

RECTORAL DECREE

University Corridors for Refugees – UNICORE 8.0 (2026/2028)

Call for applications for 1 study grant and welcome services for one refugee student, from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, registering for the Master's degree programme Medical Biotechnologies, taught in English, at the University of Piemonte Orientale, for the Academic Years 2026/2027 and 2027/2028.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: 17th April 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (noon, UTC+2).

THE RECTOR

Noted that on 22nd October 2019 University of Piemonte Orientale joined the “Manifesto of Inclusive Universities” promoted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);

Noted that the Manifesto aims to promote the right to higher education and to encourage the integration of holders of International Protection;

Considered that, according to point 3 of the Manifesto, Universities can establish scholarships reserved for students and researchers who are holders of International Protection;

Considered that, according to point 4 of the Manifesto, to promote the legal entry for refugees Universities can assign reserved places to students’ holders of International Protection in third countries;

Noted that pursuant to the Manifesto, UNHCR, Caritas Italiana, Diaconia Valdese, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) together with a joined group of Italian universities, including University of Piemonte Orientale, promoted the project *University Corridors for Refugees – UNICORE 8.0*;

Considered that the project aims to promote the right to higher education for refugees through study corridors from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe to Italy;

Noted that on February 11th 2026, the Board of Directors approved to join the programme for the 8th edition, the issue of €6.000,00 + IRAP (equal to 8.5%) study grant for each year, the exemption from the fee payment, the coverage of the room provided at the residence EDISU Piemonte in Vercelli and the travel costs (resolution no. 1/2026/14.1);

ANNOUNCES

It is enacted the Call for applications, available as an Attachment, for 1 study grant and welcome services for one refugee student, from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, enrolling on the Master Degree programme Medical Biotechnologies, taught in English, at the University of Piemonte Orientale, for the Academic Year 2026/2027.

HEAD OF TEACHING DIVISION
(Dott.ssa Ilaria Adamo)

THE RECTOR
(Prof. Menico RIZZI)

Attachment

Call of Application "**University Corridors for Refugees 8.0**" for 1 study grant and welcome services for 1 refugee student, from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, registering for the Master Degree programme Medical Biotechnologies, taught in English, at the University of Piemonte Orientale, for the Academic Year 2026/2027. An additional scholarship may be awarded if additional funds become available. Should this occur, the ranking list resulting from this call for applications will be reviewed, and a second winner will be selected.

ART. 1 Subject, amount and duration

The general objective of the University Corridors for Refugees – UNICORE 8.0 project is to promote the right to higher education for refugees through study corridors to Italy. The project is jointly promoted by a consortium of partners:

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- Caritas Italiana;
- Commissione Sinodale per la Diaconia Valdese;
- Centro Astalli - JRS Jesuit Refugee Service;
- Gandhi Charity Association;
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI);
- 40 Italian Universities that are listed in the National Protocol (see Art. 9).

The benefits are intended for holders of International Protection admitted to the Master's Degree programme in Medical Biotechnologies.

UNICORE 8.0 benefits are assigned for the Academic Years 2026/2027 and 2027/2028. Maintenance merit requirements and additional renewal conditions are listed in Art. 6.

1.1 Local Partners of the Project

The University of Piemonte Orientale (UPO) will be supported in the project by three local partners:

- Arcidiocesi di Vercelli and its sections based in Vercelli (Pastorale Universitaria, Pastorale Migrantes and Caritas Diocesana);
- Chiesa Metodista, section based in Novara and the section based in Vercelli;
- Ente Regionale per il diritto allo studio della Regione Piemonte (EDISU Piemonte).

The support is conditional on signing the cooperation agreement between the parties.

1.2 Benefits and supports offered

The benefits provided to the scholarship winner are as follows:

- full coverage of the pre-arrival expenses: Visa and preparation of supporting documents;
- study grant of €6.000,00 + IRAP (equal to 8.5%) per year of study. Payments will be divided into instalments and subject to the achievement of merit requirements: 50% upon arrival; 30% in March, at least 15 university credits - ECTS; 20% in August, at least 30 ECTS (special conditions will be considered);
- exemption from university fees, apart from the stamp duty, for an amount of €16,00;
- flight tickets;
- the staff of the University will support the student in the admission procedures and will be available for assistance;
- Italian Language course;
- accomodation, for an amount of the order of €3.000,00;
- legal support offered;
- psychological support offered;

- enrollment in National Health System NHS;
- annual Public transportation subscription or other means of transportation;
- clothes, if needed;
- personal PC and stationery.

ART. 2 Incompatibility

The UNICORE 8.0 study grant cannot be combined with:

- merit-based study grants/prizes issued by the University of Piemonte Orientale for the support of international students;
- study grants issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI);
- CRUI grants for beneficiaries of international protection;
- study grants issued by foreign governmental bodies or institutions, based on agreements with the UPO, aimed at assisting the enrollment of international students at the University of Piemonte Orientale;
- EDISU Piemonte Scholarship.

ART. 3 Admission requirements

Application is open exclusively to candidates meeting the following requirements:

1. are residing in countries identified by UNHCR for this project, especially from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe to Italy, and have been recognised as refugees in collaboration with UNHCR;
2. hold a qualification valid for admission to the Master's Degree programme in Medical Biotechnologies. Students will normally hold an undergraduate degree in either: Biology, Biotechnology, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, or closely related fields within the Health Sciences;
3. the degree must be issued by a higher education institution accredited in the higher education system in the countries identified by UNHCR for this project or in another country;
4. **have a grade average of at least 24/30 – referred to the Italian System (GPA of at least 3.0). For the conversion of the average to the Italian grading system, it will be used the official conversion formula of the Italian Ministry of Education, as for Annex of this call;**
5. the degree must not be obtained before the year **2021** and no later than the **call deadline**;
6. meet the specific admission requirements of the Master Degree programme in Medical Biotechnologies;
7. have never been enrolled before in a degree programme at Università del Piemonte Orientale or any of the Partner University;
8. proficiency in the English language is required.

ART. 4 Selection criteria and application documents

4.1 Selection criteria and evaluation committee

Students are selected on the basis of merit requirements (CV, transcripts and, if needed, interview).

The evaluation will be carried out by a Committee of Experts designated by the University of Piemonte Orientale.

4.2 Application documents

Students are required to submit the following documentation:

MANDATORY DOCUMENTS:

1. copy of their currently valid Refugee Identity card issued in collaboration with UNHCR;
2. official Degree Certificate (a certificate confirming the qualification required for admission to the master degree programme Medical Biotechnologies);
3. official transcripts of exams passed and grades (Transcript of records);
4. GPA documentation (cumulative GPA);

5. Curriculum Vitae;
6. motivation letter (maximum two A4 pages).

NOT MANDATORY DOCUMENTS:

7. English Language Certification;
8. Italian Language Certification;
9. GPA documentation (each semester GPA);
10. letter/s of references written by supervisor/advisor supporting the application;
11. syllabus/Course description for each subject;
12. other relevant documents.

The translation of the documents can be provided or directly done by the candidates.

4.3 Deadlines and modalities

Applications are open from **2nd March to 17th April 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (noon, UTC+2)**. Students are required to apply through the website <https://universitycorridors.unhcr.it/>, which is managed by UNHCR.

ART. 5 Selection process

The selection process is divided into two steps:

- Step 1: evaluation of the documentation;
- Step 2: online interview.

5.1 Step 1 Evaluation of the documentation (Max 40 points)

The Committee of Experts will evaluate the documentation according to the following criteria:

- academic background and GPA (score: 0-20);
- evaluation of CV: professional experience and personal skills (score: 0-10);
- coherence between previous studies and the selected Second Cycle Degree programme (score: 0-10).

Candidates receiving a score of less than 25 will not be admitted to step 2 of the selection process. Candidates admitted to Step 2 will be notified by email by **4th May 2026**.

5.2 Step 2 Online Interview

Candidates admitted to step 2 will be interviewed by the Committee of Experts, who will evaluate their technical skills, competence on the subject as well as their mastery of the English language. Interviews will be graded on a scale of 60 points.

Interviews will take place starting from **5th May 2026 until 5th June 2026** and will be held online. *Interviews will be conducted in English; English proficiency will be assessed during the interview.* The precise schedule will be communicated to the selected candidates.

Candidates will be notified by email about the date and time of the interview.

Candidates are requested to come to the interview with the Refugee Identity Card or the PoR card used during the online application.

5.3 Establishment and approval of the final ranking list

Candidates who score less than 60/100 points will not be included in the final ranking.

Candidate rankings are drawn up by the Committee of Experts, summing up the results of the two phases and are approved by Rectoral Decree.

The ranking is drawn up in descending order of score. For equal score, preference will be given to the younger candidate. The winner will be notified by email by **22nd June 2026**.

5.4 Acceptance

To confirm the scholarship the candidate must reply to the University communication accepting the

scholarship within 10 days from the reception. Failing to provide feedback by the given deadline will cause the loss of the benefits.

By accepting the scholarship, the student fully accepts without reserve UNICORE 8.0 project support and financial benefits at the conditions established in this call for applications. With the acceptance the student also confirms under her/his full responsibility that she/he does not fall within any of the conditions of incompatibility established in article 2 of this call for applications. Finally, accepting the scholarship the candidate also accepts the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the University of Piemonte Orientale.

5.5 Ranking scroll and assignment of available seats

In case a candidate winner of the scholarship officially **withdraws by 10th July 2026**, the scholarship will be allocated to the next eligible candidate in the ranking. In case of vacant seats, the University of Piemonte Orientale reserves the right to search for eligible candidates from a ranking of other University partners of UNICORE 8.0. Eligible candidates from external rankings must meet specific requirements of the programme of University of Piemonte Orientale.

ART. 6 Renewal requirements

6.1 Second year renewal

In order to renew (for the Academic Year 2027/2028) scholarship, the student is required to earn 30 ECTS by the **10th August 2027**. The grant will be divided into instalments as cited in the previous article 1.2. The student is required to graduate by the last session available for her/his matriculation year, e.g. March/April 2029.

6.2 Additional Renewals

Any enrollment beyond the standard duration of the program will not include an extension of the scholarship benefits. In exceptional and well-justified cases, the Selection Committee may evaluate special requests for extensions.

ART. 7 Withdrawal from the course

The Candidate who withdraws from the programme during her/his studies will lose all the benefits of the scholarship.

ART. 8 Information notice concerning data processing

In compliance with European data protection policy, the personal data collected are processed as described in the “Informative privacy” available (in Italian) at: <https://www.uniupo.it/it/ateneo/regolamenti-trasparenza-sindacati/protezione-dei-dati-personali/informative>

Personal data collected are also processed in compliance with UPO Data Protection Policy available here: <https://www.uniupo.it/en/about-upo/regulations-transparency-and-trade-unions/protection-personal-data>

The Administration 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 because of such verification the applicant will forfeit the right to the study grant.

ART. 9 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” (2026/2028) and to the specific cooperation agreement between University of Piemonte Orientale and the local partners.



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Italia

Annex

Italian Ministry of Education grades conversion system:

[ALLEGATO 5 D.M. n.313 - 2016 SSM 2015-2016 - Conversione Titoli \(miur.it\)](#)