not lend themselves today to this atomistic vision. The need for stronger coordination between institutions and public decision-makers and, between these, and private institutions (e.g., companies, non-profit associations, families) requires the formulation and implementation of policies that derive from a shared vision of the causal structure underlying the problems to be addressed. Such coordination also implies the search for greater capacity to implement public policies and to assess their impact. It is, therefore, a coordination understood both in a “vertical” and “horizontal” sense, aimed at overcoming distorting barriers of different kinds (political, administrative, regulatory, language, cultural, professional).

The strategic learning process that can support the change described is the key through which the “Systems Dynamics” approach offers the concrete advantage for an evolution of knowledge and application practices in an interdisciplinary perspective. Although decisions aimed at providing an answer to the various problems can only be formulated within individual institutions that make use of specific skills and professionalism, today these must increasingly derive from a collaborative governance that presupposes the ability of decision-makers to combine the macro with the micro dimension, passing from the meso, with reference to the key to interpreting the phenomena analyzed. This perspective, through the analysis of the feedback relationships between structure and System Dynamics, is such as to favor a better alignment between the legal-institutional system, the socio-political, economic and cultural system, and the managerial system, capable of supporting an improvement in performance that also looks at the *outcomes*, and not only at the outputs or formal assumptions underlying the actions undertaken by each decision-maker.

On the basis of these methodological assumptions, the doctoral program is divided into three interrelated curricula:

- Models for the improvement of performance in the public sector (curriculum entirely in English, “Based Public Planning, Policy Design and Management”);
- Dynamics of legal systems;
- Dynamics of historical, economic and social systems.

2. Guide to activities: scheduled teaching, activities, seminars, self-managed meetings

The PhD Course in Systems Dynamics provides a rich calendar of training activities, adequate in quantitative and qualitative terms to the aims of the Doctorate, also through the participation of high-profile Italian and foreign scholars and experts from the academic world, research institutions, companies, cultural and social institutions.

The training activities - which are essentially divided into scheduled teaching activities (compulsory), seminars (optional) and in-depth language courses - are balanced between highly specific topics related to the research project and more general aspects aimed at filling any training gaps with multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary elements.

The training program also includes training activities aimed at the dissemination/communication of the research activity.

The calendar of teaching activities and seminars is published on the PhD website at the beginning of the academic year and is constantly updated in relation to the events scheduled during the academic year.

PhD students are required to carry out training activities – including scheduled teaching activities, seminars and laboratory activities, language courses, research activities and publication of research results, as well as supplementary teaching activities to support teachers (up to 40 hours per year) – for the achievement of **60 credits per year (not cumulative between the years of the course), for a total of 180 credits in the three-year period**. The credits will be awarded in the light of what is certified in the annual report and on the basis of the Credit Attribution Table referred to in Annex. 1.

In order to guide individual choices and ensure the correct fulfilment of teaching obligations, it is essential to understand the nature and purpose of each activity.

Scheduled teaching

The planned teaching activity – intended for PhD students in the first two years of the course – consists of at least **20 hours of lectures** for each curriculum. Lessons follow a predefined calendar, published at the beginning of the course, and their attendance is mandatory. Some lessons are specifically intended for PhD students of each individual curriculum, others focus on transversal topics of the different curricula. The objective of the planned teaching is essentially to provide PhD students with the conceptual and methodological tools necessary for carrying out research activities in the different scientific sectors.

Seminars and Workshops

These are meetings with Italian and foreign scholars for the in-depth study of the topics of the Doctorate, with particular reference to the theory of System Dynamics, the methodology and systemology of political-legal-social models, as well as the issues of comparison and circulation of



the models themselves. The seminars and workshops privilege the interdisciplinary approach to System Dynamics through the participation of scholars from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds. **The participation of PhD students**, although strongly recommended, **is optional** and contributes to the achievement of the compulsory number of hours of 60 credits per year.

Language Improvement Courses

These are foreign language courses, organized by the [University Language Center](#) for a wider audience of recipients, in which doctoral students who need linguistic support can participate, with particular reference to contextual vocabulary and technical terminology. The courses are purely optional and take place at the University's facilities. Participation contributes to the achievement of the compulsory number of hours of 60 credits per year.

External training activities

PhD students are constantly invited to participate in national and international seminars, conferences and conventions as spectators, speakers and/or *discussants*, who contribute to the achievement of the compulsory number of hours of 60 credits per year, if authorized in advance or ratified by the respective academic tutors.

Self-managed meetings

The organization of self-managed meetings is **submitted and approved** by the respective tutors and by the Coordinator of the Doctorate. These are training initiatives that are born and developed in full autonomy by the doctoral students themselves, under the supervision of their respective tutors, with great flexibility in the organization and choice of the type of initiative to be carried out (e.g. meetings to share research results, study groups). Their value lies in promoting peer learning, honing critical skills and strengthening the spirit of community and collaboration among young researchers.

These initiatives - for which an orientation calendar is drawn up at the beginning of each PhD cycle - also contribute to the achievement of the compulsory number of hours of 60 credits per year.

Information and updates on training activities

The official information channel is the dedicated page of the **Student Portal** [that can be reached by clicking on the following link](#). The latter publishes the constantly updated calendar of all activities (lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.). Regular consultation of this portal is strongly recommended, although generally the conduct of individual events is preceded by a specific communication to the PhD students by e-mail by the professors and/or the Secretariat.

In order to receive automatic notifications for each new event and integrate deadlines into your personal agenda, it is strongly recommended to synchronize the institutional calendar with your Google Calendar account.

To enable this feature, you can follow the steps below:

- 1) After going to the main page of the Ph.D. in Systems Dynamics, scroll down until you see the Calendar.
- 2) Click on “Add to Google Calendar” at the bottom left
- 3) At the bottom left, look for “Other calendars”
- 4) Click on the three dots next to “PhD Events” for settings
- 5) Click on “Settings & Sharing”
- 6) Scroll down to “Event Notifications”. From here, you can customize event notifications to choose between email and notifications. You can add multiple notifications at the same time (e.g., a week before, a day before, etc.).

To facilitate this procedure, an [illustrated guide](#) of each step has been prepared.

3. Annual report and procedure for the validation of claims

The annual report is the official document through which the Academic Board monitors and evaluates the progress of the research and training path of each doctoral student. Its correct and timely submission is a mandatory requirement for admission to the following year of the course. The procedure is divided into the following phases:

Step 1 – Preparation of the annual report

The doctoral student prepares a detailed report on the research activities and training carried out during the reference year, as well as any scientific production. To ensure uniformity and completeness, it is advisable to use the official forms made available by the Doctorate Secretariat and which can also be downloaded from the Doctorate website at the following link ([Facsimile year-end report](#)). The sections provided for in the form must be completed on the basis of the activities carried out; therefore, you can let them delete and/or add sections based on what you have done.

The report must contain a brief description of the activities, making explicit and precise reference to the summary table of credits approved by the Academic Board (see Appendix 100). I), for the purpose of conversion into CFU.

Step 2 – Approval by the Tutor

Once drafted, the report must be subject to the supervision of one’s academic tutor. The tutor has the task of verifying the consistency and truthfulness of what has been declared, as well as certifying the fruitful development of the doctoral course. The approval of the tutor is an essential condition for the validity of the document and is formalized with his signature. Without such approval, the report cannot be submitted to subsequent evaluation by the Academic Board.



The annual report must be submitted for evaluation and approval by the tutor, according to validation and signature procedures to be agreed with the latter.

Phase 3 – Submission to the Teachers' Board

Subsequently, the report must be delivered to the secretariat staff within 15 days of the end of the relevant PhD year.

This deadline must be calculated with reference to the specific and individual start date of the PhD programme, which – especially for co-funded PhD scholarships – may not coincide with the academic year and/or with the start of the course of other PhD students of the same cycle.

Once the formal approval of the tutor has been obtained, the PhD student must submit the signed report to the final scrutiny of the Academic Board, by sending the document to the competent offices of the PhD Secretariat, following the procedures and deadlines determined annually by the University. The Academic Board, having read the report and the opinion of the tutor, will decide on the admission of the PhD student to the following year.

The Department secretariat and/or the UNIPA Doctoral Office will send a confirmation e-mail in the days following admission and consequent reminder for the **payment of the enrolment fee for the following year**.

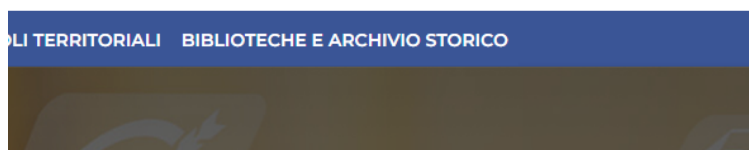
4. Use of library spaces and resources

To carry out their research activities, PhD students are advised to use the library services offered by the University, organized in order to allow access to a vast heritage of books, manuals, scientific journals and articles, available in paper and/or digital format.

Access to library resources takes place through the online portal of the Library System, to be used as a starting point for any documentary research. The portal, in fact, allows both to locate physical texts within the University libraries and to directly consult the collections of digital resources.

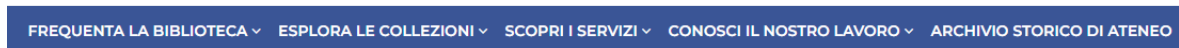
In the following sections, we will illustrate the operational procedures to correctly use the portal and exploit its full potential.

To access library services, it is necessary to consult the main page of the University portal. In the blue bar, select the last item on the right called “**Libraries and historical archive**” (Fig. 1).



(Fig. 1)

After entering this section, the blue bar will present several sections (Fig. 2), which represent the access points to the main services of the portal. Although all the entries have their usefulness, for the purposes of research and consultation of scientific material, it is necessary to familiarize yourself with some sections from the beginning.



(Fig. 2)

Attend the library

The “**Frequent the library**” section (Fig. 3) is not used for searching for texts, but it is essential to obtain all the practical information necessary for those who intend to go in person to one of the locations.

Here, in fact, it is possible to consult the complete and updated list of all the libraries of the University, with the addresses and hours of the various library poles, including the territorial offices. A special function indicates the availability of seats in the reading rooms: it may be useful to check in this section (<https://enusweb.unipa.it/bibliotrack/>) if there are free workstations in the various rooms.



(Fig. 3)

Explore the collections

The “**Explore the collections**” section is the access point to all the main tools for bibliographic research. This is the main area of the portal to consult in order to search for the scientific material necessary for one’s work. Inside there are several tools, and the choice of which one to use depends on the specific goal. Once in the “**Explore collections**” section, click on “**Catalogues and tools**” (Fig. 4).



(Fig. 4)

Here you will find the complete list of search services, but to start it is essential to know two of them: the **University Catalogue** and the **Discovery Service** (Fig. 5), both useful for searching for journals and books, with similar functions that will be better analysed in the following paragraphs.

Portale delle Biblioteche

Cataloghi e strumenti

Ascolta



UniPa Discovery Service

per cercare libri, e-book, riviste a stampa e digitali, articoli scientifici online e risorse open access



Catalogo online

per iscriversi e fruire dei servizi di prenotazione e rinnovo dei libri in prestito, dei tablet e degli e-reader

(Fig. 5)

Discovery Service

The Discovery Service has a simpler and more linear user interface, useful for quick searches (Fig. 6). To search, simply enter an author, topic, or title in the search bar in the center of the page.



(Fig. 6)

Online Catalog

The second service has a slightly more complex interface, but at the same time allows you to carry out more in-depth searches. This interface is also the same that is preset on all computers available to users in the University's rooms and libraries. Learning to use it effectively from your PC means, therefore, knowing how to use it at its best even from any university workstation.

Registration

Students coming from other universities are advised to first register a new user ID by clicking on the "Register" button at the bottom left (Fig. 7).

N.B.: PhD students who have graduated from the University of Palermo will not have to register again, but will have to ask the staff of the Department library to change the user ID by communicating the new matriculation code received after enrolling in the PhD course.

Per favore identificati:

ID utente:	<input type="text"/>
Password:	<input type="password"/>
Catalogo	Catalogo UNIPA (PAL50) ▾
<input type="button" value="Entra"/> <input type="button" value="Registrati"/> <input type="button" value="Cancella"/> <input type="button" value="Dimenticata Password?"/>	

(Fig. 7)

A screen will open where you will need to enter all the required data (Fig. 8).

* Campi obbligatori

Cognome, Nome:	*	<input type="text"/>
ID Utente:(Numero di matricola)	*	<input type="text"/>
Biblioteca:	*	<input type="text" value="▾"/>
Password (Pin) :	*	<input type="password"/>
Ripeti password:	*	<input type="password"/>
Lingua		ITA ▾
Dettagli personali		
Indirizzo:(via, numero civico, Città)	*	<input type="text"/>
CAP:	*	<input type="text"/>
Indirizzo e-mail:	*	<input type="text"/>
Recapito telefonico 1	*	<input type="text"/>
Recapito telefonico 2		<input type="text"/>
Luogo di nascita:	*	<input type="text"/>
Data di nascita:	*	00000000 (aaaammgg)
Il consenso al trattamento dei dati è implicito alla registrazione		
<hr/>		
Domanda di sicurezza:	Il colore dei tuoi occhi ▾	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Vai"/> <input type="button" value="Pulisci"/>		

(Fig. 8)

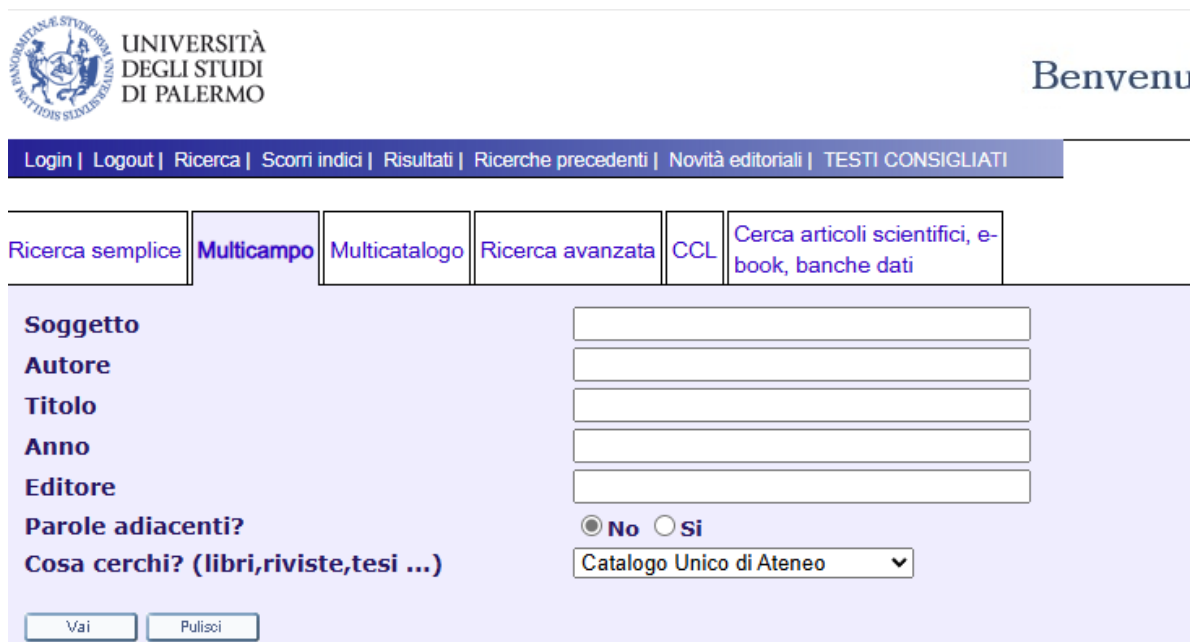
To start a structured and precise search, the first operation to be carried out is always to access the portal via the “**Login**” button, using your University credentials.

If you don’t make any changes, your credentials will normally be:

- **User ID:** Service Tag
- **Password:** Tax Code

Once authenticated, you must move the mouse over the “**Search**” item, present in the blue navigation bar at the top. From the drop-down menu that appears, select the “**Multifield**” option (Fig. 9)

This action will open the advanced search mask. Here you can enter your terms and keywords in specific fields, to make your search more effective. For example, you can search for a word only in the **Title** field, a last name in the **Author field**, or combine multiple elements to refine your results, such as searching for a specific topic by limiting your search to a certain year.

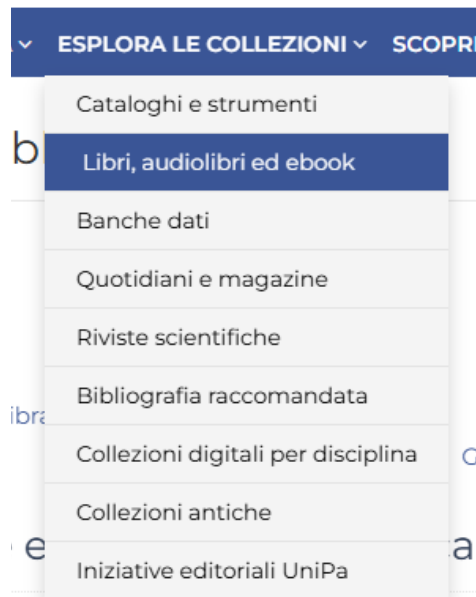


The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the University of Palermo website. The search bar is highlighted in blue, and the 'Multicampo' option is selected. Below the navigation bar, there are several search options: 'Ricerca semplice', 'Multicampo', 'Multicatalogo', 'Ricerca avanzata', 'CCL', and 'Cerca articoli scientifici, e-book, banche dati'. The 'Multicampo' option is currently selected. Below these options, there is a search form with the following fields: 'Soggetto', 'Autore', 'Titolo', 'Anno', 'Editore', 'Parole adiacenti?' (with radio buttons for 'No' and 'Si'), and 'Cosa cerchi? (libri, riviste, tesi ...)' (with a dropdown menu set to 'Catalogo Unico di Ateneo'). At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Vai' and 'Pulisci'.

(Fig. 9)

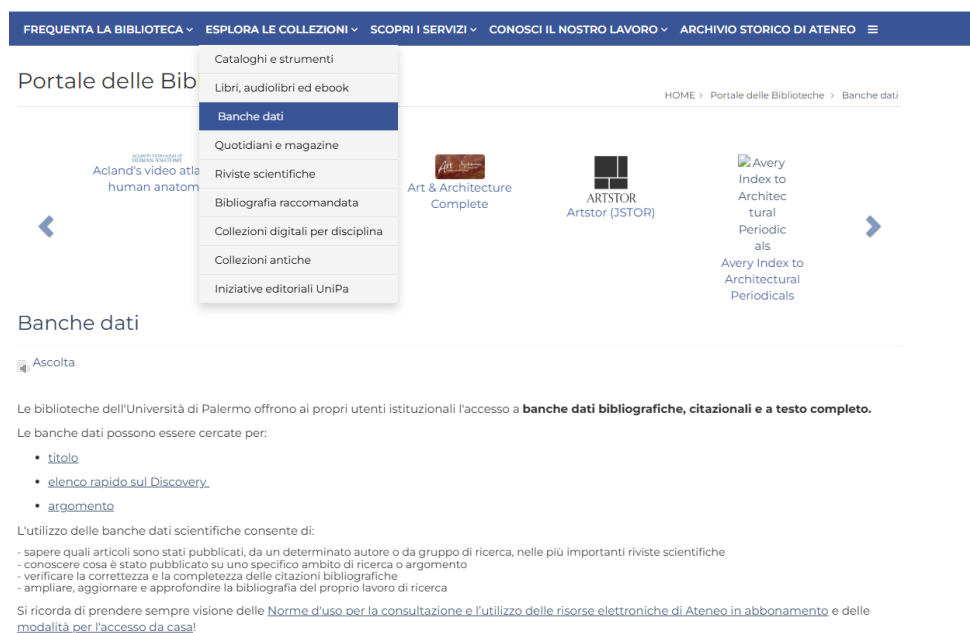
Ebook

If the research is aimed exclusively at e-books, the portal provides a special section that collects the entire collection of digital volumes to which the University is subscribed, isolating them from other types of resources such as articles or paper books. To access this dedicated catalogue, click on the item “**Books, audiobooks and ebooks**” in the main menu (Fig. 10). You will thus be redirected to a specific platform for searching and consulting e-books only.



(Fig. 10)

To access the complete list of databases subscribed to by the University, you must use the appropriate section of the portal. This area is the one to consult in order to use the different types of resources available, such as citation, bibliographic and full-text databases. To enter this section, click on the item “**Databases**” (Fig. 11).



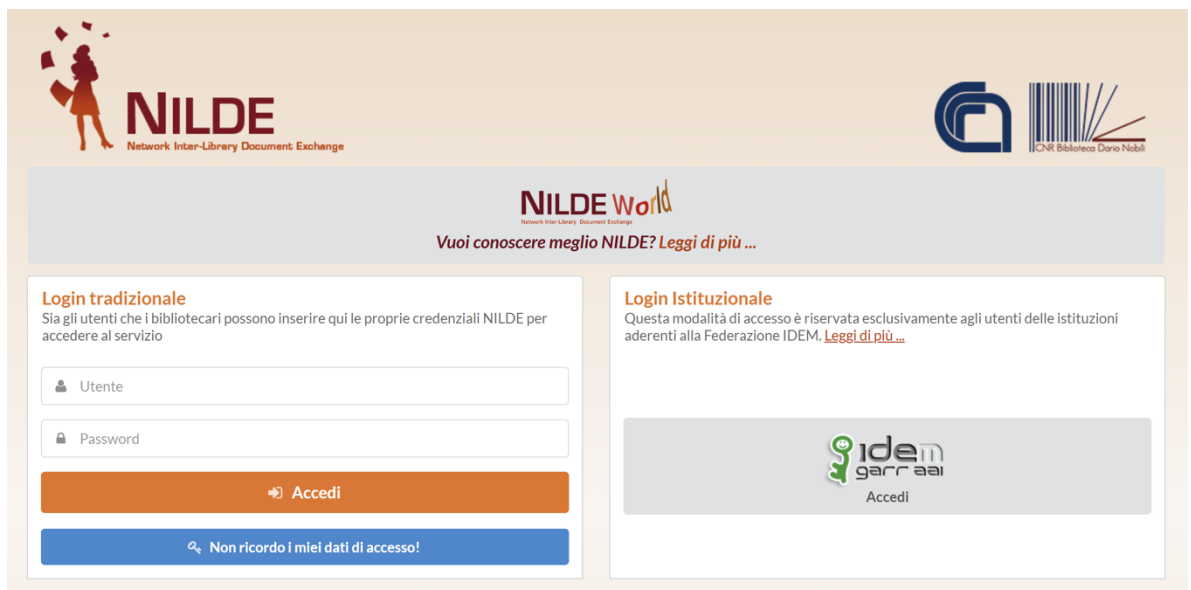
(Fig. 11)

NILDE Service

NILDE (*Network for Inter-Library Document Exchange*) is a web software for *document delivery* service between libraries. Over time, a network of libraries (NILDE Community) has been formed willing to share their bibliographic resources in a spirit of collaboration, in order to provide their users with a quality document retrieval service using the NILDE software. **Within the NILDE community, libraries exchange documents almost always free of charge, in compliance with copyright law and licensing agreements with publishers.**

To date, about 900 libraries belonging to different countries, institutions and disciplinary areas are part of the NILDE Network, to which almost 70,000 users belong, including researchers, teachers, students, freelancers or ordinary citizens. The reference website of the NILDE community of libraries and users is: <https://nildeworld.bo.cnr.it/>

To log in, click on “**Institutional Login**” (Fig. 12)



(Fig.12)

After selecting the University of Palermo (Fig. 13), you will need to proceed with registration at the first login (Fig. 14).

Seleziona la tua organizzazione

Per poter accedere alla risorsa Nilde Utenti erogata da Biblio Area CNR Bologna per favore seleziona o cerca l'organizzazione con la quale sei affiliato.

Digitare il nome dell'organizzazione con cui sei affiliato...

Seleziona

Ricorda la selezione per questa sessione

[Informazioni sulla Federazione IDEM](#) | [Aiuto](#) | [Protezione dei dati](#)

(Fig. 13)

Se è la prima volta che ti registri a NILDE clicca su "Registrazione"

Registrazione

Se in passato sei stato già registrato a NILDE inserisci le tue vecchie credenziali nel box sottostante e clicca su "Migrazione Account"

Username

Password

Inserisci il codice che vedi qui sotto

36762 [Ripetere](#)

Migrazione account

(Fig. 14)

After filling in all the data, the registration request will be forwarded to the staff of the Library of Political Science, who will have to enable you to access it (Fig. 15)

↑ ▶ Registrazione ▶ Utente

Registrazione utente

Registrazione completata, il tuo account è stato creato

È necessario attendere che la biblioteca scelta abiliti il vostro account. Riceverete una mail di conferma dell'avvenuta abilitazione al servizio **NILDE**.

(Fig. 15)

As soon as the profile is enabled, a confirmation email will be sent. To start the search, you will then need to enter the platform and select "Insert new" (Fig. 16).

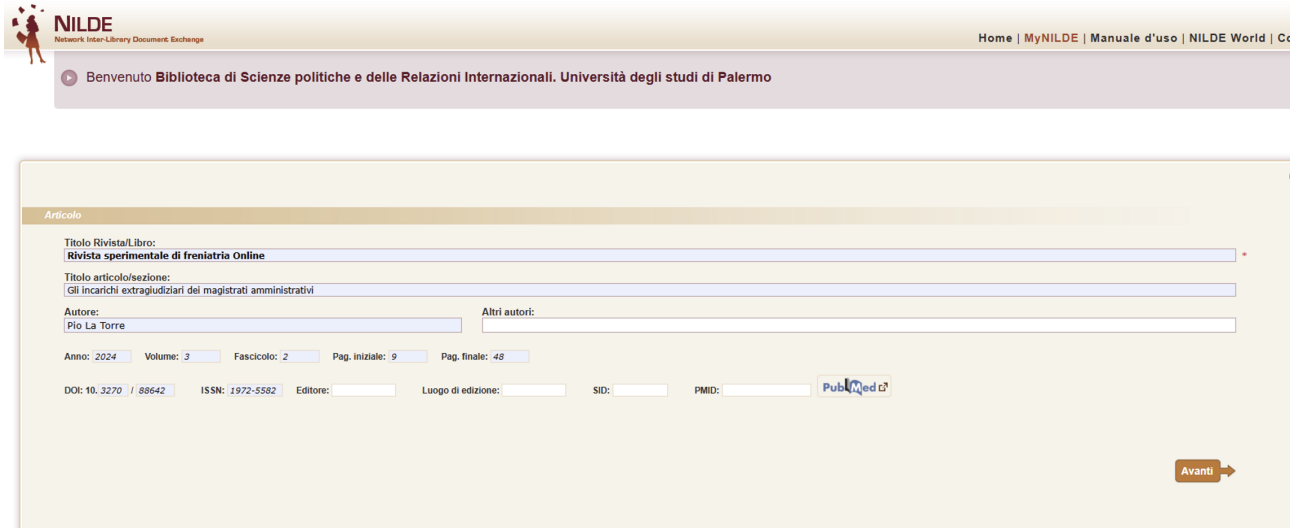
Inserisci nuovo

Elimina selezione

Visualizza Tutti 10

(Fig. 16)

After indicating whether you want to receive a magazine or a book, just fill in the required fields. An example is attached below (Fig. 17).



Articolo

Titolo Rivista/Libro:
Rivista sperimentale di freniatria Online

Titolo articolo/sezione:
Gli incarichi extragiudiziari dei magistrati amministrativi

Autore:
Pio La Torre

Altri autori:

Anno: 2024 Volume: 3 Fascicolo: 2 Pag. iniziale: 9 Pag. finale: 48

DOI: 10.3270 / 88642 ISSN: 1972-5582 Editore: Luogo di edizione: SID: PMID: PubMed

Avanti

(Fig. 17)

Assistance from library staff

PhD students have two options to obtain assistance in resolving doubts or problems: physically contact the library staff at the offices in front of the “Alfonso” Reading Room, or use the online support tool.

The latter is a virtual service that allows you to start the “**Ask the librarian**” chat (Fig. 12). You can easily locate it, as it appears as a green icon or button located at the bottom right while browsing the portal.

You can use this tool to ask any questions and get real-time assistance. It is the right channel to ask for information of all kinds: from complex bibliographic issues (e.g. “*How do I set up an effective search on this topic?*”) to technical issues (e.g. “*Why can’t I access this resource?*”) up to simple practical requests on timetables and procedures.



(Fig. 12)

Using the University VPN

The University VPN allows you to use resources and databases even remotely. Please refer to the user guide already available on the [Unipa Portal at the following link](#).

5. Procedures for the use of funds

All missions, regardless of their nature, must be authorized in advance and compulsorily by the Department Director by submitting a specific request for authorization for the mission through the [dms.unipa.it platform](#), to be submitted at least three working days before the scheduled departure date.

As regards the request for the use of the funds necessary to carry out the mission, the PhD student must proceed through the [ffr.unipa.it platform](#).

The different operational steps of the procedure are described in detail on the following pages.

As regards the type of expenses, only those strictly pertinent to the performance of the mission and duly documented can be reimbursed. Generally reimbursable categories of expenditure include travel costs (air ticketing, train, etc.), accommodation and local transport costs by public transport. Any other expenses, such as registration fees for conferences, must be authorized in advance by the Coordinator and his/her Tutor. It should be noted that each expense must be justified by a receipt, invoice or valid travel document.

In particular, as far as food is concerned, for missions in Italy longer than 12 hours, the reimbursement of the daily expense for meals is due up to the limit of € 100.00. For missions abroad, food expenses are reimbursable within the maximum daily limits provided for in Table B attached to the Ministerial Decree of 23 March 2011 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in relation to the classification area of the foreign country. For the reimbursement of hotel expenses (both in Italy and abroad) the Regulation provides for a maximum of € 200. It is therefore necessary to keep the receipt and receipt of the electronic payment.

From 1 January 2025, legislation on the traceability of food, lodging and transport expenses has been introduced. Specifically, the legislation provides that expenses relating to hotel services, food and transport expenses, with reference to non-scheduled public services, are deductible only if the related payment is made in a traceable manner, i.e. through the tools provided for by the legislation in art. 23 of Legislative Decree 241/1997 (**credit card, debit card, bank and postal transfers, bank or cashier's checks, other electronic payment solutions**).

The use of cash makes the expense non-refundable.

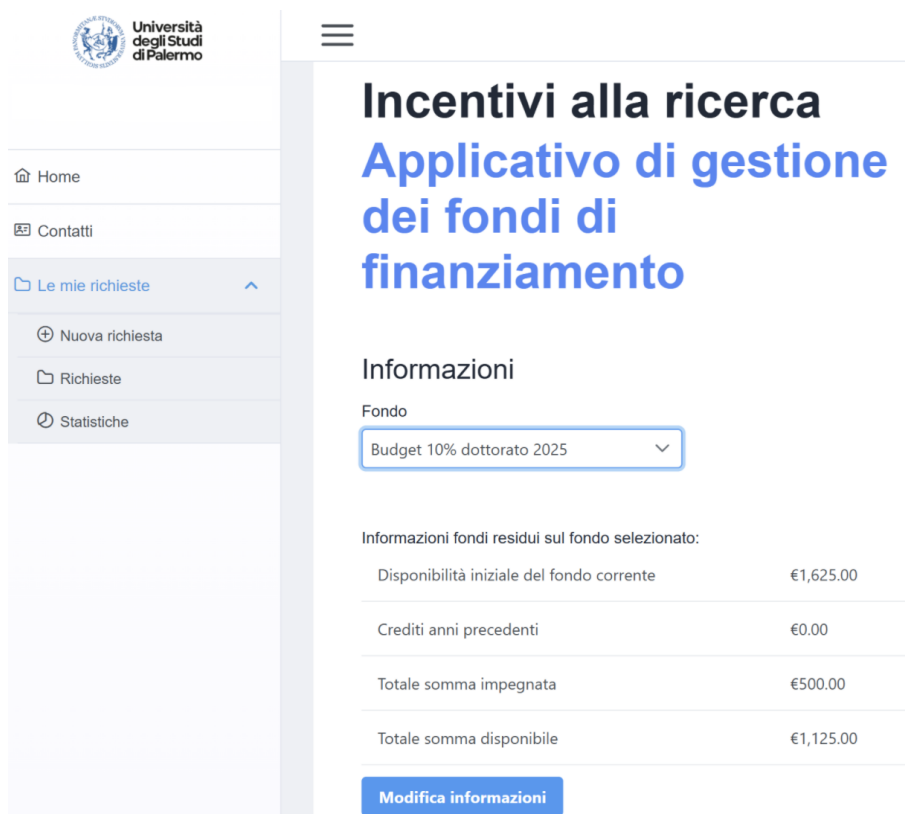
Phase 1 – Authorization to carry out a study and/or research mission

To start the mission, the first fundamental step is to request authorization from your tutor. This is a mandatory step and must be done before starting the procedure on the platform. You will have to download the “*Application form for PhD students for study and/or research missions*”, fill it out carefully in its entirety and have it signed by your tutor in paper or digital format.

Step 2 – Application on the FFR platform

Once you have obtained permission from your tutor, the next step is to connect to the [Research Incentives | University of Palermo](#) (the so-called FFR Portal) using their credentials.

After logging in, you must wait a few seconds for the system to link your user profile to the funds available. Once this procedure has been completed, a dedicated screen will appear (Fig. 1).



The screenshot shows the FFR Portal interface. On the left is a sidebar with the University of Palermo logo and navigation links: Home, Contatti, Le mie richieste (expanded), Nuova richiesta, Richieste, and Statistiche. The main content area is titled 'Incentivi alla ricerca' and 'Applicativo di gestione dei fondi di finanziamento'. It features a dropdown menu for 'Fondo' set to 'Budget 10% dottorato 2025'. Below this is a table of fund residual information for the selected fund.

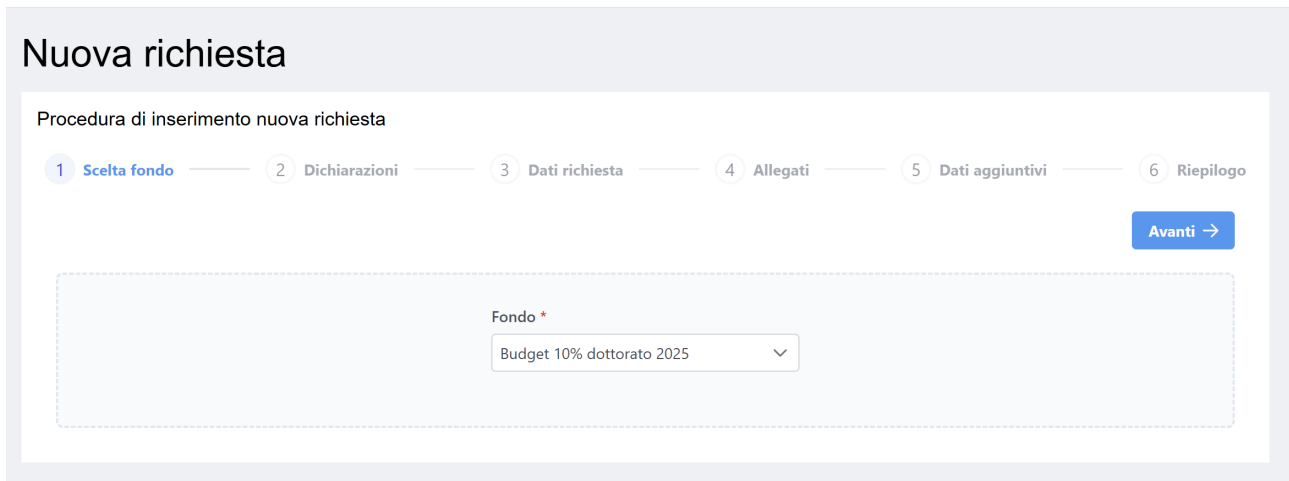
Informazioni fondi residui sul fondo selezionato:	
Disponibilità iniziale del fondo corrente	€1,625.00
Crediti anni precedenti	€0.00
Totale somma impegnata	€500.00
Totale somma disponibile	€1,125.00

A 'Modifica informazioni' button is located at the bottom of the table.

(Fig. 1)

Part 1: Creating a New Request

To proceed with the mission, click on the “*New request*” item located in the menu on the left of the screen. On this new page, you will see the fund available to you. Simply check that the indicated fund is the correct one and, once verified, click on the “Next” button to continue (Fig. 2).



Nuova richiesta

Procedura di inserimento nuova richiesta

1 Scelta fondo — 2 Dichiarazioni — 3 Dati richiesta — 4 Allegati — 5 Dati aggiuntivi — 6 Riepilogo

Avanti →

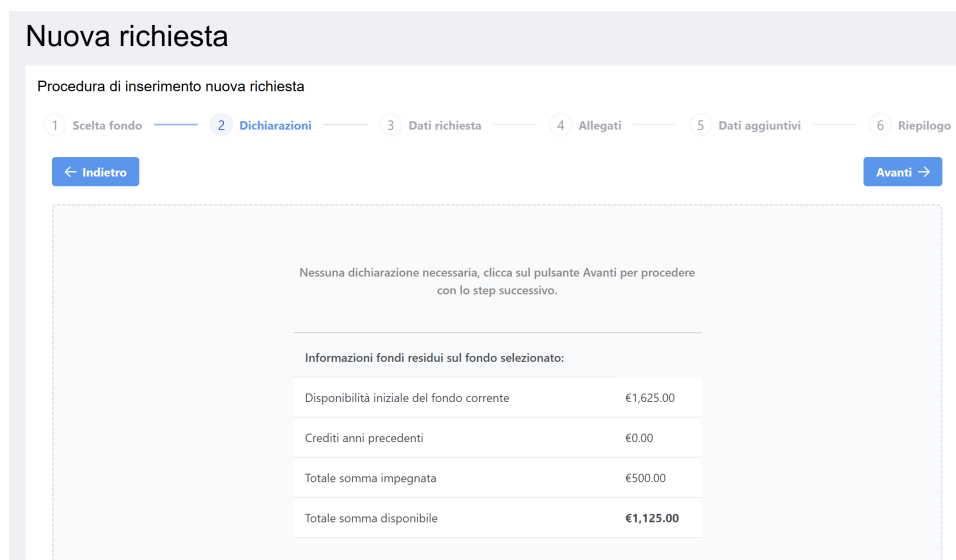
Fondo *

Budget 10% dottorato 2025

(Fig. 2)

Part 2: Statements

In the second part, you will have the opportunity to review the funds available again. Also on this screen, once the information has been verified, simply click on “Next” to proceed (Fig. 3)



Nuova richiesta

Procedura di inserimento nuova richiesta

1 Scelta fondo — 2 Dichiarazioni — 3 Dati richiesta — 4 Allegati — 5 Dati aggiuntivi — 6 Riepilogo

← Indietro Avanti →

Nessuna dichiarazione necessaria, clicca sul pulsante Avanti per procedere con lo step successivo.

Informazioni fondi residui sul fondo selezionato:

Disponibilità iniziale del fondo corrente	€1,625.00
Crediti anni precedenti	€0.00
Totale somma impegnata	€500.00
Totale somma disponibile	€1,125.00

(Fig. 3)

Part 3: Request Data

The third page is the most important section of the application, where you will have to enter all the necessary data related to the mission. Here you will specify the essential details, such as the title of the request, description and amount requested (Fig. 4).

Nuova richiesta

Procedura di inserimento nuova richiesta

1 Scelta fondo — 2 Dichiarazioni — 3 **Dati richiesta** — 4 Allegati — 5 Dati aggiuntivi — 6 Riepilogo

← Indietro Avanti →

Titolo richiesta *

Descrizione richiesta *

Se trattasi di missione, occorre indicare l'importo previsto, il motivo, il luogo ed i tempi di svolgimento;
Se trattasi di acquisto, occorre indicare il bene e l'importo (allegando un preventivo, anche informale).

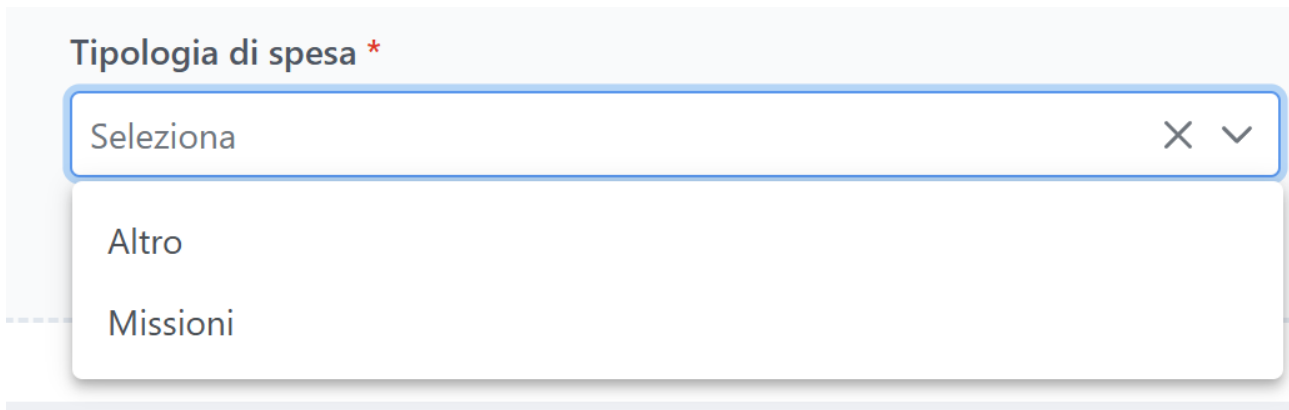
Tipologia di spesa * Ammontare richiesto *

Seleziona × 0,00 €

(Fig. 4)

On this page, it will be crucial **to indicate precisely the type of request** you are making. You can choose between two main options (Fig.5):

- **Other:** This category includes expenses other than missions, such as the purchase of computer equipment, consumables, or other specific needs. It should be noted that any material asset purchased with public funds must be returned to the Department at the end of the academic course. By material goods we mean, among others, books, magazines, tablets, computers, etc.
- **Mission:** By selecting this option, you intend to cover expenses related to travel and accommodation, participation in conferences, schools or seminars.



Tipologia di spesa *

Seleziona

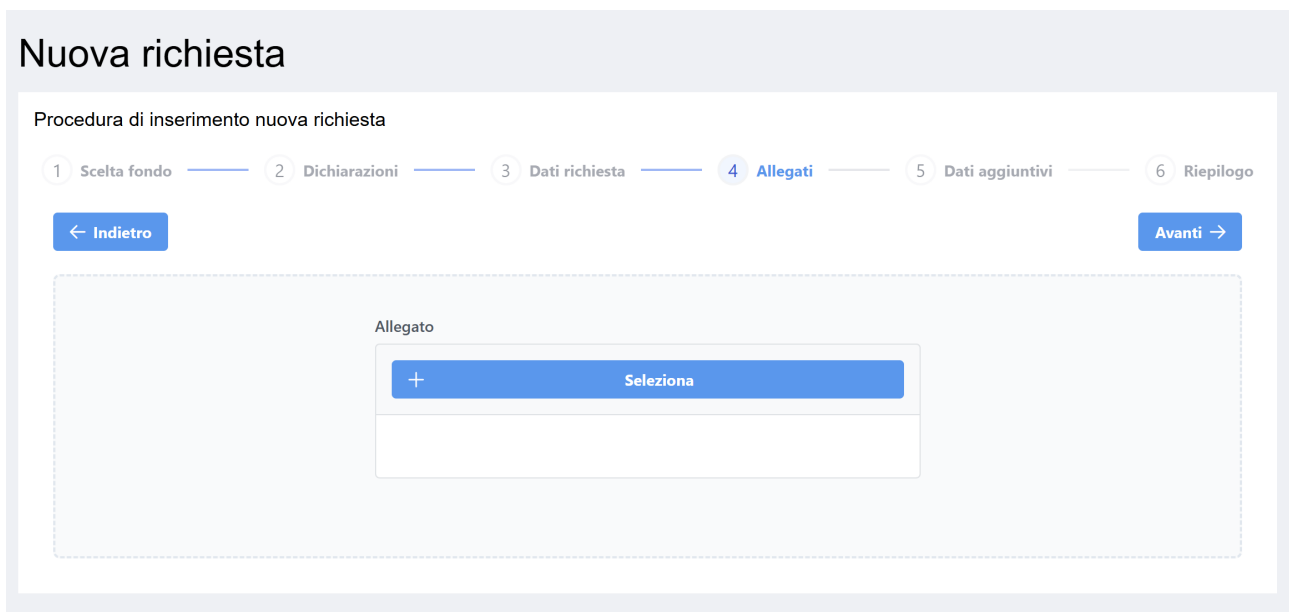
Altro

Missioni

(Fig. 5)

Part 4: Uploading the Tutor's Authorization

At this stage, it is essential to upload the authorization issued by your tutor for the mission, i.e. the form discussed in Part 1. Although the portal does not mark it as a mandatory upload, its absence will result in the rejection of the request (Fig. 6).



Nuova richiesta

Procedura di inserimento nuova richiesta

1 Scelta fondo — 2 Dichiarazioni — 3 Dati richiesta — 4 Allegati — 5 Dati aggiuntivi — 6 Riepilogo

← Indietro

Avanti →

Allegato

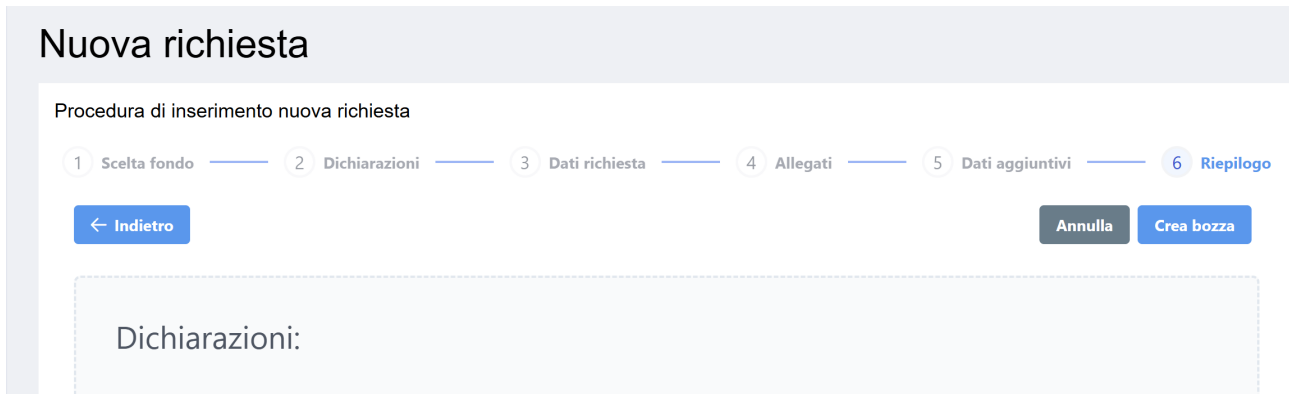
+ Seleziona

(Fig. 6)

Parts 5 and 6: Additional Data and Summary

Parts 5 and 6 are dedicated to confirming the data that has been entered in the application. After verifying that all the information is correct, you will have to click on “Create draft”, a button located

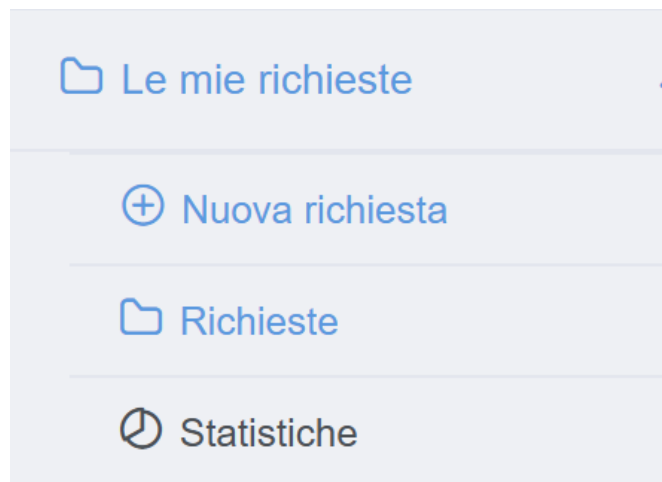
at the top right of the page, to save the request pending final submission (Fig.7).



(Fig. 7)

Phase 3 – Authorization by the PhD Course Coordinator

After creating the draft, it will be necessary to wait for the coordinator of the doctorate to authorize the request. The service will send an e-mail as soon as there are updates, but it is still possible to consult the progress of your requests in the drop-down menu on the left (Fig.8):



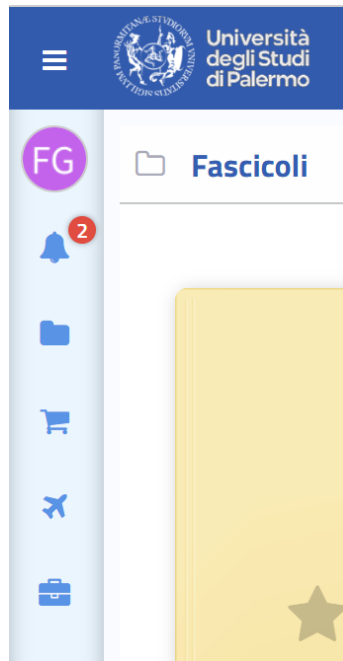
(Fig. 8)

Step 4 – Upload to the DMS Unipa Portal

Part 1: After receiving the coordinator’s authorization, you will need to log in to the DMS Unipa portal.

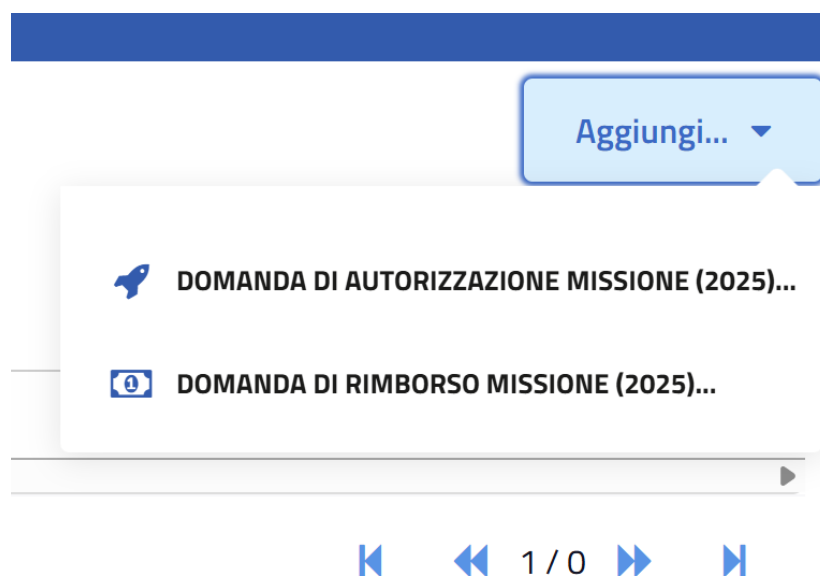
For reimbursement purposes, the two icons of the “Shopping Cart” and the “Airplane” (Fig. 9) are important:

- the Shopping Cart concerns the expenses that in our previous request on the FFR portal we had indicated as “Other”;
- the airplane, on the other hand, concerns reimbursement for missions, trips, conferences, etc.



(Fig. 9)

Part 2: Regarding missions, after clicking on the airplane, we must click on the “Add” button at the top right and select the item “**Application for mission authorization**” (Fig. 10).



(Fig. 10)

Part 3: Fill in all the fields related to the mission

At this stage, you must enter all the fields related to the mission. In this part, it is important to pay attention to two specific items (Fig. 11):

- attach: In this section, despite the optionality, it is advisable to upload event posters, invitations to events and/or any useful documentation to speed up checks;
- Expense reimbursement check (IMPORTANT): **Failure to check the item “Request for reimbursement of expenses” will result in the non-reimbursement of expenses.**

Allegare (facoltativamente) fino a 3 documenti a supporto delle motivazioni indicate

	Scegli File ...
	Scegli File ...
	Scegli File ...

DATA E ORA PRESUNTA DI PARTENZA/RIENTRO

Dal	Orario	Al	Orario	Giorni
01/07/2025	--:--	01/07/2025	--:--	1

Richiesta di rimborso delle spese


(Fig. 11)

In the *Interested Fund list*, mark *Research Funding Funds (FFR) / Budget 10% (PhD students)*, on the right you will find the code of the approved request on the [Research Incentives | University of Palermo](#)

Leave everything “Unaccountable” and enter the authorized amount, leaving the “*University ordinary operating fund*” field unchanged (Fig. 12).


FONDI DI ALTRO RESPONSABILE

RESPONSABILE Scegli un responsabile...	Non Rendicontabile	IMPORTO	EUR
---	--------------------	---------	-----

PERCHE' NON TROVO IL FONDO DI UN RESPONSABILE ? 

FONDO DI RICERCA/BUDGET 10% DOTTORANDI

RICHIESTA PRE-AUTORIZZATA Scegli un fondo FFR/Budget 10% Dottorandi...	Non Rendicontabile	IMPORTO	EUR
---	--------------------	---------	-----

PERCHE' NON TROVO IL FONDO DI RICERCA ? 

FONDO DI FUNZIONAMENTO ORDINARIO DI ATENEO

CA.C.B.03.06.01	IMPORTO	EUR
-----------------	---------	-----

Totale presunto delle spese 0 EUR


(Fig. 12)

Complete the request indicating the means of transport and send the request. Means of transport are divided into two types:

MEZZO DI TRASPORTO ORDINARIO

- Nessuno Autovettura del Dipartimento
 Aereo Treno
 Altro

MEZZO DI TRASPORTO STRAORDINARIO

- Mezzo Proprio 
 Mezzo Noleggiato
 Taxi urbano ed extraurbano

All means of extraordinary transport require additional authorization. For further information, you can contact the heads of the Department Secretariat directly.

Step 5 – Upload and delivery of receipts/invoices/receipts related to the mission

Phase 5 must be started when the PhD student has returned from the mission. The request for reimbursement can only be uploaded to the platform if the PhD student is in possession of the digital signature, otherwise it will be necessary to proceed by delivering the paper form to the secretariat staff.

In the event that you want to deliver everything in paper format, in fact, the procedure to follow will be as follows:

1. fill in the form that you find on the Department website in the Department - Forms - Mission settlement form;
2. deliver to the administration offices the completed and signed form in original together with the receipts/receipts/invoices, the list of bank transactions and any other document necessary for the purpose of reimbursement;
3. access the dms.unipa.it/tasks platform : airplane icon – add (top right) – mission reimbursement application;
4. indicate in the form the individual expenses for which reimbursement is requested, attaching to each of them a scan of the relevant receipt/invoice;
5. attach boarding passes in addition to the payment receipt, attach boarding passes for flight expenses, in *the Other attached documents - Add a new document section*;
6. attach, in *the Other attached documents section - Add a new document*, poster/invitation letter/certificate of participation;
7. attach, in *the Other attached documents - Add a new document section*, the list of bank transactions relating to the expenses incurred during the mission.

All information can be consulted in [the Regulations for mission treatment](#) (D.R. 10332/2024 - prot. 162856 of 10/10/2024).

6. End of the PhD course and final thesis discussion

Thesis Sessions

For the discussion of doctoral theses, three time windows have been established during the academic year:

Session	Session period	Thesis submission deadline
I. Autumn	15 November – 19 December	5 October
II. Winter	20 February – 3 March	10 January
III. Summer	26 June – 6 July	15 May

The precise dates of each session will be established and communicated by publication on the University website and on the PhD website on an annual basis.

- [Guidelines for PhD Theses](#)

Activities planned before the final discussion

To write the doctoral thesis, it is possible to download the title page and the drafting rules directly from the “Attachments and Forms” section of the Portal.

The following table summarizes the phases and activities preparatory to the discussion of the thesis for the achievement of the degree, with an indication of the responsible party, i.e. the person responsible for the initiative and/or the performance of that particular activity.

Phase	Activities	Responsible
1	Convocation of the Academic Board regarding: formulation of the doctoral student’s report on the activities carried out; formulation of the opinion for the title of <i>Doctor Europaeus</i> ; training of Selection Committees; appointment of external evaluators.	Coordinator
2	The PhD student sends the doctoral thesis to the Course Coordinator.	PhD Student
3	The Coordinator sends the THESIS to the Evaluators.	Coordinator
4	The Evaluators send the judgments on the THESIS to the Coordinator.	Evaluators
5	The PhD student fills out the online application for admission to the final exam, pays the fee and uploads the required documents (identity document, declaration for <i>Doctor Europaeus</i> , evaluations of the evaluators, title page, board presentation, admission/extension decree).	PhD Student
6	The Coordinator informs about the outcome of the evaluation and sends the judgments to the Doctoral Unit and to the doctoral student.	Coordinator
7	The PhD student sends the final THESIS in electronic format to the Coordinator and uploads it to IRIS. The Coordinator issues the document of “Successful filing”.	PhD Student and Coordinator
8	The Coordinator sends the form with the proposal for appointment of the commission to the PhD Unit.	Coordinator

9	The Coordinator sends the THESES to the President of the Examination Committee.	Coordinator
10	Publication of the Selection Committees. Notification of the Rector's Decree by e-mail to the Coordinator.	O.U. PhDs
11	The PhD student sends e-mails to mail-protocollo@unipa.it with the subject line [Final examination documents for the PhD student <surname name>, <Doctorate>, <cycle>], attaching the title page, "Deposit", declaration of legal deposit and any request for embargo.	PhD Student
12	EXAMS for the achievement of the title of PhD.	Examination Board
13	Only doctoral students who are up to date with the payment of fees will take the exam.	PhD Student

Hypothesis of extension and suspension of the duration of the course

For proven reasons that do not allow the submission of the doctoral thesis within the time frame set by the duration of the course, the doctoral board may grant, at the request of the doctoral student, an **extension** of a **maximum duration of twelve months**, not accompanied by the payment of the scholarship.

In addition, an **extension** of the duration of the doctoral course for a **period not exceeding twelve months** may be granted by the doctoral board for justified scientific needs, only if the corresponding extension of the duration of the scholarship will be ensured in this case with funds paid by the department of affiliation to the doctoral course.

- [Fac – Similar thesis extension request](#)

PhD students can ask the academic board, for proven reasons, for the **suspension** of the course for a **maximum duration of six months**. For the duration of the suspension, the payment of the scholarship is not envisaged. The recovery of the suspension period will take place at the end of the course and the relevant scholarship will be paid for it.

Suspension from the course for certain periods is allowed in the cases provided for by law, such as maternity, illness, civil service, fortuitous events or force majeure, provided that they are duly documented.

Unjustified **suspension** from the course lasting more than 30 days will result in the immediate interruption of the disbursement of the scholarship, which can no longer be recovered.

The periods of extension and suspension mentioned above **may not exceed eighteen months in total**, except in specific cases provided for by law.

7. Information on the period abroad and on Erasmus and Forthem projects

International mobility

International mobility represents a fundamental component of the PhD course, as well as a training and professional opportunity of great value. PhD students are offered the opportunity to carry out periods of research and/or further training at universities and highly qualified research centres abroad.

Duration and types of mobility

As indicated in the PhD Regulations (available [here, see articles 14 and 16](#)), it is possible to spend up to **12 months** abroad during the PhD programme, which can be extended up to **18 months** in the case of **co-tutorship agreements**.

The carrying out of research and training activities abroad, consistent with the research project, is ordinarily provided for each individual PhD student. For some PhD scholarships, a period of research and training abroad is mandatory, according to the terms and procedures indicated in the call for applications (e.g. co-funded scholarships).

Mobility can take place:

- within the framework of **active framework agreements** between the PhD course in Systems Dynamics and foreign partner institutions;
- at **institutions or universities without active agreements**, provided that the host institution formally accepts the doctoral student's application. In this case, it will be up to the PhD student, in agreement with the tutor, to check and comply with the methods and timing provided for the reception of *visiting researchers* by the identified institution or university.

In both cases, the activities must be consistent with the individual research project.

Co-tutorship of thesis

It is possible to activate an **international co-tutorship path**, which provides for the stipulation of a formal agreement between Unipa and a foreign university. This agreement allows you to co-manage the research path and, in the end, obtain a **double PhD degree**, one for each institution. [See the dedicated page](#)

Grant surcharge

For periods spent abroad, there is a 50% increase in the doctoral scholarship, calculated only for the actual days of stay abroad. For stays longer than 90 days, it is possible to ask for a deposit of 50% of the increase. The request must be submitted following a specific procedure (see below).

Procedures for mobility and scholarship increase

It should be noted that, in addition to the summary information indicated below, it is advisable to consult the [Guide for the Application for Scholarship Increase](#) available on the University website.

Before departure

1. Request for authorization to the Doctoral Board

Submit a written request to the Academic Board, countersigned by the university tutor, addressing it to the Coordinator of the PhD Course, with a copy of the knowledge (CC) of your tutor. A facsimile for the submission of the [application is available here](#). The letter of invitation from the host University/Institution must also be attached.

2. Request for a mission to the DEMS Department

Submit the request for authorization for the mission to the DEMS department. If necessary, also attach a request for early mission, making sure to CC both the coordinator and the university tutor. [See the page dedicated to the forms for the missions](#)

Request for a scholarship increase

After obtaining the authorization of the Board, it is possible to request a 50% increase in the scholarship by filling in the I50 form at the dottorati@unipa.it Doctoral Office, CCCING the tutor and the Course Coordinator. For stays longer than 90 days, it is possible to ask for a deposit of 50% of the increase. Once welcomed in the host structure, the PhD student must request a declaration of start of activity from the institution. The declaration must contain the start date and the (presumed) end date of the activity. The declaration must be sent to dottorati@unipa.it (copying the tutor and coordinator). Any 50% deposit will be paid only following receipt of this document.

On the return

1. Return communication

Send a communication stating that you have resumed activities. In the communication, it is necessary to specify the dates of departure and return, the name of the host structure and the reference professor abroad with the University Tutor in CC who must send an email to the Coordinator confirming the information. Facsimile [Authorization to return to the foreign period](#)

2. Request for the second advance of the scholarship increase

Within 30 days, the PhD student must submit:

- a) original certification issued by the foreign structure on the start of activity;
- b) original certification issued by the foreign structure on the actual period of stay abroad. The balance will be calculated on this declaration;
- c) certification from the Course Coordinator declaring that the PhD student has returned, that he has resumed study and research activities and that he confirms the period of stay abroad.

Erasmus+ mobility and the Forthem Alliance

In addition to the international mobility programs described above, PhD students of the course in Systems Dynamics can access the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ and Forthem Alliance programs. All information relating to procedures, timelines, programmes and forms can be found on [the dedicated page of the University website](#); below, however, the main information and deadlines are summarised. It remains necessary to communicate the departure and receive authorization for the same according to the procedures listed above.

Timing of the Erasmus Call

- The Erasmus+ call for study is published only once a year, approximately during the month of March. It is valid for departures in both the first and second semesters. The call for applications and possible destinations are updated annually.
- Each PhD student can apply and participate only once during the PhD course.

How to participate for PhD students

- PhD students participate as “students”, and are therefore required to follow the procedures indicated and to use the Unipa Student Portal.
- The available destinations are listed on the website dedicated to Erasmus+ mobility of the University of Palermo. However, you can propose new Erasmus+ agreements through your supervisor. To find out about the procedures and propose the activation of a new agreement, you can contact Dr. Silvia Amodeo: silvia.amodeo02@unipa.it.
- It is mandatory to fill out a **Learning Agreement**, which must include:
 - the activities that are intended to be carried out in order to obtain training credits. Examples of such activities are: 1) research activities; 2) seminars; 3) specific courses offered by the host university;
 - the equivalence or recognition of activities at the University of Palermo.
- The Learning Agreement must be completed on the Student Portal and downloaded in PDF format; signed by the partner university; uploaded on the portal. Downloadable at the following [link](#)

Learning Agreement – Phases

- I. **Before Mobility:** the Learning Agreement must be drawn up before departure and signed for acceptance by the tutor and the coordinator of the PhD.
- II. **During Mobility:** Any changes can be made and signed during the stay.
- III. **After Mobility:** at the end of the mobility, the host university must send:
 - a Transcript of Records with the activities actually carried out;
 - a certificate attesting to the period of stay, with start and end dates.

The documents in question must be sent to:

- the head of the Department, Dr. Francesca Schiavo: francesca.schiavo@unipa.it
- [University Outgoing Office](#).

For further information and clarifications, we suggest contacting the offices indicated above.

Opportunities offered by the FORTHEM Alliance

- The FORTHEM alliance offers additional opportunities for short mobility, both individual and collective.
- Activities may include seminars, joint projects, workshops and laboratories.
- There are specific calls for *short-term mobilities*, published twice a year.
- All updated information is available on the [University page dedicated to FORTHEM](#) and on the University page dedicated to outgoing mobility for students (see the link in the previous paragraph)

8. Attachments and Forms

All attachments and forms can be downloaded from the dedicated page on the Unipa portal, which can be reached at the following [link](#).

If the desired form is not present, it is possible to ask for more information from the Head of the PhD Office of the Department or University.

9. Representation of PhD students

PhD students have the right to be represented in two important bodies: the Department Council and the PhD Teaching Board. The methods of representation and the related activities are described in the following paragraphs.

Department Council

The [Department Council](#) includes all the professors of the Department, as well as representatives of students, technical-administrative staff and doctoral students. The active participation of PhD students in the Department Council is essential to represent the interests of PhD students at the departmental level and participate in decisions of common interest.

The elections for this body allow **five doctoral students** to participate and are ordinarily held electronically through the Eligo portal. There is no distinction between doctoral cycles; Representatives can come from different cycles or from the same cycle. It is clear that greater representativeness is achieved when all cycles are represented.

The mandate lasts **two years**, at the end of which new elections are called. To apply, you must wait for the opening of a call for applications that will indicate the time window for submitting your application. If a PhD student withdraws, his place will be filled by the first of the non-elected candidates.

Doctoral Teaching Board

The [Doctoral Teaching Board](#) is the representative body of all the professors belonging to the Doctorate, which is responsible for all the most important decisions relating to the scientific project of the Doctorate, the research and training activities of the doctoral students and the related organizational methods.

Each doctoral cycle is called upon to appoint **its own representative in the Academic Board**, whose term of office lasts **three years**. Again, if a PhD student were to withdraw, his place would be assigned to the first incoming candidate.

The active participation of the doctoral students' representatives within the academic board allows them to participate in the discussion of decisions at the didactic and organizational level that affect the individual doctoral cycles.

10. PhD School

The [University's PhD School](#) is a structure dedicated to the coordination of all transversal activities related to the PhD.

The purpose of this structure is to coordinate doctoral courses and manage common activities, helping to ensure training in scientific research and to provide the skills necessary to carry out research activities, including at an international level, and highly qualified professional activities.



The Doctoral School is the University's reference point for higher education in research.

The [governance](#) of the structure is made up of a series of bodies that perform different functions.

1. At the top of the organization there is the Director, whose tasks are to represent the School in institutional relations, coordinate the activities of the School, convene and chair the Council and sign the minutes of the meetings, convene and chair the Advisory Committee of Reference and sign the minutes of the meetings.



2. The Deputy Director, whose task is to represent the Director in the event of absence or impediment.
3. The School Council, which carries out guidance and coordination functions, is composed as follows:
 - a) the Director, who acts as President;
 - b) the Coordinators of the Doctoral Courses with administrative headquarters at the University of Palermo;
 - c) the University contact persons for the Courses in agreement or consortium with administrative headquarters other than the University, designated by the Academic Board;
 - d) five doctoral students elected from all doctoral students, one for each of the five macro-areas referred to in art. 15 of the Statute;
 - e) the Vice-Rectors for Research, Teaching and Third Mission.
4. The Committee, which performs an advisory function and is chaired by the Director of the School
5. Commissions and Working Groups.

11. Contacts

For effective and targeted communication, the main PhD referents are indicated below, divided by role and area of expertise:

- **PhD Coordinator Prof. Chiara Garilli**
chiara.garilli@unipa.it
- **Vice-Coordinator Prof. Santa Giuseppina Tumminelli**
santagiuseppina.tumminelli@unipa.it
- **Curriculum Managers**
 - *Models for the improvement of performance in the public sector* Scientific Referent: Prof. Carmine Bianchi
carmine.bianchi@unipa.it
 - *Dynamics of Legal and Social Systems* Scientific Referent: Prof. Antonello Miranda
antonello.miranda@unipa.it
 - *Dynamics of historical, economic and social systems* Scientific Referent: Prof. Giulia Adriana Pennisi
giuliaadriana.pennisi@unipa.it



- **Head of Department PhD Students** **Dr. Ciro Benanti**
ciro.benanti@unipa.it
- **UNIPA Research Doctorate Office**
<https://www.unipa.it/U.O.-Dottorati-Di-Ricerca---Contatti/>