University Corridors for Refugees - UNICORE 2.0 (Ethiopia 2020-2022)

Call for application for 2 study grants and welcome services for refugee students registering for Second cycle degree programmes held in English at the University of Pisa, Academic Years 2020-21 and 2021-2022

APPLICATION SUBMISSION: From 20 April 2020 to 20 May 2020

ART. 1 – Subject, benefits and duration

The general objective of the UNICORE 2.0 pilot project is to promote the right to higher education for refugees, through the creation of study corridors from Ethiopia to Italy.

1.1 National Project Partners

UNICORE 2.0 is jointly supported by a consortium of partners, including: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Caritas Italiana, Waldensian Deaconship, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), University of Pisa (UNIPI) and other Italian Universities.

1.2 Local Project Partners

The Tuscany Regional Agency for the Right to University Study (Diritto allo Studio Universitario - DSU Toscana) and other local partners will support the University of Pisa and contribute to the local development of the project. The support is dependent on the establishment of a partnership with the institutions mentioned above. The services offered by the partners will be detailed in their letters of agreement to join the partnership.

1.3 Benefits and supports offered

The benefits are intended for holders of International Protection certified by UNHCR currently living in Ethiopia, registering in one of the degree programmes offered at one of the partner university for the Academic Year (A.Y.) 2020-21.

The full list of the Second Cycle degree programmes held in English at the University of Pisa is specified in Annex 2.

UNICORE 2.0 benefits are assigned for the A.Y. 2020-21 and A.Y. 2021-22. Merit requirements retention and additional renewals conditions are applied as listed in Art.6.

Beneficiaries of the UNICORE 2.0 project will benefit from full support in:

- pre-enrolling at the Italian Embassy in Ethiopia and carrying out immigration procedures;
- applying for admission to one of the Second Cycle degree programmes held in English at the University of Pisa, listed in Annex 2;
- receiving financial benefits, housing and board as better detailed in article 1.4;
- applying for DSU benefits;
- mentoring services in administrative, logistical and educational issues throughout the study programme, provided by the International Office and the teaching staff in charge of the project;
- integrating into the local students’ life and community.
1.4 Specific Benefits offered by the University of Pisa

Beneficiaries of the UNICORE 2.0 project at the University of Pisa will also receive specific financial benefits and support, consisting of:

- Full coverage of the expenses incurred in Ethiopia before the arrival in Italy (e.g. flight tickets, visa application and preparation of supporting document) covered by Caritas Italiana
- € 3,000 per year covered by the University of Pisa. Payments will be divided into instalments. Selected candidates will be provided with more information upon enrolment.
- In the event the beneficiary is not awarded the DSU benefits for the Academic Year 2020/2021 and/or 2021/2022, a supplementary grant of 3,000€ per academic year, paid into instalments, will be awarded by the University of Pisa in compliance with the merit requirements listed in art. 6.
- Free accommodation in a shared room from arrival to October 2020
- Tuition fee exemption (still, the student must pay €16 for the revenue stamp - amount subject to change for A.Y. 2020-21)
- Monthly allowance of 200 € for additional cost throughout the study programme duration, covered by the Waldensian Deaconship
- A Buddy service to facilitate the integration in the local students’ life and community
- Additional support from local partners signing the cooperation agreement.

The benefits mentioned above only apply to the scholarship beneficiaries and in any case can be extended to relatives or third parties.

Beneficiaries of the UNICORE Project at the University of Pisa will have to apply for DSU benefits for A.Y. 2020-21 and 2021-2022, which include:

- a study grant per academic year, paid into instalments;
- accommodation in a shared room at DSU students’ dorm;
- free access to the university dining halls (“mensa”) for two daily meals;
- tuition fee exemption (still, the student must pay €16 for the revenue stamp - amount subject to change - for A.Y. 2020-21).

The candidate must correctly submit the applications for DSU benefits within the deadlines set by DSU for A.Y. 2020/21 and 2021/22 according to the annual call for scholarships and accommodation, usually published in July on the website https://www.dsu.toscana.it/servizi/benefici-agli-studenti/borsa-di-studio-e-posto-alloggio/

The University of Pisa will support students in filling the form and keeping contacts with DSU office.

UNICORE 2.0 and DSU benefits are subject to the acquisition of the merit requirements for each academic year as specified in art. 6.

Further additional financial benefits may be awarded after the end of academic year 2021/2022 (see, art. 6.3).
ART. 2 – Incompatibility

The UNICORE 2.0 study grants are incompatible with:

- merit-based study grants/prizes issued by the University of Pisa for the support of international students;
- study grants offered by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI);
- CRUI (Conferenza Rettori Università Italiane) grants for beneficiaries of international protection;
- study grants offered by foreign governmental bodies or institutions, based on agreements with the University of Pisa, aimed at the enrolment assistance of international students at the University of Pisa.

ART. 3 – Application requirements.

Application is exclusively open to candidates who:

1. are residing in Ethiopia and have been recognized the refugee status/International Protection by UNHCR;
2. hold a qualification valid for admission to the selected Second Cycle degree programme, issued by a higher education institution accredited in the Ethiopian higher education system;
3. have obtained the qualification between the year 2015 and the 20 May 2020;
4. have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.0 according to the Ethiopian tertiary education grading system\(^1\);
5. meet the specific admission requirements of the selected Second Cycle degree programme. (In Annex 2 please find further information about specific admission requirements of the Second Cycle degree programmes held in English at the University of Pisa);
6. have never been enrolled before in a degree programme at the University of Pisa.

ART. 4 – Application documents, deadlines and procedures

4.1 Application document

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

1. The application form and CV annexed to this call (see Annex 1)
2. A copy of their currently valid Refugee Identity Card and/or the Proof of Registration issued in collaboration with UNHCR
3. An official certificate, issued by the awarding university, confirming the qualification required for admission to the selected degree programme;
4. Official transcript of exams and marks;
5. Any other relevant and additional document required by the specific degree programme selected (including but not limited to certification of English language knowledge, see Annex 2)
6. A motivation letter (maximum two pages)
7. Applicants are warmly recommended to record a short video CV (e.g. using a mobile phone) where they introduce themselves and their motivations. Candidates can forward the video via [https://wetransfer.com/](https://wetransfer.com/) to the email address unicore@adm.unipi.it. Applicants will be emailed on the video receipt. It is not required to annex the video to the requested documentation.

All submitted documents must be in English or Italian. 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. In the application stage, the applicant can provide an informal translation but mandatorily along with the original documents. In this stage, it is not necessary to submit an official certified translation into Italian, or the relative legalization or "declaration of value" of the study qualification.

4.2 Deadlines and procedures
Applications, along with the documents listed in art.4.1, must be submitted between 20 April 2020 at 12:00 pm (Italy official time) to 20 May 2020 at 12:00 pm (Italy official time).

For the University of Pisa, the application must be submitted exclusively via email to the mailbox unicore@adm.unipi.it specifying in the object: CALL UNICORE 2.0 and the candidate’s name and surname.

Applications not correctly filled in or not complete with all the required documentation will not be accepted. Applications cannot be submitted on hardcopy, by fax or to a mailbox different from the one mentioned above.

Concerning the University of Pisa, candidates are allowed to apply for a maximum of two programmes. We strongly recommend not to apply for more than two different Universities within the same project and to select exclusively the programmes for which the specific entry requirements are met. When filling the application for the Programmes offered by the University of Pisa, applicants can contact the International Office telephone n° +39 050 22 12 276 / 157 from Monday to Friday between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm (Italy official time) or e-mail to unicore@adm.unipi.it

ART.5 – Selection criteria and process

5.1 Selection criteria and evaluation committee
Candidates are selected upon merits requirements. For the University of Pisa, the evaluation will be carried out by a Committee of Experts composed by Prof. Marcello Di Filippo (Teaching staff Focal point in charge of the project), staff members of the International Office, the Presidents of the relevant Master’s Degree Programmes or their delegates and any other teaching staff considered appropriate.

5.2 Selection process
The selection process foresees two stages:

- Stage 1: preliminary evaluation of the documentation submitted.
- Stage 2: in-depth assessment and interview of selected candidates.

Stage 1 – Preliminary evaluation of the documentation submitted

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

- Academic background and Grade Point Average GPA (score: 0-20)
- CV Evaluation: 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 receiving a score lower than 25 will not be admitted to stage 2 of the selection process. Candidates admitted to Stage 2 will be emailed by 1 June 2020.

Stage 2 – In-depth assessment and interview of candidates

The in-depth assessment of the candidates admitted to stage 2 and the interviews will be carried out by the Committee of Experts, who will assess their motivation, skills and competence on the subject as well as their English language proficiency.

Interviews will only be held remotely, via skype or other similar platforms, starting from 3 June 2020. Candidates will be emailed on the date and time of the interview. In case of application to two Programmes, the evaluation Committees will try to arrange the interviews on the same date.

Candidates are requested to attend the interview having at hand the Refugee Identity Card and/or the Proof of Registration used during the application. To assure the candidates’ identification, a third party will be present at the beginning of the interview.

Interviews will be assessed on a scale of 40 points. Only candidates receiving a minimum score of 25 points will be eligible for the final ranking.

5.3 Setting and approval of the final ranking list of candidates

Only candidates with a minimum overall score of 50 out of 80 points, will be included in the final ranking.

The Committee of Experts will set up the candidates ranking lists summing up the scores of the two stages. The final ranking list is set in decreasing order and then approved by decree.

The two available places are awarded on a gender balance ratio and the Committee will set up two different ranking lists according to the gender of the candidates.

In the event the list of eligible candidates does not include representatives of both genders, the places can be awarded to the first beneficiary of the same gender. Upon equal score, preference will be given to the younger candidate.

The list of applicants admitted to the University of Pisa, including the ones not selected for the available seats, will be published on the websites http://www.unipi.it/unicore and on http://universitycorridors.unhcr.it/ by 30 June 2020.
5.4 Acceptance
Selected candidates will be personally emailed by 30 June, 2020. To confirm the acceptance of the UNICORE 2.0 project support and financial benefits, the selected candidates must reply to the University of Pisa by emailing to unicore@adm.unipi.it no later than 10 days from the notification sending date, under penalty of loss of the project support and financial benefits.

Selected candidates must state their full acceptance without reserve of the UNICORE 2.0 project support and financial benefits, according to the conditions established in the call for application. With the acceptance, they are also required to confirm, under their own full responsibility, not to have any of the conditions of incompatibility established in article 2 of this call. They shall also notify the University of Pisa any changes to the declared information that may occur during the year.

**IMPORTANT**: students selected for the UNICORE 2.0 project support and financial benefits are not automatically enrolled in the selected Second Cycle Degree Programme. Students must personally enrol in the selected Degree Programme and comply with applicable provisions and deadlines, including the enrolment regulations established by the Memorandum issued by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research concerning foreign students’ access to university degree programmes.

Selected students will receive from the International Office of the University of Pisa detailed information about the procedure to complete the enrolment process. Upon arrival, selected candidates will have to hand over the following documents:

- The original Bachelor’s Degree certificate;
- Declaration of value (DV), issued by the Italian Diplomatic Authorities in their home country, along with the diploma official translation into Italian, legalised (or with an “apostille”) and validated **OR**, the ENIC-NARIC certificate is accepted;
- The University Transcript of Records with all the exams completed (in English or Italian).

5.5 Ranking scroll and vacant places assignment
In case a selected candidate waives by 15 July 2020, UNICORE 2.0 project support and financial benefits will be allocated to the next eligible candidate in the gender-based ranking list.

ART. 6 – Access to the scholarship and renewal requirements

6.1 Access to the scholarship
Selected candidates will be emailed for detailed information to access the benefits.

6.2 Renewal and merit requirements
The merit requirements to preserve the UNICORE 2.0 and DSU benefits during each academic year are:

- For the first year: acquisition of 30 CFU (Crediti Formativi Universitari- University Credits) within 10 August 2021
- For the second year: acquisition of 80 CFU (Crediti Formativi Universitari- University Credits) within 10 August 2022
6.3 Additional Renewals
The students who do not foresee to complete the Master’s Degree Programme within December 2022 can request a six (6) months extension of the scholarship, submitting a formal request to the International Office by 1 September 2022. The University of Pisa will grant the extension from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 only if the student has obtained at least 84 CFU (Crediti Formativi Universitari - University Credits).

Additional renewals and extension are subject to the University decision, financial availability and eventually only to the extent not covered by DSU benefits. Any further extension will be subject to a case-by-case approach.

ART. 7 – Waiving
Selected candidates can waive by emailing unicore@adm.unipi.it. The scholarship will be allocated to the next eligible candidate in the gender-based ranking.

ART. 8 – Information notice concerning data processing
Personal data collected are processed as described in the Regolamento per la protezione dei dati personali nell’Università di Pisa available (in Italian) at: http://alboufficiale.unipi.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/RegProtezioneDatiPersonali.pdf

Personal data collected are processed in compliance with UNHCR Data Protection Policy Available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/55643c1d4.html and its guidance available at https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b360f4d4.html

The Administration reserves the right to verify the truthfulness 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 the applicant will forfeit the right to the study grant.

ART. 9 – Conditional issuing of the call for application
This call for application is issued conditionally to the signing of the cooperation agreement and its addendum for the project “University Corridors for Refugees 2.0” (Ethiopia –2020-2022) among all the parties listed in art. 1, para. 1. The same applies to the signing of the cooperation agreement with local partners mentioned in art. 1, para. 2.

Additionally, this call might be suspended or withdrawn following the developments of the legal and epidemiological framework of the health emergency known as SARS-CoV-2.

ART. 10 – Call publication
The present call will be published on the official university register and on the website http://www.unipi.it/unicore
ART.11 – Responsible for the procedure

In compliance with the provisions of Law no. 241/1990, art.5, the responsible in charge for the procedure of the present call is MRS Cristina Orsini, Direzione Servizi per la Didattica e l'Internazionalizzazione - Lungarno Pacinotti 44, 56126 Pisa, email cooperations@unipi.it

Annexes
- Annex 1 – Application Form and CV
- Annex 2 – List of the Second Cycle Degree held in English at the University of Pisa, included in the call