

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: Selection of 30 students for the Winter School in Interdisciplinary Biodiversity 2026 – February 2-7

Art. 1 – Presentation

The Winter School, sponsored by the National Biodiversity Future Center (NBFC), is organised by Ca' Foscari University's School for International Education (CFSIE) in collaboration with the Italian National Research Council's Istituto di Scienze Marine (CNR-ISMAR) so as to provide definitions and tools for the understanding and management of the different components of the biodiversity as observed by the biologist, the climatologist, the social scientist, the economist and others. The programme takes a widely interdisciplinary approach, will investigate the following questions:

- What is biodiversity?
- How can it be measured nowadays, and its changes determined with respect to the "natural" state of the environment?
- What are the ecosystem services provided by the biota and their effects on human health, food production and energy supply?
- How is biodiversity conservation regulated by law?

The Program Director is Assistant Professor Corinna Guerra (Historian of Science, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, Ca' Foscari University).

Art. 2 – Winter School contents and structure

1. A total of 30 participants will be accepted.
2. Courses are held in English.
3. The programme is open to applicants with any academic background.
4. Participants are not required to have previously studied any specific topics. The course contents are designed so as to be able to offer learning opportunities for applicants at all levels and to enhance exchange between applicants with different backgrounds.
5. The programme runs from February 2 to February 7, 2026. Classes will be held on campus in classrooms at Ca' Foscari University and CNR-Ismar in the Venice city centre. One day will also be dedicated to field work.
6. Accommodation is included for 24 participants (see art. 7.2).

Art. 3 – Admission Requirements

1. Applicants must have completed at least an undergraduate (Bachelor's) degree.
2. Applicants must have a good working knowledge of English (a solid B2 is expected). Applicants are not required to produce certification, but must be able to easily interact and engage with their peers and instructors.

Art. 4 – Applications

1. This Call for Applications has been published online on the dedicated webpage: www.unive.it/winter-biodiversity
2. The online application form is available here: [link](#).
3. Applicants must use their full name in the application, and their name and surname should be the same that are present in their ID card or passport.
4. Applicants must include the following documents in their application:
 - a. Curriculum vitae in English in Europass format with certifications and publications (<https://europass.europa.eu/en/create-europass-cv>);
 - b. Passport or ID card. This will be used to confirm the citizenship of the applicant.

- c. Applicants are required to submit their highest University qualification (Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, **OR** PhD), in Italian or English. Incomplete or lower-level qualifications should not be submitted. If the certificate/diploma is issued in another language, an official translation to Italian or English must be included. Official translations must be carried out by an authorised translator (e.g., university, sworn translator, professional agency, etc.).
 - d. Motivation letter of no more than 800 words, written in English. In the letter, applicants should explain why they are applying for this position, providing a short overview of their profile and background. They should describe how their experience and qualifications relate to the study of biodiversity, highlighting any relevant academic or professional experience. Finally, applicants should reflect on why they believe that an interdisciplinary, full-immersion approach to studying biodiversity at this School will be valuable for their academic and professional development.
- 5. Applications may be rejected for any of the following reasons:
 - a. received after the deadline;
 - b. incomplete or incorrect;
 - c. missing documents;
 - d. false information.
- 6. If the Selection Committee deems that an applicant's motivation letter has not been written in their own words, that is, it has been plagiarised, taken from a template, or has been written through the use of AI, points will be deducted for lack of originality. Applicants should be aware that motivation letters written through the use of AI are clearly identifiable.
- 7. Applicants must upload all documents in the application form before the deadline.
- 8. Documents must be named as follows: SURNAME Name – Type of document. Please follow this example: "SMITH John – Motivation letter" or "SMITH John – Final diploma".
- 9. The application deadline is **December 9th, 2025, at 12 PM CET**.

Art. 5 – Selection and overall ranking

- 1. The selection process will be carried out by a Selection Committee, to be nominated in a successive phase of the application process.
- 2. All applicants will be ranked based on their overall score, which will be structured in the following way:
 - a. **40% Academic profile**
 - b. **60% Motivation**
- 3. The Selection Committee may request applicants to sit an online interview to verify their academic profile, motivation, and communication skills.
- 4. Should two or more applicants attain an equal placing in the ranking, precedence will be given (in this order):
 - a. applicants holding a non-EU citizenship
 - b. the younger student
- 5. The rankings will be available no later than December 19th, 2025
- 6. Applicants who are ranked within the top 30 places in the ranking will be admitted on condition that they accept their place within the specified time frame (see art. 6).
- 7. Applicants who are ranked lower than the number of places reserved for the programme will be placed on a waitlist.
- 8. Applicants on the waitlist will be contacted between January 7th and 15th should a place become available (see art. 6).

Art. 6 – Final admission and acceptance

1. Selected applicants must confirm their place by January 7th, 2026 by:
 - a. Filling out the online acceptance form;
 - b. Paying the application fee of €50.
2. Should a student not confirm their place by the final admission deadline (as per the publication of the final ranking), applicants on the waitlist will be contacted.
3. Payments are to be made online through the platform “PagoPA”. Wire transfers will not be accepted as a payment option. Selected applicants will receive a link to make the application fee payment. All further information will be sent to applicants by email once the rankings have been published.

Art. 7 – Tuition, Accommodation, and Travel

1. Tuition costs, including field visits, are covered for all selected applicants.
2. Accommodation costs - which will be arranged at a residence in Venice, in double rooms – are covered for the first 24 selected applicants in the ranking from February 1st to 7th, 2026. Applicants who wish to arrive earlier or leave later will have to make their own arrangements independently.
Applicants who do not need accommodation should specify this in the application form. Applicants who accept the provided accommodation will be responsible for paying the tourist tax (approximately 3 euros per day).
3. All participants are provided meals at the university cafeteria on the days of teaching for lunch and dinner (the cafeteria is closed on Saturday evening).
4. Participants will receive a weekly public transport pass for travel within the city of Venice.
5. Up to 12 selected applicants will receive a partial (or total) reimbursement of travel costs upon submission of complete documentation (invoice or other document stating the cost of the ticket(s), booking confirmation, and proof of payment). Applicants who do not need travel reimbursement should specify this in the application form.

The travel reimbursements will be provided to the participants based on their final ranking position and on their citizenship. Specifically, reimbursements will be offered to:

- The top 6 applicants holding non-EU citizenship
- The top 6 applicants holding EU citizenship

as determined by their position in the overall ranking.

Each selected participant will be eligible for:

- reimbursement of up to € 600,00 for travel from cities located up to 1299 km from Venice;
- reimbursement of up to €1.300,00 for travel from cities located 1300 km or more from Venice.

In all cases, the reimbursement will not exceed the actual amount paid by the participant, even if the eligible maximum reimbursement is higher.

Applicants must calculate the distance from their city of departure to Venice by using the following online tool: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/distance-calculator>.

The selection committee will use the same tool to determine the applicable reimbursement.

Selected applicants will be contacted after the publication of the ranking and required to confirm the place of departure.

6. Selected applicants who are citizens of non-EU countries and who do not possess a legal status permitting travel to Italy are required to apply for and obtain an entry Visa as a mandatory condition for participation. **It is highly recommended to verify the conditions and timing for the VISA request immediately upon submission of the application.**
7. Applicants who need an entry Visa to travel to Italy must send a copy of it to the School for International Education office at summerschool.international@unive.it once they obtain it.
8. Applicants who need an entry Visa to travel to Italy and do not receive it are not eligible for reimbursement of their travel costs.

Art. 8 – Policies

1. **Attendance is mandatory.** If a student is unable to attend any of the teaching activities, they must notify the Programme Director and the School for International Education office as soon as possible, providing a valid justification. Only health-related absences will be considered justified when calculating the final attendance rate.
2. Participants who have reached the minimum attendance requirement of 80% and have completed any final assessments that the programme faculty may deem necessary, will be awarded an [Open Badge](#), which certifies the skills acquired in the Winter School.
3. Ca' Foscari students may also obtain university credits (CFU) by contacting the Head of Studies for their respective degree programmes ("Collegio didattico").
4. Participants who did not attend at least 80% of all classes or have not completed the final assessment will receive a certificate of participation. Participants who did not meet any of the two abovementioned criteria will not receive any certificate.
5. Classes are not expected to be held online in any circumstance. Should force majeure affect the program in any way, class instructors will evaluate how best to provide participants with class materials (class recordings, online tutorials, homework through online learning platforms, additional readings, and so on).

Art. 9 – Information on Personal Data Processing

1. The data processor is Ca' Foscari University of Venice, with headquarters in Dorsoduro n. 3246, 30123 Venice (VE), in the person of the Rector Magnificent.
2. The University has appointed the "Data Protection Officer", who can be contacted by writing to the e-mail address dpo@unive.it or to the following address: Ca' Foscari University, Venice, Data Protection Manager, Dorsoduro n. 3246, 30123 Venice (VE).
3. Personal data categories, purposes and legal basis of data processing
The data processing in question involves the provision of personal data and data relating to previous study and professional experience. Unless the selection procedure is for protected categories, it is not necessary to provide data of a sensitive nature (for example, data concerning health status, sexual orientation or political or trade union opinions); candidates are therefore requested not to provide such data, unless deemed necessary for optimal evaluation of the position selection procedure. The processing of personal data is aimed solely at the completion of the selection procedure and will take place in a way and within the limits necessary to pursue the aforementioned purpose. The legal basis for this treatment is represented by art. 6.1.e) of the Regulations ("execution of a task of public interest or connected to the exercise of public powers"). The processing of personal data is based on the principles of correctness, lawfulness and transparency and the protection of the privacy and rights of the data subject, as well as the additional principles established by art. 5 of the Regulations. More information about the privacy policy can be found at this link: <https://www.unive.it/pag/36610/>.