

UNIVERSITAS SCHOLARSHIPS – CALL 2020

MSc and PhD scholarship programme for students from developing countries

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)

1. History and context

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel has always made own funds available for development cooperation. Originally, VUBAROS made funds available for about twenty scholarships for students from developing countries. After implementing various budget reductions, the available budget currently amounts to 206.000 €/year.

The modalities for granting the scholarships have changed over the years. Three different concepts were developed and applied successively, but did not give the expected results. All three were very cumbersome to administer and/or had little added value or impact for VUB or the universities in the South.

The last change introduced in 2016 was the reorganisation of the scholarship programme into a tuition fee waiver system. This newly designed scholarship programme would be implemented when the last cohort of students of the previous scholarship scheme would start their final year at VUB. In the end it was not implemented.

At the request of the BAOW, the UNIVERSITAS fund (now ex-UNIVERSITAS, but the name will remain) will be used again to grant full scholarships to students from developing countries. This call is the first within the framework of the newly developed programme, as approved by the RIB on 5 November 2019.

2. General outline

The general objective of this programme is to obtain considerable and relevant added value and impact, both for VUB and institutions in the South, taking into account the currently available budget of max. 206.000 €/year.

- Scholarships are awarded to students from institutions in developing countries. These institutions must be involved in sustainable development cooperation activities with VUB;

- The institution must be located in one of the countries of the country list (see below);
- An application for a scholarship package is restricted to one institution in the South. It is allowed to submit more than one application;
- The grants must be used in support of the internationalisation strategy of the dept./faculty and more specifically in support of its development cooperation strategy;
- The scholarships have to be linked to ongoing sustainable development cooperation activities at dept./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 already existing development-relevant collaboration.

3. Initial master or doctoral scholarships?

The submitting entity decides for itself whether 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 enroll each year at VUB, also for interuniversity programmes.

4. Funding

The application concerns a scholarship package (master and/or PhD scholarships) of which the total amount is close or equal to 100.000 €. This is the maximum amount that can be requested and granted. This budget can be complemented by other funds of the dept. This call is not meant for single scholarship applications (application for one scholarship for one student).

The period during which the allocated budget can be implemented 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

Remaining budget will return to the UNIVERSITAS scholarship fund for next calls. The scholarship payments will be handled by the International Relations office on a separate internal PKC.

For a full Master programme

- VUB tuition fee for years 1 and 2 (see applicable amounts for the selected programmes)
- Monthly allowance for 22-24 months (amount per month: 1.150 €)
- 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 are also covered by the scholarship programme.

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 defense.
- 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 (amount: 1.500 € /month). The monthly allowance is only paid for the months when the student is residing in Belgium.

- Paid to the VUB-promotor: allowance of 300 € per month in Belgium for expenses related to the research work of the student (e.g. participation at conferences by the student, invitation of local promotor to join the PhD defense).

General

All other travel and operating costs have to be paid on a different budget. With the UNIVERSITAS-funding, only economy class flight 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.

5. Who can submit a proposal for receiving funding for a scholarship package?

An application for a scholarship package can be made by a **ZAP-member of VUB**. The application must be sent to the International Relations office **by one of the ZAP-members of the same faculty as the applicant and who is member of the RIB**.

If a RIB member is applying for the 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 is responsible for informing the necessary bodies of the faculty.

6. 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 country list;
- Must be able to present excellent academic credentials;
- Must meet the admission requirements for the desired master programme.

Candidates for PhD scholarships:

- Must be 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 IUC-programme is running, can be granted if the content of the chosen Master programme or the research topic of the PhD student is clearly not connected with the scope of the 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.

7. Which countries are eligible?

Eligible countries are the 31 countries which have a Common Strategic Framework, developed by DGD together with the ANGS in 2019.

These 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, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru and South Africa.

8. Can countries be added to this list of countries?

To enable new countries to be added to the list, the possibility is created in the application form to make this request. If approved, the development country will be included in the next call.

At the moment of the application and presentation of the new country, the request must be accompanied by documents proving that development-relevant activities have already been carried out and/or are ongoing with the chosen institution in this new country, with formally approved budgets.

9. Selection

Selection procedure:

All applications submitted before the deadline 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 are ranked according to their score. The funds will be attributed to the applications with the highest scores. The final selection is done by the RIB.

Selection criteria

A score will be asked for the following five criteria:

- Quality: coherence of the proposal? Is it well structured? Is all the information available to give a well-considered score for the other four criteria?
- Effectiveness: what is the link between the VUB and the local institution? How were the proposed candidates selected? How well are the proposed candidates embedded in the institution?
- Efficiency: value for money
- Impact: what is the impact of the requested scholarships on the expected results of the collaboration between the two institutions. What is the added value for VUB and for the local partner?
- 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 for continuing the collaboration?

10. Follow-up and reporting

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

11. Frequency of the call and evaluation

An annual call is launched to the deans, heads of depts., directors of English-taught programmes, RIB and BAOW members. After 2,5 years there will be a first evaluation, after which possible adjustments of form and frequency can be made, after 4,5 years a second evaluation will be planned. Results will be used to adapt the scholarship fund procedures if needed.

12. Planning 2019-2020

The UNIVERSITAS scholarship scheme will be launched for students to study at VUB 2020-2021.

The deadline for submission is 15/02/2020. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The deadline for application in CALI is 31 March. Therefore, the deadlines are quite short this time around, but for the year 2020-2021, the call will be launched end of August 2020.

Date	Action	Responsible
18/12/2019	Launch call	IRMO
15/02/2020	Deadline submission	Applicant (ZAP member VUB)
05/03/2020	Eligibility check and pre-selection by BAOW	IRMO and BAOW
24/03/2020	Selection by RIB	RIB
25/03/2020	Communication results	IRMO
Latest 31/03/2020	Students apply in CALI	Students

13. Submission and contact

Submission: the application form and annexes must be submitted, as described under point 5 in this document, to development.cooperation@vub.be.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Contact for more information: development.cooperation@vub.be or francoise.de.cupere@vub.be

14. Indicative amounts

The amounts below are listed to give you an idea of the cost of a master and PhD student within this UNIVERSITAS scholarship scheme. We recommend making the calculation for the specific cases in the scholarship package that you are applying for.

One year master	Unit	Times the unit	Total
Tuition		1	
Subsistance fee	1.150 €	10 or 12	13.800 €
Travel plane	1.200 €	2	2400 €
Insurance	40 €	10 or 12	480 €
Visa cost	150 €	1	150 €
Indicative total			16.830 €
To add			1 tuition

Two year master	Unit	Times the unit	Total
Tuition		2	
Subsistance fee	1.150 €	22 or 24	27.600 €
Travel plane (variable)	1.200 €	3	3.600 €
Insurance (indicative)	40 €	22 or 24	960 €
Visa cost (variable)	150 €	1	150 €
Interuniversity transport if relevant (indicative)			900 €
Indicative total			33.210 €
To add			2 tuitions

PhD	Unit	Times the unit	Total
Tuition		2	
Travel plane (variable)	1.200 €	5	6.000 €
Insurance (indicative)	40 €	24	960 €
Subsistance fee	1.500 €	24	36.000 €
Research allowance	300 €	24	7.200 €
Visa cost (variable)	150 €	5	750 €
Indicative total			50.910 €
To add			2 tuitions

15. Application *(See application form in annex)*

The application must include the following items:

1) Applicant within the VUB

- Full name of applicant (ZAP member VUB)
- Department and/or research group, faculty
- Current function within the VUB
- Email address

2) Local institution

- Name of the institution
- Country
- Department and/or research group, faculty of the local institution
- Contact person
- Current function within the local institution
- Contact details

3) What is the current link with the local institution? Which collaboration(s) have taken place or are ongoing and since when? What are the proposed changes (Theory of Change) of the joint development activities that are currently ongoing or have been realized?

4) Which and how many grants are applied for? Will the dept. or other foresee a co-funding if more than 100.000 € will be spent? Which candidates were selected? How were the proposed candidates selected? What is the link of the selected candidates with the local partner? What is the added value for VUB and for the local partner?

5) 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 for continuing the collaboration?

6) If applicable, which country should be added to the list of eligible countries for the next call? What is the actual link between VUB and the local institution of your preference in this country. Provide some information on this ongoing collaboration.

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, either 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 stays 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: