



**PUBLIC CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO THE PhD PROGRAMME
IN MOLECULAR AND EXPERIMENTAL MEDICINE**

XXXV Cycle – Academic year 2019/2020

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ART. 1 – SCOPE OF THE CALL

This call regulates the application procedure for the PhD Course in Molecular and Experimental Medicine (MEM) for the academic year 2019/2020, corresponding to the XXXV cycle of PhD programmes activated in accordance with current legislation.

The Course is organised by Humanitas University in collaboration with IRCCS Humanitas. The Course is made up of the following two Curricula:

1. MEM curriculum;
2. MEM-Clinical curriculum.

There are 8 (eight) places available, of which at least 6 (six) are covered by scholarships or equivalent forms of funding.

The number of available places and/or scholarships may increase in the event that external funding for additional places or scholarships becomes available by the deadline set for the completion of the call application procedure.

Scholarships are issued by Humanitas University and are assigned to candidates according to their position in the ranking list and candidates' curriculum preferences.

Specific agreements made before the beginning of the Course may allow members of staff and collaborators working for public or private research institutions and businesses, who are involved in highly-qualified work, to be admitted to the PhD Course, whilst maintaining their earnings paid by the institution to which they belong (c.d.: "PhD Executive"), provided that they are on the ranking list relating to the admissions procedure for this call.

Any additional scholarships or external funding of sums equal to or more than the PhD programme will only be awarded once it has been established that candidates listed in the ranking are in possession of any specific skills required for the field of research for which the funding has been granted.

Candidates who are granted scholarships, research fellowships or equivalent contracts issued by other countries or institutions may be admitted to the PhD programme even when the enrolment quota has been reached provided they pass the admissions process relating to this call or special selection process agreed with the funding institution.

The legal duration of the PhD programme in Molecular and Experimental Medicine is 3 (three) years.

The PhD programme is scheduled to begin on November the 1st 2019.

The official language of the course is English.

The programme of the PhD Course in Molecular and Experimental Medicine covers the scientific areas listed below and is based on two curricula: MEM and MEM-Clinical.

The MEM curriculum provides for the research activities to develop along, yet not remain limited to, the following main areas, including: oncological immunopathology, molecular cardiometabolics,

genetics, neurosciences. An overall vision of regenerative and precision medicine is the theme running throughout the programme. The curriculum provides specific training for enabling technologies, such as imaging, flow cytometry, genomics and bioinformatics.

The MEM-Clinical curriculum aims to combine basic or clinical experimental research activities with clinical practice involving patient enrolment and assessment in specific trials. The course provides for ordinary clinical practice in the hospital under the supervision of a doctor (up to a maximum of 20 hours per week) and experimental laboratory activities, which include but are not limited to cellular and molecular biology, information technology, immunology and the use of preclinical models. Candidates will be directly responsible for research projects approved by their clinical supervisor and/or laboratory head.

For both curricula the PhD will be conducted in a stimulating environment involving the organisation of Journal clubs and seminars given by national and international speakers, participation in congresses, informal meetings between different disciplines, encouraging researchers to work independently and collaboration with groups abroad. Liaising with tutors and non-Italian discussants further develops the international dimension.

The main scientific areas covered by the PhD programme are as follows:

- 02/D – APPLIED PHYSICS, TEACHING AND HISTORY OF PHYSICS
- 05/E – EXPERIMENTAL AND CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY
- 05/F – APPLIED BIOLOGY
- 05/G – EXPERIMENTAL AND CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGICAL SCIENCES
- 05/H – HUMAN ANATOMY AND HISTOLOGY
- 06/A - PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY DIAGNOSTICS
- 06/C – GENERAL CLINICAL SURGERY
- 06/D – SPECIALISED CLINICAL MEDICINE
- 06/F – INTEGRATED CLINICAL SURGERY
- 06/I – CLINICAL RADIOLOGY
- 06/M – PUBLIC HEALTHCARE

The PhD training project provides for students to take part directly in ongoing research programmes at organising or partnering bodies. Further information about research topics analysed during the PhD course are available at this link: <https://www.hunimed.eu/courses/phd-molecular-experimental-medicine/#research-topics>.

ART. 2 – ADMISSION CRITERIA

2.1. Applicants wishing to enrol on the PhD course in Molecular and Experimental Medicine, MEM curriculum, must either have a “laurea magistrale” awarded in accordance with D.M. 270/2004 or equivalent qualification awarded by a foreign university (usually referred to as a Master’s Degree), in one of the subjects listed below:

- LM-6 Biology
- LM-7 Agrarian Biotechnologies
- LM-8 Industrial Biotechnologies
- LM-9 Medical, Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies
- LM-13 Pharmacy and Industrial Pharmacy
- LM-17 Physics
- LM-18 Computer Science
- LM-21 Biomedical Engineering
- LM-22 Chemical Engineering
- LM-32 Computer Engineering
- LM-41 Medicine and Surgery
- LM-42 Veterinary Medicine
- LM-46 Dentistry
- LM-53 Materials Science and Engineering
- LM-60 Natural Sciences
- LM-61 Nutrition
- LM-70 Food Science and Technology
- LM-71 Industrial Chemistry

Applicants who are waiting to be awarded the required qualification at the date of submission can also take part in the selection process providing they have passed all of the Degree course exams at the time of the online application and are awarded the qualification by the final deadline of September 13th 2019. In the event these applicants pass the selection process, their enrolment on the PhD course is conditional upon providing proof that the qualification is awarded by September 16th 2019.

2.2. Applicants wishing to enrol on the PhD Course in Molecular and Experimental Medicine, MEM-Clinical curriculum must:

- be enrolled on the Medical Register;
- already possess a specialist medical qualification;

- Alternatively, applications will also be taken from doctors in specialist training who will enrol in the final year in a School of Specialisation at Humanitas University;
- Doctors in specialist training who are already enrolled in the final year of Specialisation at any university and who will complete their training by October 31st 2019 may also apply. In the event these applicants pass the selection process, they may conditionally enrol on the PhD Course and are required to provide proof that the qualification is awarded by November 4th 2019.

Further information regarding the equivalence and/or equalization of Italian academic qualifications please consult: <http://www.miur.gov.it/equipollenze-ed-equiparazioni-tra-titoli-accademici-italiani1>.

The equivalence of a foreign academic qualification is evaluated by the Committee appointed to assess the applications for admission to the PhD Course in accordance with current legislation in Italy and the country where the qualification itself was awarded, as well as international treaties or agreements pertaining to the recognition of the qualification. For this purpose, Humanitas University may require the applicant to provide a Declaration of value *in loco* issued by the competent Italian Diplomatic Authorities in the country where the qualification was awarded. This document should provide evidence that the academic qualification allows access to post-graduate programmes equivalent to that of the country where the qualification was awarded.

ART. 3 - ADMISSION APPLICATION

The application for the admission procedure, together with the attachments described below, must be submitted **online**, on pain of exclusion, no later than **13.00 Italian time**, on **June 20th 2019** via the computerised application located at the following page:

<https://pica.cineca.it/humanitas/tipologia/dottorati>

No other forms of application to take part in the procedure will be accepted.

An email address must be supplied in order to access the online application and register on the system. Those already in possession of LOGINMIUR username can gain access without registering by accessing with their LOGINMIUR account username and password; applicants accessing the system in this way must first select LOGINMIUR from the dropdown menu.

Once registration is complete, applicants must enter all of the data required to generate the application and attach the requested documents in PDF electronic format. At the time of application, candidates must select at least one preference from:

- MEM curriculum
- MEM-Clinical curriculum

The selection of a preference is compulsory and binding for the purposes of assigning the scholarships and ranking position; applicants also have the option of selecting a second preference in addition to the first.



The application procedure requires candidates to provide contacts for two referees preferably from amongst those who have recently supervised their work.

The people supplied (Referees) will be contacted directly by the university, which will ask them to provide a short reference.

Any references received will be used for the purposes of assessing the applicant.

References supplied by different means from those indicated will not be accepted.

The PhD Office is not required to solicit the dispatch of references.

Applicants are required to pay a fee for the amount of €30.00 for the selection process via bank draft, on penalty of exclusion, to the BANCA PROSSIMA bank account – P.zza P. Ferrari, 10 – 20121 Milan – c/c 1000/00102343 - IBAN: IT54 0033 5901 6001 0000 0102 343 – BIC CODE: BCITITMX for payments from abroad – made out to Humanitas University, and must indicate the following reference: **“PhD MEM 35”** followed by their **name** and **surname**.

Please note that the payment of the quota does not guarantee enrolment in the selection process.

Under no circumstances can the application fee for the selection process be refunded.

The online form allows candidates to save their application in draft mode prior to the application deadline. The submission of the application to take part in the selection procedure is certified by the form, which automatically sends an electronic receipt to the email supplied in the application. Once the deadline for submission has expired, the system will no longer allow access to the application or the electronic form to be sent.

Every application submitted will be assigned a reference number which, together with the code of the call indicated in the software app, must be specified for any subsequent communications.

The application procedure requires the following documents to be uploaded in **PDF** format only:

1. **Curriculum vitae** (maximum 2 pages) describing the qualifications held (including publications and conferences attended) and any professional or research experience which can be used to assess the applicant’s aptitude for scientific research (candidates are advised to use the Europass format for their CV <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/it/documents/curriculum-vitae>);
2. **Letter of Motivation** (maximum 3,000 characters including spaces) explaining why the applicant wishes to enrol on the PhD programme and the reason for their choice of research topics indicated on their application;
3. Copy of a valid **identification document**, or for non-EU applicants, a passport;
4. **Diploma Supplement** – or equivalent certification – issued by the university which awarded the academic qualification presented for the purposes of admission to the selection process, i.e. certification in English or Italian language from the university where the applicant was enrolled, listing exams taken, their value in credits and the statistical distribution of the degree course examination marks, and the minimum and maximum mark required for the qualification to be awarded. Applicants whose graduation is still pending must upload a study plan, the exam transcript and a statement from their supervisor attesting that the applicant is likely to be

awarded the academic qualification required for admission to the PhD programme by the deadline specified in this public call;

5. **Copy of receipt of payment** for € 30.00 (thirty euro).

The submission of the admission application must be completed by printing and signing the electronic form filled in by the applicant. The signed form in PDF format must then be uploaded in the designated area of the online form.

Applicants failing to submit one or more documents listed above in points 1 – 5 will be excluded from the selection process.

In addition to the documentation specified above, the university reserves the right to request a copy of the qualifications and/or publications indicated by the applicant.

ART. 4 – SELECTION PROCESS

Admission to the PhD Programme is based on a selection process which assesses the qualifications and an interview carried out by a Commission appointed by decree of the Rector consisting of a maximum of seven members.

The aim of the selection process is to assess the knowledge, skills and aptitudes of applicants for scientific clinical or translational research, as well as their reasons for wishing to undertake a PhD Programme. The assessment of these elements is based on the evaluation of the documentation submitted by the applicants and an interview designed to establish whether candidates possess the specific basic skills needed to carry out the research projects indicated in the application. Where necessary, this may also be done using a multiple-choice test.

Only those candidates ranking in the first 40 positions (including all candidates that have obtained *ex aequo* in final position) based on the assessment of the curriculum and qualifications will pass to the interview phase.

The evaluation of the curriculum and qualifications will also take into account the candidate's entire university career, any publications submitted, professional and laboratory experience and periods of study or research with foreign universities and research bodies. Other qualifications submitted by the candidate pertaining to their aptitude for scientific research will also be considered. A maximum of 40 points can be awarded for the evaluation of the curriculum and qualifications; when awarding a score, the Commission takes into account the circumstances and time in which each candidate has gained their qualifications. The Commission may also request a formal opinion from the members of the PhD Academic Board who do not form part of the Commission evaluating whether the curriculum of the individual candidate is suited to the topics of research indicated in the application.

Only candidates meeting the curriculum and qualification ranking requirements for whom at least one reference has been provided by June 28th 2019 will be invited for the interview.

The results of the assessment will be posted on the following page relating to the PhD programme: <https://www.hunimed.eu/courses/phd-molecular-experimental-medicine/> by the end of July 2019.

The interview will be open to the public and will be held during the week from September 8th to 12th 2019 according to the timetable posted on the website for the PhD programme. Prior to the interview, candidates may be asked to take a short multiple-choice test designed to assess specific knowledge needed to develop the research topics chosen by candidates in the application. The interview is intended to assess the professional skills acquired and their aptitude for scientific research. The interview will include a presentation of the degree final thesis or a research project to which the candidate has contributed, followed by a general discussion aimed at assessing the candidate's motivation. A maximum of 60 points may be awarded for the test and the interview.

The interview will be held in English language.

The timetable of the interviews will be posted by July 31st 2019 on the website <https://www.hunimed.eu/courses/phd-molecular-experimental-medicine/>. **This post will be considered an official notification** for all intents and purposes. Candidates who are not notified that they are excluded from the selection process are required to attend the interview according to the timetable and will be asked to provide a valid identification document.

Should circumstances require it, candidates may ask to hold the interview via video conference, providing that their identity can be guaranteed, or ask for special assistance. Those concerned must specify this when completing the admission application.

Once the interviews are over, the Commission will draw up the general ranking on the basis of the total score awarded to the candidates following the assessment of their curriculum and qualifications, and the interview.

Applicants achieving a minimum overall score of 60/100 are considered to have passed the selection process.

The points awarded to each individual candidate will be posted, guaranteeing their privacy, on the PhD programme website at <https://www.hunimed.eu/courses/phd-molecular-experimental-medicine/>.

ART. 5 – SCHOLARSHIPS AND PLACES WITHOUT SCHOLARSHIPS

5.1 Scrolling of positions in the ranking

Scholarships are granted on the basis of ranking position and the preferences expressed by the candidates.

There is only one ranking, which is updated after each stage in the event of non-acceptance.

Candidates who fail to accept a scholarship will be definitively removed from the ranking and any other position. Those candidates qualifying for the final ranking who have selected the MEM-Clinical curriculum as their first preference when submitting their application will be offered a place on this curriculum.

Those candidates qualifying for the final ranking who have selected the MEM curriculum as their first preference when submitting their application will be offered a place on this curriculum.

Candidates failing to enrol on the curriculum selected as their first preference will be excluded from any position in the ranking for the curriculum selected as their second preference.

In the event that available places are remaining once the first ranking positions have been scrolled according to the candidates' first preference, these places will be offered on the basis of the ranking order of the remaining candidates according to their second preference.

Candidates should note that in order to gain access to the MEM-Clinical curriculum they must meet all the requirements pursuant to art. 2, comma 2.2.

5.2 Granting of scholarships

Scholarships are granted in two different phases. Scholarships for the MEM-Clinical curriculum are granted in the first phase. Once this process is complete, scholarships for the MEM curriculum will then be granted in the second phase. Candidates who are awarded a scholarship must accept the Topic assigned to them by filling in the special form sent to them by email and complete online enrolment **within two working days** beginning on the date the ranking is posted.

Once the registration deadline has expired, candidates who have failed to complete enrolment will be considered not to have accepted and other candidates will take their place according to the criteria mentioned above.

ART. 6 – PUBLICATION OF THE RANKING

The ranking of suitable candidates will be posted on the PhD Course website at the following page: <https://www.hunimed.eu/courses/phd-molecular-experimental-medicine/> **in the week starting on September 16th 2019.**

This post will be considered as **official notification** to all intents and purposes for the successful candidates and the deadline by which places must be accepted will run from the date of online posting.

Candidates admitted to the course who fail to complete registration by the enrolment deadline according to the terms set out in this call will be excluded; subsequent candidates in the ranking will then take their place according to their position in the ranking and selected curriculum preferences.

A scrolling ranking is also provided for cases where a successfully registered candidate withdraws within the first three months of the course. In such cases, the student who withdraws is required to repay the months of the scholarship they have used.

If a candidate in the ranking who is granted a scholarship, research fellowship or equivalent contract issued by another country or institution is admitted to the PhD programme as a supernumerary, their free place is allocated to the next candidate according to the order of the ranking and their preferences.

ART. 7 – ENROLMENT

Candidates admitted to the programme must complete online enrolment by the deadline specified in this call using the registration procedure at <https://humanitas.esse3.cineca.it/>. Candidates are also required to pay the annual fee, which includes the regional tax for the right to study, insurance and stamp duty, by the same deadline set at €250.00 (two hundred and fifty euro) for the 2019/2020 academic year.

Withdrawal from the PhD programme does not entitle candidates to a refund of any registration fees already paid.

Non-EU candidates must provide the following documents by the enrolment deadline:

- a) Italian tax code issued by the Agenzia delle Entrate (<https://www.agenziaentrate.gov.it/wps/portal/english/individuals>);
- b) Stay permit (<http://vistoperitalia.esteri.it/home/en>).

The University reserves the right to request the original copies of qualifications obtained abroad or to check they are valid at the time of enrolment. Until such time, candidates are provisionally admitted to the course and may be excluded from the course if found not to meet the requirements.

ART. 8 – SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships granted by Humanitas University are assigned according to the order of the ranking and the candidates' selected preferences until the available grants run out.

The gross annual amount of each scholarship awarded by the University for the MEM curriculum totals €18,000.00 (eighteen thousand euro). This sum is exempt from IRPEF income tax according to the provisions of art. 4 of Law no. 476 of 13th August 1984, and is subject to social security contributions according to the provisions of art. 2, section 26 and subsequent sections, of Law no. 335 of 8th August 1995 and subsequent modifications.

The gross annual amount of each scholarship awarded by the University for the MEM-Clinical curriculum totals €22,400.00 (twenty-two thousand, four hundred euro).

PhD students admitted to the first year of the PhD programme for the MEM-Clinical curriculum who are also enrolled in the final year of Medical Specialisation based at Humanitas University will receive the Specialisation grant for the first year of their PhD; the PhD scholarship will be made available from the second year of the PhD programme.

Scholarships granted by the University are paid in monthly instalments at the end of the month. These scholarships cannot be combined with other scholarships of any kind excepting those awarded by national or foreign institutions to compensate for the expenditures incurred to take part in a PhD programme abroad.

ART. 9 – RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PHD STUDENT

Admission to the PhD Programme implies a full-time and exclusive commitment. By enrolling on the PhD programme, students undertake to:

- i) comply with the University's Code of Ethics and that of the institution where they carry out their main PhD activities;
- ii) behave according to general principles of scientific integrity and conduct their studies and research in accordance with criteria of honesty, precision, efficiency and objectivity;
- iii) attend courses, seminars, tutorials and teaching modules forming part of the PhD programme, as well as carry out continuous study and research on the premises designated for this purpose by the partnering institutions.

As an integral part of their own PhD training project students may be authorised by the Academic Board to spend a maximum total of 18 months, which may or may not be continuous, carrying out training or research abroad. For periods abroad lasting 30 consecutive days or more, the scholarship may be increased by up to 50 percent depending on the destination.

Students may request a temporary suspension from the PhD programme in the event of serious and justified personal reasons. A suspension in attendance for a period of more than thirty days will result in the scholarship being suspended.

In accordance with DM 45/2013, students admitted to a place on the MEM-Clinical curriculum enrolled on the final year of a medical specialisation based at Humanitas University will be simultaneously enrolled in the final year of medical specialisation and the first year of the PhD programme. A withdrawal during the first year of the PhD programme and/or failure to complete the qualification for the medical specialisation will also result in the loss of PhD student status.

Any absences without prior notification and authorisation may represent grounds for expulsion from the PhD Programme.

ART. 10 – ADMISSION TO SUBSEQUENT YEARS AND AWARD OF THE QUALIFICATION

The PhD qualification, abbreviated as: "Dott.Ric." or "Ph.D.", will be awarded by Humanitas University following the successful completion of the PhD programme.

Each student will be assigned a research topic at the time of enrolment.

At the end of the first year of the course, students will present their individual research project to a Selection and Evaluation Commission. In the event that a research project is not approved, the student will not be admitted to the second year and as a result will lose the benefits associated with the status of PhD student.

Students can be provisionally admitted to the second year ("ammissione con riserva") when the Committee's evaluation is only partially positive and highlights critical issues and possible amendments to



the individual training project to be implemented by the end of second year.

Admission to the third year is contingent upon a positive evaluation of the Poster which the PhD student presents to illustrate the progress made in their PhD project. The Poster must contain the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, Results and Conclusions and will be evaluated by an internal commission, taking the following aspects into account: clarity of the contents illustrated by the Poster, clarity of the presentation, quality of the work and evaluation of actual future prospects for further progress and successful completion of the PhD programme. The Commission is appointed by the Selection and Evaluation Commission.

In order to be admitted to the final exam, students must present the preliminary version of their doctoral thesis at the Viva session to two Examiners (one of which is internal and the other external) indicated by their Supervisors, with the agreement of the PhD student and approval of the Course Co-ordinator. The Viva session comprises a public seminar and a brief moment for evaluation on the part of the examiners mentioned above.

The examiners are asked to provide a written analytical judgement of the work presented including comments and suggestions for any improvements to be made before the final submission of the doctoral thesis.

ART. 11 – PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

Pursuant to EU Regulation 2016/679, the University undertakes to respect the confidential nature of the information supplied by candidates; all data supplied will only be used for the purposes associated with the admission procedure and for managing relations with the University, in full compliance with current legislation.

ART. 12 – PERSON IN CHARGE OF THE PROCESS

The person responsible for the selection process included in this public call is Dott.ssa Paola Antonicelli.

For further information please send an email to: phd@hunimed.eu.

ART. 13 – REFERENCE TO PROVISIONS

For matters not explicitly mentioned in this call, please refer to the Regulations of Humanitas University and to current provisions relating to Italian research doctorates.