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University Corridors for Refugees 8.0

Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, e Zimbabwe - 2026/2028

This Call for applications offers 4 study grants and welcome services for refugee students residing in specific target countries and applying for second-cycle degree programmes taught in English at the University of Padua, for the Academic Year 2026/27.

ART. 1 - Subject, partners and benefits

The general objective of the University Corridors for Refugees 8.0 is 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, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to Italy. University Corridors for Refugees – UNICORE 8.0 is jointly promoted by a consortium composed by the following partners:

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Caritas Italiana
- Diaconia Valdese
- Centro Astalli – JRS Jesuit Refugee Service
- Ghandi Charity
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)
- University of Padua
- 39 Italian higher education institutions (the complete list will be included into the national agreement).

The benefits are intended for holders of international protection certified by UNHCR living in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, applying for at least one of the second cycle degree programmes taught in English at one of the partner universities for Academic Year (A.Y.) 2026/27.

The full list of the programmes available at the University of Padua is provided in Annex 1.

1.1 Local Partners of the Project

The University of Padua will be supported in the project by the following local partners: Diaconia Valdese, Associazione Popoli Insieme, Associazione Migranti, Fondazione IRPEA, Refugees Welcome Italia, Orizzonti Società Cooperativa Sociale. The support is conditional to the signing of the local protocol between the parties.

1.2 List of benefits and supports offered

- logistical and economic support for visa applications at the Italian Embassy and other pre-departure bureaucracy (UNHCR/MAECI);
- coverage of travel tickets to reach Padua (University of Padua);
- tuition fee waiver for the whole duration of the master's degree (University of Padua);
- payment of the annual enrollment fee (regional fee and revenue stamps) (Diaconia Valdese);
- free accommodation in student dorms / private affiliated colleges / university residences (University of Padua);
- one free meals per day, from Monday to Friday, in ESU canteens or affiliated restaurant (University of Padua);

- Scholarship of 4,800 euros academic year, assigned into two instalments each year, plus an additional instalment of 2,400 euros in September 2028 in case of graduation by March 2029, according to art. 9.2, (University of Padua);
- provision of health insurance (Diaconia Valdese);
- coverage of residence permit expenses (Diaconia Valdese);
- mobile phone SIM card and first month subscription (Diaconia Valdese);
- one-time pocket money of € 100,00 upon arrival (Diaconia Valdese);
- coverage of the study-related expenses, e.g. personal computer, stationery, books (University of Padua);
- coverage of local transport subscription (University of Padua);
- free language courses at the University Language Centre (University of Padua);
- Italian language tandem learning (Associazione Popoli Insieme);
- support for administrative procedures, for integration in everyday life, mentoring, social and cultural inclusion, networking, orientation to access extra-curricular activities and services (Diaconia Valdese, Associazione Migranti, Associazione Popoli Insieme and Refugees Welcome Italia)
- dedicated tutoring by local students (University of Padua);
- psychological support (Orizzonti Società Cooperativa Sociale and SCUP);
- post-lauream job placement facilitation and orientation (Fondazione IRPEA).

The above-mentioned benefits are applicable only to the beneficiaries of the scholarship and cannot be extended for any reason to relatives or third parties.

ART. 2 - Incompatibilities

The UNICORE 8.0 study grants cannot be combined with any other scholarship or grant awarded by other public institutions (e.g. Padua Excellence scholarship, MAECI, Invest Your Talent, Regione Veneto, etc).

ART. 3 - Entry admission requirements

To be eligible for selection, under penalty of exclusion, applicants must:

- hold UNCHR refugee status¹ and residence in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe;
- hold a qualification valid for admission to the chosen Master's degree programme awarded by a duly accredited higher education institution². The qualification must allow to local access to a second-cycle degree programme;
- have graduated between January 1st 2021 and May 2nd 2026;
- have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.0 out of 4.0 or equivalent according to the Italian Ministry of University's [conversion table for foreign titles](https://www.unipd.it/en/entry-title-requirements) considering a minimum threshold of 24 out of 30 of the Italian Higher Education grading system. Higher GPAs may be requested depending on the country where the qualification has been obtained. The full list is available at <https://www.unipd.it/en/entry-title-requirements>;
- meet the specific admission requirements for the Master's degree programme of interest as specified in art. 2;
- fulfill the English requirements of at least B2 level according to the instructions provided at www.unipd.it/en/studying-padua/admission/language-requirement;
- have never been enrolled before in a degree programme at any of the Partner Universities listed in the national agreement.

Applicants must also comply with applicable provisions and deadlines, including enrollment regulations established by the Memorandum issued by the Italian Ministry of University and Research concerning foreign students' access to university degree programmes.

¹ The status will be confirmed by UNHCR local operation

² Applicants can consult our website <https://www.unipd.it/en/how-apply> and the Country-based list of specific foreign qualification at <https://www.unipd.it/en/entry-title-requirements> (non exhaustive list)

ART. 4 - Application procedure and documents required

4.1 Deadlines and modalities

The application will be deemed valid only if the student completes the below two-step procedure correctly.

Step 1

Applications can be submitted **until 17 April 2026, 12.00 pm/noon (UTC +2)** through the UNICORE website available at <https://universitycorridors.unhcr.it/>.

Incomplete or incorrect applications will not be taken into consideration. Students are allowed to apply for up to two (2) Master's degree programmes offered by the University of Padua and for only two (2) universities among those participating in the UNICORE 8.0 project including the University of Padua. This is a mandatory requirement: non-compliance with this clause will cause the immediate rejection of the application.

Step 2

Candidates meeting the entry requirements (art. 3) will be invited to register and upload the relevant documentation **until 2 May 2026, 11.59 pm (UTC +2)** on the University's platform apply.unipd.it.

For assistance or guidance, students can contact the Admissions and Welcome Unit - Global Engagement Office (unipd.rescuefund@unipd.it).

4.2 Application documents

Applicants must upload the following documents to their application:

- Refugee ID card / ration number card of the PoR;
- **Passport/Convention Travel Document** (if possessed);
- **Bachelor's degree diploma or equivalent first-cycle degree diploma** (if already obtained). Please verify the country-based specific entry title requirements at the following [link](#);
- Bachelor's degree **Transcript of records and relevant key to grades/GPA documentation**;
- **Proof of English Language** (check entry requirements at www.unipd.it/en/language-requirement-admission-degree-programmes);
- **Motivational Letter(s)** in English;
- **Curriculum Vitae (Résumé)** in English
- **Any other document required** (check entry requirements for each programme).

All documents in any language other than Italian or English must be supported by a translation into English or Italian on plain (non-letterhead) paper. Applicants must also provide the original document.

In the application phase it is not necessary to submit an official (sworn/certified) translation into Italian.

If admitted to the degree programme, students might be asked to submit other documents including legalised copies of previous qualifications. Applicants do not have to upload legalised documents at the application stage.

ART. 5 - Selection criteria

The evaluation will be carried out by a Committee of Experts of the University of Padua. A second decree will define the members of the Committee.

Students are selected on the basis of merit requirements, which will be evaluated in two phases:

- Phase 1: preliminary evaluation of the documentation;
- Phase 2: interviews of candidates.

5.1 Documentation evaluation

The Committee of Experts will evaluate the documentation received by each applicant based on the following criteria:

- Academic background and GPA (score: 0-20)
- Evaluation of CV: professional experience and personal skills (score: 0-10)
- Personal motivation and coherence between previous studies and selected second-cycle degree programme (score: 0-10)

Candidates scoring less than 25 will not be admitted to step 2 of the selection process. A provisional ranking will be drawn up and eligible candidates admitted to phase 2 of the selection process.

Candidates admitted to Phase 2 will be notified by email starting **from 18 May 2026**.

5.2 In-depth evaluation and interview of candidates

Applicants will be interviewed online by the relevant Committee, who will evaluate their motivation, expectations, and technical skills, as well as their mastering of the English language.

Interviews will be graded on a scale of 40 points. Shortlisted applicants scoring less than 25 points will be rejected. Those scoring 25 points or more will be eligible for the final ranking. Interviews will be conducted in English. Interviews will take place online **between 19 May and 19 June 2026**. Candidates will be notified by email about the date and time of the interview.

Candidates are requested to join the interview with the Refugee Identity Card used during the on-line application. A third party must be present during the beginning of the interview for the identification of the candidate.

ART. 6 - Establishment and approval of the final ranking list

The final ranking list will be drawn up according to the cumulative scores obtained in both phases of evaluation and will be approved by decree. The rankings will be arranged in descending order of scores. In case of a tie, priority will be given to the youngest candidate.

The full ranking list for the University of Padua will be published starting from **22 June 2026** on <https://www.unipd.it/en/unicore>. It will include the students selected to receive the scholarship and those eligible but not selected.

Beneficiaries of the scholarship will be also notified by email.

ART. 7 - Acceptance

In order to confirm acceptance of the UNICORE 8.0 project support and financial benefits, assignees must **confirm their acceptance no later than 7 days** from the reception of the email, under penalty of loss of the project support and financial benefits.

By accepting the scholarship, the students fully accept without reserve UNICORE 8.0 project support and financial benefits at the conditions established in this Call for applications. With the acceptance students also confirm under their own full responsibility that they do not fall within any of the conditions of incompatibility established in article 2 of this call for applications.

It is implied that any changes to the declared information must be promptly notified to the University.

Candidates will receive detailed information about the documents to be submitted in order to complete the enrolment.

ART. 8- Ranking scroll and assignment of available seats

Applicants may withdraw by sending an e-mail to unipd.rescuefund@unipd.it.

In case a candidate winner of the scholarship officially withdraws by **30 June 2026**, the scholarship will be allocated to the next eligible candidate in the ranking.

If, after having scrolled all the rankings, seats will still be available, the University of Padua reserves the right to call eligible candidates from other rankings issued by the partner Universities of the UNICORE project. Potential candidates will be required to undergo any additional selection process that the University of Padua will deem appropriate in order to verify the specific entry requirements.

ART. 9 - Procedure for accessing the financial benefits and renewal requirements

9.1 Access to the financial benefits

Beneficiaries will receive detailed information on how to access the benefits by e-mail.
Beneficiaries are kindly invited to regularly check their mailbox for updates of the process.

9.2 Renewal requirements

For the scholarship to be renewed for the second year, the students must have obtained at least 30 CFU **by 30 September 2027**.

9.3 Scholarship instalments

The scholarship will be paid in 4 instalments of € 2,400.00 each. The first instalment will be paid upon arrival and successful enrolment at the University.

The next instalments will be paid based on merit requirements:

- 2nd instalment: the student must have registered at least 8 credits by the end of a.y. 2026/27 winter examination session (March 2027);
- 3rd instalment: the student must have registered at least 30 credits by the end of a.y. 2026/27 summer and extra examination sessions (September 2027);
- 4th instalment: the student must have registered at least 48 credits by the end of a.y. 2027/28 winter examination session (March 2028).

An additional 5th instalment of € 2,400.00 can also be requested by students graduating by March 2029. Students must have gained at least 90 credits by the end of a.y. 2027/28 summer and extra examination sessions (September 2028).

9.4 Additional Renewals

If the student does not succeed to complete the Master Programme within the last session of academic year 2027/2028 (March 2029), he/she can apply for an extension of the grant until July 2029. The request must be submitted to the Admissions and Welcome Unit by 30 October 2028.

The above additional grants will be considered only if the student has obtained at least 90 credits and they are subject to financial availability and approval by the University and the local partners. Any extension will be subject to a case-by-case approach.

ART. 10 - Withdrawal

In case of withdrawals, eligible students will automatically lose all benefits granted by this call for applications.

ART. 11 - Information notice concerning data processing

Personal data collected are processed as described at: <https://www.unipd.it/en/privacy>.

Personal data collected are also processed in compliance with UNHCR [Data Protection Policy](#) and its [guidance](#).

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 as a result of such verification the applicant will forfeit the right to the study grant.

ART. 12 - 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” among all the parties listed in art. 1.

The Rector
Prof. Daniela Mapelli
digitally signed as per the decree 82/2005