



Università
degli Studi
di Palermo

DIREZIONE GENERALE
SERVIZIO SPECIALE RELAZIONI INTERNAZIONALI
UO IMMATRICOLAZIONE STUDENTI E VERIFICA TITOLI ACCADEMICI STRANIERI

THE RECTOR

- CONSIDERING THAT** on 25th November 2019, the University of Palermo joined the "Manifesto of Inclusive Universities" promoted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- CONSIDERING THAT** the Manifesto aims to promote the right to higher education and to encourage the integration of holders of International Protection;
- CONSIDERING THAT** according to point 3 of the Manifesto, universities can establish scholarships reserved for students and researchers holding International Protection;
- CONSIDERING THAT** according to point 4 of the Manifesto, in order to promote legal entry for refugees, universities can assign reserved places to students holding International Protection in third countries;
- HAVING REGARD TO** the Manifesto, the UNHCR, Caritas Italiana, Diaconia Valdese, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), together with a joint group of Italian universities, including the University of Palermo, promote the project University Corridors for Refugees – UNICORE 8.0 (**Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe**);
- PURSUANT TO** the project, which aims to promote the right to higher education for refugees through study corridors from **Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe** to Italy;
- WHEREAS** the University of Palermo, with a resolution adopted by the Board of Governors on 17th April 2026 (resolution 10.05, *rep. decreti* 333/2026 as a reference), as part of the actions of the Inclusive Universities Manifesto, resolved to sign the National Memorandum of Understanding for the activation of the University Corridors for Refugees according to the proposal of UNHCR.

DECLARES

the approval of the following Call for Applications: "University Corridors for Refugees 8.0" offering three (3) study grants and welcome services for refugee students enrolling in second cycle degree programs taught in English at the University of Palermo, for the Academic Years 2026-2028.

ART. 1 Subject, amount, and duration.

1.1 Subject and general objective

The overarching objective of the *University Corridors for Refugees - UNICORE 8.0* project is to promote access to higher education for refugees through educational pathways from **Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe** to Italy.

The benefits of UNICORE 8.0 are allocated for academic years 2026-2028.

Maintenance of merit criteria and additional renewal conditions are outlined in article 6.

1.2 Local Partners of the Project

The University of Palermo will receive support in the project from four local partners: Caritas Diocesana di Palermo; Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese; Centro Astalli Palermo; Confindustria Sicilia.

Upon the agreement of all partners, the University of Palermo shall have the opportunity to enter into agreements with other local stakeholders for the complete implementation of the project.

1.3 Benefits and supports offered

The scholarship includes the following:

- €7200 scholarship per year of study, subject to merit requirements. The scholarship covers the subscription fee for the national health service.
- Free accommodation starting September 2026 (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo and Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese).
- Enrollment at the University of Palermo (University of Palermo).
- Provision of a personal PC (University of Palermo).
- SIM card and telephone subscription (provided by Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Annual public transportation subscription (provided by Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Psychological support services (University of Palermo).
- Assistance for initial application and subsequent renewals of the residence permit (University of Palermo).
- Purchase of didactic materials (provided by Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Full coverage of administrative costs, including expenses for initial application and subsequent renewals of the residence permit (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro



Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).

- Legal advisory services (University of Palermo).
- Provision of three cultural and linguistic facilitators (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Publicize the CVs of graduates and postgraduates among members of Confindustria Sicilia (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Contact facilitation between companies and partners of this protocol (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Assistance for professional orientation (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Assistance to companies during internship periods (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Access to public events and initiatives involving the business community (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Publication of CVs on the job demand-supply platform of Confindustria system - www.unimpiego.it (Confindustria Sicilia).
- Payment of the regional tax required for enrollment of scholarship recipients (University of Palermo).
- Italian language courses organized by the language center of the University of Palermo, ITASTRA (University of Palermo).
- Mentoring service for the duration of studies (University of Palermo).
- Flat-rate healthcare expense coverage (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Coverage of the clothing expenses (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).
- Facilitation of access to all local orientation services for migrants, applicants, and international protection seekers (Caritas Diocesana di Palermo, Centro Diaconale - Istituto Valdese, and Centro Astalli Palermo).

ART.2 Incompatibility.

The UNICORE 8.0 study grants cannot be combined with the following:

- Merit-based study grants or prizes provided by the University of Palermo to support international students;
- study grants provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (English for *Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale*, MAECI);
- CRUI grants designated for beneficiaries of international protection;
- study grants provided by foreign governmental bodies or institutions, based on agreements with the University of Palermo, intended to facilitate the enrollment of international students at the University of Palermo;
- regional scholarships offered by *Ente Regionale per il Diritto allo Studio Universitario* (ERSU)

ART.3 Admission requirements.

The application is open exclusively to refugees who meet the following requirements:

1. They reside in **Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe** and have been granted refugee status in collaboration with UNHCR.
2. They are admitted to the chosen Master programme (i.e. second cycle degree programmes). The degree must be issued by a higher education institution accredited in the higher education system of the applicant's country of origin or country of residence.
3. They have attained a grade of at least 80/110 according to the Italian graduation grade conversion system ([conversion system](#)).
4. They have attained the degree in or after 2021 and no later than May 19th, 2026.
5. They fulfill the specific admission requirements of the Master programme of interest.
6. They have never been previously enrolled in a degree program at any of the Partner Universities.
7. They are proficient in English.

ART.4 Selection criteria and application documents

4.1 Selection criteria and evaluation committee

Students are selected based on academic merit.

The evaluation is conducted by a Committee of Experts established by a Rectoral Decree and made up of Professor Aldo Schiavello, in charge of the project, University administrative staff, the Professors responsible for the Master programme concerned - or their delegates - and any other relevant teaching staff or project partners designated by the University of Palermo.

4.2 Application documents

Students are required to submit documentation that follows.

- mandatory documents:
 1. copy of currently valid Refugee Identity card issued by UNHCR;
 2. certificate confirming the qualification required for admission to the chosen degree program;
 3. transcripts of exams passed and related marks;
 4. any relevant and additional documents required by the specific programs chosen.
- not mandatory documents:
 5. motivation letter (maximum two A4 pages);
 6. letter/s of references written by supervisor/advisor supporting the application.

At this stage, candidates may translate documents themselves.

4.3 Deadlines and procedure

Applications will be accepted from **27 April 2026 at 12 pm** (noon, UTC+2) until **20 May 2026 at 12:00 pm** (noon, UTC+2).

Students are due to send applications, including all of the documents listed above, through the UNICORE website, at <https://universitycorridors.unhcr.it/>. Once the application is



submitted, applicants will receive a confirmation email to the mailbox indicated in the online form. Incomplete or incorrect applications will not be taken into consideration.

Students are allowed to apply for a maximum of two Master programmes offered by the University of Palermo project including the University of Palermo. This is a mandatory requirement: non-compliance with this clause will cause immediate rejection of the application.

ART.5 Selection process

5.1 Step 1: evaluation of submitted documents

A Committee of Experts will assess the documentation based on the following criteria:

1. Academic background and graduation grade (score: 0-15);
2. CV: professional experience and personal skills (score: 0-15);
3. Coherence between previous studies and selected Master programme (score: 0-10)

Candidates scoring less than 25 will not proceed to step 2. Candidates advancing to Step 2 will be notified by email by **8 June 2026**.

Please note, a maximum of 15 candidates will be selected for step 2.

5.2 Step 2: online interview

Candidates will sit for an interview with the Committee of Experts who will evaluate applicants's technical skills, subject competence, and proficiency in English. Interviews will be scored on a scale of 40 points.

Interviews will be conducted online **between 10th June and 20 th June 2026**. Candidates will receive an email notification regarding the interview date and time. Candidates must attend the interview with either the Refugee Identity Card or the Proof of Registration Card (henceforth, PoR) card used during the online application.

The interviews will be conducted in English as to assess language level.

5.3 Establishment and approval of the final ranking list

Candidates who score less than 50 out of 80 points will not be included in the final shortlist.

A Committee of Expert will prepare a ranking list including the results of both phases and approved through a Rectoral Decree. The ranking is arranged in descending order of points.

The three available grants are awarded on a gender balance ratio. A such,the Committee will elaborate two different rankings according to the gender of the candidates.

In case the list of eligible candidates does not include representatives of the two genders, the grants can be awarded to two representatives of the same gender.

In the case of equal score, preference will be given to the younger candidate.

Winners will be notified by email by **23 th June 2026**.

5.4 Acceptance.

Candidates must accept the scholarship by replying within 5 days after receiving the notification by the University. Failure to provide feedback by the specified deadline will result in the loss of the benefits.

By accepting the scholarship, students fully acknowledge and accept, without reservation, the support and financial benefits provided by the UNICORE 8.0 project, as outlined in this call. Additionally, by accepting the scholarship, students confirm, under their full responsibility, that they do not meet any of the conditions of incompatibility outlined in article 2 of this call.

5.5 Use of the ranking list

In case a scholarship recipient officially withdraws by **28 th June 2026**, the grant will be allocated to the next eligible candidate in the shortlist.

Any vacant positions may be filled using the ranking list of other partner universities by **30th June 2025**. In this case, eligible candidates from external rankings must meet the specific requirements of the programs at the University of Palermo.

5.6 Enrollment in the Master programme

To enroll in the chosen course, students will be required to submit either the Declaration of Value issued by the Italian embassy or the certificate of comparability issued by CIMEA (<https://www.cimea.it/pagina-diplome>).

In case the aforementioned documents are not available for *force majeure*, the enrollment will be assessed by the Commission for the Evaluation of International Students' Qualifications established within the University.

ART.6 Renewal Requirements

6.1 Renewal requirements

Scholarship is renewed upon:

- earning half of the full number of credits requested to complete the first year (as indicated in the official study plan), which generally equals 30 credits except exceptional circumstances, specifically assessed by the Council of the study course;
- obtaining the Italian language certification by the Language Centre of the University ITASTRA as follows:
 - o A2 level of knowledge of the Italian language by August 2027;
 - o B1 level of knowledge of the Italian language by June 2028;
- graduation by the last session available for their matriculation year, April 2029.

It is possible to obtain an extension of the grant as stated in point 6.2.

6.2 Additional renewals

Students who do not graduate by April 2029 may request a 6-month extension of the scholarship, provided they have earned at least 80 university credits by **31st March 2028**.

Extension requests must be submitted to unicore@unipa.it.

ART.7 Withdrawal from the course

Candidates who withdraw from the programme during their studies shall forfeit all scholarship benefits.

ART.8 List of Master programmes (second cycle) taught in English available within this

call

Students may access information about the programs, including study plans and entry requirements, by clicking on the name of the program.

Class	Course	Seat of the University	University department
LM 25	Automation and Systems Engineering	PA	Engineering
LM-29	Electronics Engineering	PA	Engineering
LM-31	Management Engineering	PA	Engineering
LM-70	Mediterranean Food Science and Technology	PA	Agricultural, food and Forestry Sciences
LM-52	International Relations	PA	Political Sciences and international Relations
LM-77	Curriculum Entrepreneurship and Management - Business and Economic Sciences	PA	Economic,Busines and Statistical Sciences
LM-56	Curriculum Economic and Financial Analysis - Economic and Financial Sciences	PA	Economic,Busines and Statistical Sciences
LM-49	Tourism systems and hospitality management	PA	Economic,Busines and Statistical Sciences
LM-48	Spatial Planning	PA	Architecture
LM-90	Migrations, Rights, Integration	PA	Law
LM-81	Development and Migrations Studies	PA	Cultures and Societies
LM-6	Neurosciences	PA	Biomedicine, Neuroscience and Advanced Diagnostics



LM-75	Environmental Science and Technology	PA	Earth and Sea Sciences
-------	--------------------------------------	----	------------------------

ART.9 Information notice concerning data processing

In compliance with European data protection policy, the personal data collected are processed as described in the internal regulation of the University ([Regolamento di Ateneo in materia di protezione dei dati personali](#)).

More information about the privacy policy of the University of Palermo is available at:

<https://www.unipa.it/privacy/normativa-privacy/>

Personal data collected are also processed in compliance with UNHCR Data Protection Policy available at <https://www.refworld.org/docid/55643c1d4.html> and its guidance available at <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b360f4d4.html>

The candidates will also give consent to publish the refugee ID card number or the ration number card of PoR in the list of admitted candidates and the final ranking list both on the website: www.universitycorridors.unhcr.it and on: www.unipa.it.

The University of Palermo reserves the right to verify the truth of the information provided without prejudice to the penal sanctions of article 76 of Italian Presidential Decree no. 445/2000, in the event of fraudulent information being discovered in result of such verification the applicant will forfeit the right to the study grant.

ART.10 Conditional issuing of the call for applications

This call for application is issued conditionally to the signing of the cooperation agreement and its addendum for the project “University Corridors for Refugees 8.0” and to the specific cooperation agreement between the University of Palermo and the local partners.

ART.11 Officer in charge of the procedure

The officer in charge of this procedure is Dr. Furaha Nzirirane, responsible of the [Foreign students and qualification recognition – Immatricolazione studenti e verifica titoli accademici stranieri](#) Unit.

Art. 12 Final Provisions

For all matters not provided for in this call and insofar as they are compatible, the current university regulations apply.

THE RECTOR

Prof. Massimo Midiri