UNIVERSITAS SCHOLARSHIPS – CALL 2022
MSc and PhD scholarship programme for students from developing countries

List of abbreviations:
ANGS: Actors of the non-governmental Cooperation (Actoren van de Niet-Gouvernementele Samenwerking)
BAOW: Advisory Body for Development Cooperation (VUB)
DGD: Directorate General for Development Cooperation
IRMO: International Relations office (VUB)
RIB: Council for International Policy (VUB)
UOS: University Development Cooperation
VLIR-UOS: Flemish Interuniversity Council – University Development Cooperation
VUBAROS: VUB General Council for Development Cooperation (VUB Algemene Raad voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking) (VUB)

CONTEXT

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel has always made own funds available for university development cooperation. In the past, VUBAROS provided about twenty scholarships for students from partner countries.

UNIVERSITAS is a scholarship programme that was approved by the RIB on 5 November 2019 and aims at strengthening existing co-operations between VUB and partners in the Global South. Consequently, the UNIVERSITAS scholarships will, as part of the internationalization policy of VUB, contribute to the realization of the SDGs. As such, the UNIVERSITAS Call contributes to the concept of Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals launched in the VUB policy plan, on the one hand, and to the realization of a number of strategic objectives (SD) of the internationalisation sub-policy plan, on the other hand.

The following SDs of the internationalisation policy plan are relevant: SD2 (focus on partnerships), OD 2 (elaboration of a strategic regional policy) and the SD 4 (a committed internationalisation policy), OD 1 (focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and global commitment) and OD 2 (institution-wide trajectory on social and academic inclusion - diversity as distinguishing feature).

Each academic year, 206,000 EUR will be available for MSc/PhD scholarships for graduates from partner institutions from the South.
GENERAL OUTLINE

The general objective of this programme is to generate substantial and relevant added value and impact, both for VUB and institutions in the partner countries, building upon an already existing collaboration between both institutions.

This call is not meant for individual scholarship applications (application for a scholarship by and for an individual student). The scholarship package consists of grants that are awarded to students from an institution in a partner country that is already involved in sustainable development cooperation activities with VUB:

- The local institution must be located in one of the countries of the partner country list (see section 7);
- The scholarship package application is jointly elaborated by two promoters, one at VUB and one at the partner institution. The VUB promoter cannot submit more than one application per call;
- The scholarships have to be linked to ongoing sustainable development cooperation activities at research group/department/faculty level. The available grants must be used to strengthen this collaboration. The grants are not meant to be used as seed money;
- In line with the Theory of Change, these grants must contribute to the intended long-term change of an already existing development-relevant collaboration.

INITIAL MASTER OR DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS?

The promoters decide to award initial master grants, doctoral scholarships or a combination of both, depending on the activity or project they have to support.

Advanced masters are not eligible. In all cases, the student must obtain a diploma from VUB and has to enrol each year at VUB, also for interuniversity programmes.

FUNDING

A scholarship package (Master and/or PhD scholarships) cannot exceed **100,000 EUR**

This is the maximum amount that can be requested and granted. When required, this budget can be complemented by other funds of the department/research group.

The period during which the allocated budget can be used is as follows:

- Initial master: 1 or 2 years depending on the organization of the master programme (60 or 120 ECTS)
- PhD: maximum 5 years
Any remaining budget will return to the UNIVERSITAS scholarship fund for future calls. The scholarship payments are handled by the International Relations Office through a separate internal PKC account.

For a full Master programme
- VUB tuition fee for years 1 and 2 (see applicable amounts for the selected programmes)
- Monthly allowance for 12-24 months. This allowance follows the monthly allowance as determined by DGD and specified in the VLIR-UOS financial guidelines.
- Travel from the home address to Belgium, a return plane ticket between year 1 and 2 and a plane ticket at the end of the programme to the home address (door-to-door).
- Health insurance (incl. SIP complement)
- Visa related costs
- In case of an interuniversity programme: local travel costs between the different Belgian institutions can also be covered by the scholarship package.

PLEASE NOTE that VLIR-UOS Scholarship guidelines can be updated annually.

For a doctorate with a maximum of 24 months of stay in Belgium
- Tuition fee for the first year of registration and the year of defence.
- 1 return flight ticket (economy) per year (max. 5 in total). Travel cost door-to-door.
- Health insurance during the stay in Belgium (incl. SIP complement)
- Monthly allowance for max. 24 months, consecutive or not. The monthly allowance is only paid for the months when the student is residing in Belgium
  Short term stay (maximum 11 months): payment consists of a housing fee of 600 Euro/month and an expat allowance of 900 Euro/month.
  Long term stay: for stays of 12 or more consecutive months, the rules for scholars with limited “RSZ-bijdrage” apply, and there, a budget between 33,000 – 38,000 EUR per year has to be considered (for a detailed simulation, please contact the M&O department)
- Paid to the unit of the VUB-promoter: allowance of 300 EUR per month in Belgium for expenses related to the research work of the student (e.g. participation in conferences by the student, invitation of local promoter to join the PhD defence, field work).

General
All other travel (e.g. travel Flemish promoter) and operational costs must be paid on a different budget. With the UNIVERSITAS-funding, only economy class flight and/or train tickets can be purchased.

The grants are personal and meant for the student to study or perform research in Belgium. Extra costs for family (e.g. family reunion) will be borne by the student.

WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

An UNIVERSITAS scholarship package can be submitted by any ZAP-member of VUB. A ZAP-member can only submit one application per call. The application must be
submitted to the International Relations Office by the promoters’ faculty RIB-representative.

If a RIB-member is applying for a UNIVERSITAS scholarship package, then the second ZAP-member of that same faculty and who is member of the RIB must submit the application.

The RIB-member who submits the application to the International Relations Office is responsible for informing the (necessary) appropriate bodies of the faculty.

The above is meant to guarantee the involvement, awareness, and support of the faculties and to improve the coherence between different development cooperation related activities and/or projects within a faculty in line with its policy plan.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

Candidates for Master scholarships:
- Must be and remain associated as research or teaching staff at the local institution;
- Must be permanent resident in the country of the local institution at the time of application and have the nationality of that country, (or of a country included in the partner country list);
- Must be able to present excellent academic credentials;
- Must meet the admission requirements for the chosen master programme.

Candidates for PhD scholarships:
- Must be and remain employed as research or teaching staff at the local institution and must return to the country of the local institution after obtaining the PhD degree;
- Must be permanent resident in the country of the local institution at the time of application and have the nationality of that country, (or of a country included in the country list);
- Must be able to present excellent academic credentials for the academic programme that allows to apply for a PhD. The period between obtaining the Master's degree and the start of the doctoral study may not exceed 10 years and the candidates’ activities during this period should contribute to the expertise gained regarding the PhD-topic;
- Must meet the VUB enrolment requirements for PhD students;
- Residence in Belgium during doctoral studies can be financed for a maximum of 24 months by the UNIVERSITAS funding.

Grants for Master and PhD students of institutions where an Institutional University Cooperation programme is running, can be allocated if the content of the chosen Master programme or the research topic of the PhD student is clearly not related to that IUC-programme.

If the content of the chosen Master programme or the research topic of the PhD student is directly connected with the scope of the IUC-programme and if at the moment of application, the IUC-programme is in year 10, 11 or 12, then all the possibilities offered within the IUC-programme regulations for financing of scholarships of year 10 must have been explored and used, and the financial balances of year 9 and 10 must be less than 5%
of the total operational budget of that year. Only then can the scholarship application be accepted.

Reserve candidates

It is possible to add a reserve candidate for each proposed candidate within a UNIVERSITAS scholarship package. The reserve candidate must comply to the same selection criteria as the effective candidate. A reserve candidate can only replace a effective candidate when the latter declines the scholarship before the start of the academic year or research activities.

WHICH COUNTRIES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Eligible are the 31 countries which have a Common Strategic Framework, developed by DGD together with the ANGS in 2017. One country, Sri Lanka, was proposed during the 2020 call to be added to the list of eligible countries, thus added to this list for the current 2022 call (see section 8).

The 31 countries are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Bolivia, Cameroon, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, Nicaragua, Philippines, Vietnam, Palestinian Territories, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru and South Africa.

CAN COUNTRIES BE ADDED TO THIS LIST OF COUNTRIES?

To enable new countries to be added to the list of eligible countries, there is a possibility to propose new countries in the application form to make this request. Upon approval by RIB, the new country will be included in the next call.

The request for adding a new country must be accompanied by documents proving that development-relevant activities have already been carried out or/and are ongoing with (a) chosen institution(s) in this new country, with formally approved budgets.

SELECTION

Selection procedure:

All timely submitted applications will be checked for eligibility by the UOS Unit of the International Relations Office. BAOW members will be asked to confirm the eligibility check, and to score the eligible applications. Applications with a score of 65% or more are considered eligible for funding. The approved applications will be ranked according to their...
score. The funds will be allocated to the applications with the highest scores. The final selection is done by the RIB.

**Selection criteria**

A score will be given for each of the following five criteria:

- **Quality**: coherence of the proposal? Is it well structured? Is all the requested information provided as to allow to give a well-founded score for the other four criteria? Is the proposal clearly written?
- **Effectiveness**: how useful is this grant to support current ongoing collaboration between VUB and the local institution? Is it a win-win situation for both institutions, what will be the immediate added value for VUB and for the local institution?
- **Efficiency**: Are all conditions (expertise of the promoters, existing collaboration, joint selection process, potential candidates) present to guarantee that both locally and at VUB, the research plans can be executed successfully and that the allocated funds can be used optimally?
- **Impact**: What is the added value for VUB and for the local partner in the long run?
- **Sustainability/strategic relevance**: what is the commitment of the local institution to retain the candidates after graduation? Which activities are planned for the future by both VUB and the local partner to continue the collaboration? How well are the future activities related to the grant embedded in the strategy/management and/or research policy of the VUB department/faculty?

**Communication of the selection results**

The selection results by RIB will be communicated by IRMO to the VUB promoter. The VUB promoter informs the local promoter and the selected scholarship candidates.

**FOLLOW-UP AND REPORTING**

The progress and/or study results of the supported students must be closely monitored by the VUB promoter. If problems occur, they must be immediately reported to the BAOW via the UOS unit, so that the necessary adjustments can be made immediately.

Annual progress reports of PhD students and marks sheets of MSc students have to be submitted by the VUB promoter to the UOS unit as soon as this information is available.

**FREQUENCY OF THE CALL**

An annual call is launched by IRMO and sent to the deans, heads of departments and research groups, directors of English taught Master Programmes, RIB and BAOW members. When necessary, modalities can be adapted by the BAOW.
PLANNING 2022-2023

The timeline of this UNIVERSITAS call is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Dec 2021</td>
<td>Launch call</td>
<td>IRMO</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Dec 2021</td>
<td>Online info session</td>
<td>IRMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Jan 2022</td>
<td>Deadline for application</td>
<td>VUB-promoter/RIB member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Feb 2022</td>
<td>Communication on eligibility</td>
<td>IRMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 March 2022</td>
<td>Communication on selection</td>
<td>IRMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 March 2022</td>
<td>Selected students apply in CALI</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This timeline is important for Master students to start their study at VUB in academic year 2022-2023, as the deadline for application in Cali is 31 March 2022.

The VUB promoter is requested to provide the students with all information and documents required for the application as soon as the UNIVERSITAS call is launched. This information can be found in the following link: [https://www.vub.be/en/studying-at-the-vub/how-to-apply#required-documents](https://www.vub.be/en/studying-at-the-vub/how-to-apply#required-documents).

Once selected, the application procedure of Master students has to be followed up very strictly by the VUB promoter in order to comply with the deadline for application in Cali.

SUBMISSION AND CONTACT

Submission: the application form and annexes must be submitted by the RIB-member to development.cooperation@vub.be.

Contact for more information: development.cooperation@vub.be or christophe.goossens@vub.be

INDICATIVE AMOUNTS

The amounts listed below are an estimation of the cost of a Master and PhD student within this UNIVERSITAS scholarship scheme. They can be used to calculate the budget needed. The requested budget should be in agreement with the planned scholarships.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Times the unit</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One year Master</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence fee</td>
<td>1.150€</td>
<td>10 or 12</td>
<td>13.800€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by plane</td>
<td>1.200€</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.400€</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>40 €</td>
<td>10 or 12</td>
<td>480 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa cost</td>
<td>150 €</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>150 €</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicative total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>16.830€</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To add</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1 tuition</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Two year Master</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence fee</td>
<td>1.150€</td>
<td>22 or 24</td>
<td>27.600€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by plane (variable)</td>
<td>1.200€</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.600€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance (indicative)</td>
<td>40 €</td>
<td>22 or 24</td>
<td>960 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa cost (variable)</td>
<td>150 €</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>150 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interuniversity transport if relevant (indicative)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>900 €</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicative total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>33.210€</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To add</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2 tuitions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PhD</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel by plane (variable)</td>
<td>1.200€</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.000€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance (indicative)</td>
<td>40 €</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>960 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing fee, expat allowance (less than 12 consecutive months)</td>
<td>1.500 €</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36.000 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship for stay of 12 or more consecutive months, for 2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70.000 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research allowance (can not be used for travel of the Flemish promotor)</td>
<td>300 €</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.200 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa cost (variable)</td>
<td>150 €</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>750 €</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicative total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>50.910€</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(&lt;12 months)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>84.910€</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(12 months or more)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To add</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2 tuitions</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIVERSITAS SCHOLARSHIPS – CALL 2022
Application form

The application must include the following items:

1) VUB promoter:
   • Full name
   • Faculty, Department and/or research group
   • Current function within the VUB
   • Email address

2) Local institution and local promoter:
   • Name of the institution
   • Country
   • Faculty, Department and/or research group
   • Full name of the local promoter
   • Current function within the local institution
   • Email address

Please answer all questions listed in 3 to 8.

3) Candidates:
   - Names of the proposed candidates
   - For MSc scholarships: which Master programme will be followed at VUB (please specify for each candidate)
   - For PhD candidates: what is the research topic of the PhD? (please provide short research outline for each candidate) For each PhD candidate, please mention the name of the promoter at VUB and in the local institution

   - Names of the reserve candidates:
   - For MSc scholarships: which Master programme will be followed at VUB (please specify for each candidate)
   - For PhD candidates: what is the research topic of the PhD? (please provide short research outline for each candidate). For each PhD candidate, please mention the name of the promoter at VUB and in the local institution

4) Efficiency:
Describe how you can guarantee that conditions (expertise of the promoters, good existing collaboration, good joint selection process, good candidates) are available, both locally and at VUB, so that research plans can be executed successfully, and that the allocated funds can be used optimally.
- expertise of the promoters
- existing collaboration: Describe the ongoing collaboration between both institutions
- joint selection process: Describe the selection process of the proposed candidates in detail. Who was involved? What were the selection criteria? How it guarantees the selection of good candidates, supported by both institutions?
- candidates: describe the link of the candidates with the local institution.

**5) Effectiveness:**
Describe the usefulness of this grant package for strengthening the current ongoing collaboration between VUB and the local institution?
Is there a win-win situation for both institutions? What will be the immediate added value for VUB and for the local institution?

**6) Impact:**
Describe the long-term effect of the scholarships on the collaboration between both institutions.
How will this grant package influence the activities planned in the future between both institutions?

**7) Sustainability/strategic relevance:**
What is the commitment of the local institution to retain the candidates after graduation?
How well are the planned activities related to the grant embedded in the strategy/management and/or research policy of the VUB department/faculty?
What kind of future collaborative activities are will be planned?

**8) If applicable, which country should be added to the list of eligible countries for the next call? What is/was the link between VUB and the local institution of your choice in this country. Provide some information on this ongoing collaboration (duration, research topic, joined publications...).**

**Annexes to be added to the application:**

**A. Detailed budget table for the application**

**B. Per student:**

B.1. Personal data form of selected master and/or PhD-candidates (see format B.1. PERSONAL DATA FORM in annex)
B.2. Copy of passport (if available) for visa purpose
B.3. Short CV, with focus on professional activities
B.4. Copy of last obtained relevant diploma and transcript of records
B.5. Current affiliation with the local institution (letter of home institution of the student)
B.6. Conditional acceptance to the Master or PhD programme. This can be either a (conditional) acceptance letter issued by the VUB registrar’s office, or a
provisional acceptance letter signed by the VUB promotor/programme director. In case of PhD, also a (conditional) acceptance letter by the home university of the student.

B.7. For PhD: planning with an overview of the planned activities at the local institution and for each stay in Belgium over the years.
B.1. PERSONAL DATA FORM

*Personal data form of selected master and/or PhD-candidate*

- Full name of the candidate (as on passport and indicating surname and given name):
- Gender:
- Home Address:
- Current country of residence:
- Email (valid throughout the whole application procedure):
- Phone number:
- Institution/organisation of employment:
- Function within institution/organisation of employment: