



**CALL FOR ADMISSION  
TO THE INDUSTRIAL PhD PROGRAMME IN THE AREA OF  
"BIG DATA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - 38TH CYCLE"**

*pursuant to Art. 10 of Ministerial Decree No. 226/2021  
financed from the resources allocated by Ministerial Decree No. 352/2022  
R.D. no. 56 of 01 august 2022*

## ART. 1

### Subject of the Call and General Provisions

1. Università Telematica *Universitas Mercatorum* has opened a call for admission to the 38th Cycle of the Industrial PhD Programme in the area of "*Big data and Artificial Intelligence*", based at the said University, for a three-year period, following the positive outcome by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MUR).
2. The Industrial PhD Programme in "*Big Data and Artificial Intelligence - 38th Cycle*" is scheduled to begin on 1 December 2022 and end on 30 November of the third year of the programme, unless otherwise specified by MUR and ANVUR (National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research Systems).
3. The MUR aims to promote interdisciplinarity, membership of international networks and cross-sectoral collaboration, as set out in the NRRP, by implementing PhD programmes on defined topics (cf. Ministerial Decree no. 352 of 9 April 2022). PhD Scholarships are established within the framework of the reserved topics indicated in the said decree and in compliance with the eligibility criteria set out in Article 6 of Ministerial Decree no. 352 of 9 April 2022. The PhD Programme in question provides for the involvement of enterprises in the defining the educational pathway, through periods of mandatory study and research at the enterprise facilities, ranging from a minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 18 months for scholarships granted under Ministerial Decree 352/2022. The enterprises involved in the defining the training project co-finance 50% of the grant established by the Ministry under this decree. A period of study and research abroad of between 6 months and 18 months at the foreign partner institutions is also mandatorily required for each reserved topic.
4. A profile of the PhD Programme is provided (see Annex 1.A, which is attached to and made an integral part of this Call) containing the following information:
  - the head office of the PhD Programme;
  - the number and type of positions offered by the Call;
  - the number and type of scholarships;
  - the curricula, if any;
  - the procedures for the admission tests;
  - the University web page dedicated to the PhD Programme referred to in paragraph 1 above, where all useful information concerning the programme and its schedule can be found.
5. The number of positions and scholarships indicated in the profile of each Programme (see Annex 1.A) may be increased, as a result of any extra funding by the University or at regional and/or national and/or European and/or international level. Any increased funding will be advertised on the University website at the following link:  
<https://www.unimercuratorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/dottorato-industriale-in-big-data-ed-intelligenza-artificiale> in the dedicated section.
6. The number of scholarships may also be increased as a result of increased funding from public and/or private bodies, provided that the relevant arrangements are agreed to no later than the deadline for submitting the applications under this Call. In this case, the increased funding will increase the number of scholarships alone and will not affect the overall number of positions envisaged by this Call for each PhD Programme.
7. The University reserves the right to withdraw this Call, suspend or postpone the relevant admission tests, or suspend or discontinue the admission of the successful applicants, or suspend or not award all the scholarships hereunder, for reasons that cannot currently be

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assessed or foreseen. In particular, the University reserves the right not to award the scholarships or to suspend their disbursement following the occurrence of unforeseen or unforeseeable events resulting in the loss of external – public and private – funding.

8. This notice, drafted in Italian and translated into English, is published online on the institutional website of Università Telematica *Universitas Mercatorum* at the following link: <https://www.unimercatorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/dottorato-industriale-in-big-data-ed-intelligenza-artificiale>, which has the value of an official notice to the interested parties, in respect of the information it contains, whereby the applicants will receive no further communication.
9. This Call will also be published on the European *Euraxess* website, as well as the website of the Ministry of Universities and Research.
10. Any corrections will be announced solely by publication on the said University website.

### ART. 2

#### Admission Requirements

1. Only applicants holding one of the following qualifications may apply for admission to the Industrial PhD Programme specified in Article 1(1) of this Call, regardless of age or nationality, namely:
  - *laurea magistrale* (master's degree) obtained pursuant to Ministerial Decree 270/2004;
  - *laurea specialistica* (specialist degree) obtained pursuant to Ministerial Decree 509/1999;
  - *laurea* (degree) obtained pursuant to the degree regulations (*ordinamenti didattici*) in force prior to Ministerial Decree 509/1999, envisaging a minimum period of study of at least four years;
  - academic qualification equivalent to an Italian *laurea* – envisaging a minimum period of study of at least four years – obtained at a foreign university.
2. Students who obtain the necessary academic qualification within the deadline of **31 October 2022**, at the latest, may also apply for admission under this Call, provided that they only need to take their graduation examination at the date of application and that they undertake to certify that they have obtained the necessary qualification at the date of enrolment, under penalty of forfeiture thereof. To determine whether or not such applicants are eligible for admission, the weighted average of the grades obtained in the examinations taken and the completion of the thesis for submission will be taken into consideration.
3. Applicants shall be admitted to the competition subject to verification of the self-certified declarations, pursuant to Presidential Decree no. 445/2000 as amended. The University may, at any time during the procedure, even after the start of the PhD programme, carry out checks on the truthfulness of the statements produced and request the production of the original documents. The University may order, at any time, by reasoned decision, the exclusion of applicants from the competition, or disqualification from admission to the PhD programme, for any failure to meet the requirements herein, without prejudice to any criminal liability arising from the misrepresentation. Such a measure shall be communicated to the interested party at the PEC (certified email) address from which they forwarded the Application Form.

### ART. 3

#### Academic Qualifications Obtained Abroad

1. Applicants holding a foreign academic qualification [equivalent to a *laurea specialistica / magistrale / vecchio ordinamento (degree obtained under the previous degree regulations)*] may submit an application for admission, attaching the qualifications obtained accompanied by an Italian or English translation. Such applicants are admitted to take part in the competition subject to reservation and will be excluded from the competition or, if they are successful, from the PhD programme in which they are enrolled, if it is found, following verification, that their qualifications do not meet the requirements hereunder and therefore do not permit enrolment in the PhD programme.
2. The academic qualification obtained abroad must be comparable, in period of study, level and disciplinary field, to an Italian second-level academic qualification. The suitability of the foreign qualification is determined by the PhD programme admission committee, in accordance with the applicable regulations in force in Italy and in the country where the qualification was awarded, as well as with the applicable international treaties or agreements on the recognition of qualifications for the continuation of university studies.
3. By the start of the programme, the translated academic qualifications, legalised in Italian and accompanied by a "*Dichiarazione di valore in loco*" (Declaration of Value) issued by the competent Italian diplomatic mission in the country where the qualification was obtained, must in any case be submitted to the *Ufficio Dottorato* of the University, attached to the application form. Alternatively, a so-called "*Attestato di comparabilità*" (Statement of Comparability of the foreign academic qualification) issued by the **ENIC-NARIC** centre in Italy (**CIMEA**), containing all the information necessary for the evaluation of the qualification, may be submitted. For a degree obtained in an EU member State, the *Diploma Supplement* is sufficient.

### ART. 4

#### Application for Admission

1. The application for admission must be submitted, under penalty of exclusion, no later than **12 September 2022 at 23.59** (Italian time), according to the procedure described in paragraph 2 below.
2. The application shall be submitted exclusively to the certified email (PEC) address [ateneo.unimercatorum@legalmail.it](mailto:ateneo.unimercatorum@legalmail.it), attaching the documents listed in Art. 5 below, exclusively in PDF format and in a single email message with the subject "**Application for Admission - Industrial PhD Programme in Big Data and Artificial Intelligence**". The certified email address [ateneo.unimercatorum@legalmail.it](mailto:ateneo.unimercatorum@legalmail.it) also accepts messages from non-certified mail addresses.
3. Incomplete applications or applications submitted in a manner and timeframe other than as indicated in this article and in Article 5 below will be rejected.
4. In order to avoid system crash, it is advisable to complete the registration procedure well in advance of the closing date of the call for applications. The University accepts no responsibility if applicants are unable to complete the application procedure due to unforeseeable circumstances, force majeure or events beyond the University's control.

## ART. 5 Documents required to Apply

1. The application for admission must be submitted, under penalty of exclusion, no later than **12 September 2022 at 23.59** (Italian time), according to the procedure described in Article 4 above.
2. Applicants are required to attach the following documents to the Application for Admission (Annex 1.B), submitted in accordance with the procedures set out in Article 4 above, for the purpose of effectively evaluating their qualifications, namely:
  - The Application for Admission (Annex 1.B), to be completed in Italian or English, indicating:
    - a) your first and last name, tax identification number, date and place of birth, residence or domicile, telephone number, email address, citizenship;
    - b) the PhD programme of interest;
    - c) your academic qualification;
    - d) any disabilities that may apply to you, accompanied by appropriate documentation indicating the relevant extent of the disability (as a percentage);
    - e) your commitment to promptly notify [dottorati@unimercatorum.it](mailto:dottorati@unimercatorum.it) of any changes of address, telephone number and email address;
    - f) a statement to the effect that you have read the contents of this Call.
  - A copy of a valid ID.
  - Your CV, containing an account of your university career, dated and signed and consenting to the processing of personal data, in accordance with the applicable regulations.
  - One of the following documents relating to the qualification:
    - a) **if you hold a “laurea vecchio ordinamento”, “laurea specialistica” or “laurea magistrale” obtained from an Italian university:**  
the relevant graduation certificate or a declaration in lieu of certification (*dichiarazione sostitutiva di certificazione*) (showing the study plan, examinations passed, with the relative grades, and the final graduation examination, with the relative grade);
    - b) **if you hold a qualification obtained from a foreign university:** the relevant degree certificate (showing the study plan, examinations passed, with the relative grades, and the final graduation examination, with the relative grade) accompanied by a Statement of Comparability (SoC) issued by the CIMEA or Declaration of Value issued by the Italian Embassy or Consular Office;
    - c) **if you are still enrolled in a “laurea vecchio ordinamento”, “laurea specialistica” or “laurea magistrale” programme at an Italian university and have not yet obtained your degree at the time of application:**  
a certificate of enrolment in the final year of the programme, containing a list of examinations passed with the relevant grades;
    - d) **if you are still enrolled at a foreign university and have not yet obtained your degree at the time of application:**  
a certificate of enrolment in the final year of the programme, containing a list of examinations passed with the relevant grades.

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- A research project relating to the topic of the PhD, in accordance with the standard form attached to this Call (Annex 1.C).
  - A list of publications, if any, accompanied by their abstracts.
  - Any documents proving knowledge of the foreign language indicated in the profile of the relevant PhD Programme, as well as any additional language or computer skills.
  - Any documents relating to further training programmes.
  - Possibly, a reference letter by a university professor, according to ASN board criteria, or from qualified international researcher.
  - A list of the qualifications submitted, attached as an annex to the application.
3. All the documents must be produced either in Italian or in English. Any document(s) in a language other than Italian or English must be accompanied by a legalised translation into Italian or English, failing which we will be unable to evaluate them.
  4. Applicants undertake full and exclusive responsibility for the truthfulness of the information entered in the application form and the content of the annexes. The University reserves the right to carry out the checks and verifications envisaged by the applicable regulations and reserves the right to adopt at any time, subject to adequate justification, the measures for excluding any applicants who have not complied with the provisions of this Call or who do not meet the requirements laid down herein.

### ART. 6

#### Admission Tests and Evaluation of Qualifications

1. The admission test to the Industrial PhD Programme is intended to ascertain the applicant's aptitude for scientific research and the applicant must also demonstrate a good knowledge of the foreign language indicated in the PhD Programme profile attached to this Call (Annex 1.A).
2. The competition procedure involves the **evaluation of qualifications**, including the mandatory submission of a research project, and an **oral test**.
3. The above-mentioned **Research Project**, to be provided using the Standard Form (Annex 1.C), must indicate:
  - Project title;
  - Objectives of the project and its connection to the subject matter of the PhD;
  - Methodology and expected results;
  - Degree of feasibility;
  - Essential references, with up to a maximum of 12 titles.
4. The submitted research project shall not constitute a binding work programme, in the event of admission to the PhD programme.
5. The **competition schedule will be published on the University website** indicated in the Industrial PhD Programme profile (Annex 1.A), by the President of the Examination Board.
6. The publication of this Call, of the information contained in the Programme profile (Annex 1.A) and of the competition schedule is to be considered as tantamount to a notice, for all intents and purposes. Therefore, applicants who have not received a notice of their exclusion from the competition shall take the examination test according to the indicated schedule, without the need for further notice.
7. Any changes to the date and time of the admission tests will be published on the same University website indicated in the Industrial PhD Programme profile (Annex 1.A).
8. The Examination Board, referred to in Article 7 below, will assign a maximum of **120 points** to

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the applicants, broken down as follows.

<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<b>Max. 40 points</b>
<b>RESEARCH PROJECT</b>	<b>Max. 20 points</b>
<b>ORAL TEST</b>	<b>Max. 60 points</b>

The minimum score for admission to the oral test is at least **30 points**.

9. For the purpose of **evaluating the qualifications**, without prejudice to the autonomy of the Examination Board, the following documents will be taken into account:

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|--|-----------------------|
| a) <b>University degree (<i>laurea</i>)</b> consistent with the topics covered in the PhD Programme<br><i>(or, for graduating applicants only, a valid certificate of enrolment)</i>   | <b>Max. 10 points</b> |
| b) <b>Graduation grade</b><br><i>(or, failing that, for graduating applicants only, the weighted average grade of the examinations taken)</i>  | <b>Max. 10 points</b> |
| c) <b>Publications in peer-reviewed journals or series</b><br><i>(already published or with publisher's certificate of acceptance and forthcoming publication)</i>   | <b>Max. 10 points</b> |
| d) <b>Post-graduate qualifications</b> , such as: <i>diploma di specializzazione</i> (postgraduate diploma), postgraduate programmes, master's degree requiring a period of study of at least one year<br><i>(awarded by universities or qualified research organisations)</i> | <b>Max. 4 points</b>  |
| e) <b>Any professional and research experience</b><br><i>(collaboration grants for research activities, study and research periods abroad – including the Erasmus programme -, awards from national and international scientific societies)</i>                                | <b>Max. 4 points</b>  |
| f) <b>Other documents deemed useful</b><br><i>(participation in research activities, letter of reference from a university lecturer with ASN board criteria or from a qualified international researcher, appointment as lecturer, language certificate)</i>                   | <b>Max. 2 points</b>  |
| g) <b>Research project</b><br><i>(prepared according to the indications in paragraph 3 above)</i>  | <b>Max. 20 points</b> |

In the case of applicants graduating by **31 October 2022**, the weighted average grade of the examinations, which replaces the graduation grade in b), must be determined by:

1. multiplying each exam grade by the respective number of credits (30 “cum laude” counts as 30);
2. adding up all the results obtained;
3. dividing the result by the sum of the useful credits (those of the graded examinations);

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4. multiplying the average obtained by 110 and dividing the result by 30 (thus obtaining the grade in one hundred and tenths).

The weighted average is not required for graduating students and graduates from foreign universities.

10. With regard to the **evaluation of the oral test** (interview), without prejudice to the autonomy of the Admission Committee, the evaluation criteria are as follows:
- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| a) <i>Clarity of presentation</i>  | <b>Max. 10 points</b> |
| b) <i>Skills of synthesis</i>  | <b>Max. 10 points</b> |
| c) <i>Critical approach and adequate knowledge of the topics related to the qualifications submitted</i>                 | <b>Max. 15 points</b> |
| d) <i>Ability to conduct part of the test in the foreign language indicated in the PhD Programme profile (Annex 1.A)</i> | <b>Max. 5 points</b>  |
| e) <i>Ability to answer in-depth questions on the presented Research Project</i>   | <b>Max. 20 points</b> |
11. The oral test is deemed passed if the applicant obtains a minimum total score of **40** out of 60 **points**.

### ART. 7

#### Examination Board and Related Formalities

1. An Examination Board shall be appointed by the Rector, composed in accordance with article 14 of the University Regulations governing PhD programmes (*Regolamento di Ateneo*) cited in the introduction, to assess admission to the Industrial PhD Programme herein.
2. The composition of the individual Boards will be published on the University website, at the following link:  
<https://www.unimercuratorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/dottorato-industriale-in-big-data-ed-intelligenza-artificiale>
3. The Examination Board shall *inter alia*:
  - post the competition schedule on the University *website* specified in the Industrial PhD Programme profile (Annex 1.A);
  - define the procedure for conducting the test (video conference or in person);
  - publish the results of the evaluation of the qualifications and the research project, which must take place at least 5 working days before the oral test;
  - promptly publish each evaluation (evaluation of qualifications and oral test) on the University *website* specified in the Industrial PhD Programme profile (Annex 1.A), in accordance with the competition schedule.
4. **Applicants will not receive any invitation or communication regarding the examinations.**
5. At the end of the examinations, the Examination Board shall draw up an overall ranking for the PhD Programme, on the basis of the grades obtained by each applicant. Applicants are admitted to the Programme in the order of ranking, until the available number of positions has been filled.



## ART. 8 Approval of the Ranking List

1. The Rector shall issue a decree to approve the ranking list, which shall show the total score obtained by each applicant in descending order. In the event of a tie between two or more applicants, the younger applicant shall prevail.
2. The above-mentioned ranking list for admission to the Industrial PhD Programme in "*Big data and Artificial Intelligence - 38th Cycle*" will be approved by Rectoral Decree and published on the University website, within the same deadline, at the following link: <https://www.unimercuratorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/dottorato-industriale-in-big-data-ed-intelligenza-artificiale> in the dedicated section.
3. This online posting will serve as official notice to all interested parties, **therefore, no communication will be sent personally to each applicant.**
4. Successful applicants may choose from among the various types of positions offered in the competition, and with respect to the positions in their chosen curriculum, on the basis of the highest total score achieved; applicants better placed in the ranking list will have more choice among the positions offered.

## Art. 9 Enrolling in the PhD Programme

1. Applicants admitted to the PhD programme will not receive any written communication.
2. **Successful applicants**, with or without a scholarship, must submit their enrolment application and make the relative declarations within the deadline indicated when the ranking list is published and exclusively in accordance with the procedures published **on the University website** at the following link: <https://www.unimercuratorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/dottorato-industriale-in-big-data-ed-intelligenza-artificiale> in the dedicated section.
3. **The failure to do so within the deadline will be disqualified** for all intents and purposes, and the vacancies will be allocated to the next successful applicant in the ranking list.
4. Successful applicants graduating by 31 October 2022 must self-certify that they have obtained their degree by the enrolment date, otherwise they will be disqualified.
5. In the event of successful placement in several rankings of different PhD programmes, the applicant will be required to opt for only one PhD programme.
6. Applicants who have been assessed as **eligible but not successful are invited to consult the web page of** the PhD Programme indicated in the profile (Annex 1.A), for useful information regarding any opportunities opening up in the ranking list.

## ART. 10 Scholarships

1. Applicants are admitted to the programmes according to their order in each ranking list, in accordance with article 9 above.
2. Scholarships, which may also be financed by a combination of several funding sources, have a total length of at least three years. They are awarded, for the entire period of the programme, to students enrolled in the PhD programmes, according to their place in the ranking list, and are renewed on an annual basis, subject to positive verification of the

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completion of the programme of activities envisaged for each year. The renewal procedures are established by the Teaching Committee and included in the programme regulations. If the scholarship is not renewed, or if the applicant renounces it, the unused amount of the scholarship is reinvested by the University to fund PhD programmes.

3. The amount of the scholarship for the academic year 2022/2023 is € 16,243.00, gross of social security charges payable by the beneficiary, and is paid in monthly instalments.
4. **Scholarships that, by agreement, are financed/co-financed by external, public and/or private enterprises/research organisations, will be awarded to the beneficiaries subject to Universitas Mercatorum actually receiving the funds.**
5. Scholarships granted for research activities abroad and authorised by the Teaching Board will be 50% higher, for a total period of 6 months, which may be extended up to a maximum of 18 months, pursuant to Article 9.3 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021.
6. For research activities in Italy and abroad, in addition to the scholarship, the beneficiary is also granted a budget equal to 10% of the scholarship for each year of the programme. This budget is also granted to PhD students without a scholarship and will be allocated to the latter to support research and training activities in conjunction with the start of the programmes.
7. PhD students are authorised by the coordinator, subject to approval by the Teaching Committee, for the following expenses:
  - a) postings of PhD students in Italy and abroad, registrations to conferences, seminars, etc;
  - b) purchase of research items relevant to the field of study (e.g. chemical reagents, electrical and electronic equipment, stationery, etc.);
  - c) goods/equipment (e.g. hardware, software, scientific equipment). All goods must be inventoried and as such, at the end of the PhD cycle, will remain the property of the University. Of course, no goods/equipment may be purchased for personal use (e.g.: mobile phones, tablets, etc.);
  - d) publication costs;
  - e) research-specific training (e.g. language programmes, higher education programmes, etc.);
  - f) events in the organisation of which PhD students are directly involved (e.g. PhDay);
  - g) if unused funds are available, the Teaching Committee may resolve to use them to pay for the travel expenses of foreign committee members for the discussion of the dissertation, which involves the award of an additional foreign qualification to the PhD student (e.g. doctor europaeus);
  - h) PhD students authorised abroad for research periods during which they benefit from the grant increase are also entitled to reimbursement per posting, in order to encourage international exchanges.
8. The PhD scholarship is subject to the payment of INPS social security contributions (*contributi previdenziali INPS a gestione separata*) pursuant to Article 2, paragraph 26, of Law no. 335 of 8 August 1995, two-thirds of which are paid by the University and one-third by the scholarship beneficiary. PhD students benefit from the related protections and rights.
9. Past scholarship beneficiaries for a PhD programme cannot apply for a second time.
10. Scholarships cannot be cumulated with other scholarships for any reason whatsoever awarded, except in the case of those granted by national or foreign institutions for the purpose of integrating the training or research activities of the scholarship beneficiaries with periods spent abroad. PhD scholarships are compatible with Erasmus scholarships.

## ART. 11 Fees and Contributions

1. **No later than the enrolment deadline**, successful applicants, whether Italian or foreign and with or without a scholarship, are required to pay the service fee of € 50.00 and the regional university tax, which in the 2022/2023 academic year, amounts to € 140.00.
2. The annual fee for admission to and attendance of the PhD programmes, for students who do not benefit from a scholarship, is € 2,000.00, in addition to the registration fee referred to in the previous paragraph. This amount is divided into four instalments:
  - 1st instalment, payable at the date of enrolment (€ 500.00);
  - 2nd instalment, payable by 31 May (€ 500.00);
  - 3rd instalment, payable by 30 June (€ 500.00);
  - 4th instalment, payable by 31 July (€ 500.00).
3. PhD students with a disability of at least 66% are exempt from paying the regional fee but are required to pay the service fee of € 50.00.

## ART. 12 Obligations and Rights of PhD students

1. The PhD Programme requires an exclusive, full-time commitment, subject to the provisions of articles 12(4) and 10(2)(b) of Ministerial Decree 226/2021. PhD students, with or without a scholarship, shall:
  - exclusively commit themselves to completing the training programme decided by the Teaching Committee;
  - continuously attend the programme activities as planned by the Teaching Committee;
  - participate in the common programmes within the PhD programme;
  - submit oral or written reports on their activities and research work;
  - draw up the personal activity reports referred to in paragraph 4 below;
  - comply with all other decisions by the Teaching Committee or provided for in the specifications for the implementation of specific funding to cover the doctoral scholarship;
  - prepare a doctoral thesis, at the end of the programme, with original contributions.
2. The activities of PhD students shall be recorded in special personal registers and include: coursework, research activities, personal study, bibliographic research and research in archives, in-progress verifications, participation in seminars, programmes and conferences, activities at facilities outside the University (other universities, research bodies, businesses), in Italy and abroad, any supplementary teaching and tutoring activities and any other activities decided by the Teaching Committee in relation to the PhD programme. It is absolutely forbidden to carry out doctoral research activities at private bodies or facilities, unless authorised by the Teaching Committee. Violation of this rule entails disqualification from the PhD programme.
3. The truthfulness of the various activities carried out by the applicants shall be attested by the coordinators on the basis of the indications provided by the supervisor and co-supervisor(s).
4. At the end of each year of the PhD Programme, the Teaching Committee, on the basis of a detailed report on the activities and research carried out by each PhD student, decides on

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admission to the following year or proposes to the Rector the exclusion from continuing the programme.

5. PhD students may request the Teaching Committee, for justified reasons, for an extension of the deadline for submission of the doctoral thesis, for a maximum length of twelve months, at no further cost.
6. The Teaching Committee may decide to extend the period of the PhD Programme for no more than twelve months, for justified scientific needs relating, among other things, to pathway requirements in the context of co-tutorships lasting more than three years or to needs for a proven increase in scientific productivity, (e.g. for the submission or outcome of a patent application, as well as due to the extension of the duration of a research project of significant national or international interest); where an extension is granted, the corresponding extension of the period of the scholarship must be ensured, with funds from the University budget, therefore the reasoned proposal for extension by the Teaching Committee will be submitted to the board of directors for approval, for the relevant financial verification. The beneficiary PhD students will be obliged to comply with all the decisions of the Teaching Committee, with reference to the extended training programme, including the performance of the programme activities.
7. PhD students may request, for justified reasons in accordance with the applicable regulations, such as maternity, severe illness and community service, suspension of the programme for a maximum period of six months. No scholarship or other equivalent funding will be paid during the period of suspension.
8. The Teaching Committee, following a communication by the programme coordinator, takes note of the suspensions. Suspensions of more than thirty days, for any of the reasons indicated in paragraph 7 above, shall entail the obligation to make up in full the periods of interruption of the activities and, therefore, in such cases, the duration of the programme shall be extended for the same period as that of the interruption.
9. The periods of extension and suspension referred to in paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 herein may not exceed a total of eighteen months, without prejudice to specific cases provided by law.
10. The regulations on the right to receive an education, set out in Legislative Decree no. 68 of 29 March 2012, remain in force for PhD students.
11. Without prejudice to the application of the rules protecting parenthood, referred to in the Decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Security of 12 July 2007, published in Official Journal No. 247 of 23 October 2007, PhD students on leave maintain the right to a scholarship, which will be paid at the end of the period of suspension, i.e. when they resume attending the programme, up to the total length thereof.
12. The PhD Programme coordinator shall promptly notify the competent office of the PhD student's discontinuation for the consequent administrative measures to be taken.
13. PhD students may be authorized, by the Teaching Committee, to find a job for the purpose of acquiring the skills relevant to the field of study of the PhD Programme, subject to an assessment of the compatibility of such activities with the profitable performance of the training, teaching and research activities of the PhD Programme. In such cases, the maximum income limit, which the PhD student may receive insofar as it is compatible with the grant, is equal to the amount of the grant itself.
14. The Teaching Committee normally provides for research and training activities, for each PhD student, consistent with the PhD project, at highly qualified institutions abroad, for a total period not exceeding twelve months. This period may be extended up to an overall maximum of eighteen months for PhD Programmes co-operating with foreign entities or

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for those in aggregate form activated pursuant to article 3(2) of Ministerial Decree 226/2021. In planning the training activities abroad, the Committee may take into account the proposal of the supervisor and co-supervisor(s) of the PhD student, who must propose the programme of activities, the title of the project and the letter of invitation from the foreign supervisor. For the periods of attendance abroad, the scholarship is increased by 50%.

15. PhD students have a duty of confidentiality in relation to the research activities in which they participate at external institutions.
16. A PhD student without a scholarship may receive a research grant, provided that the relevant topic is related, in the opinion of the Teaching Committee, to the PhD Programme topics.
17. PhD students are also required to register on the ministerial website, at the Login page of the Ministry of Education website, in order to be registered as a research potential of the University.
18. PhD students may carry out the following activities, as an integral part of their training project, subject to the approval of the Teaching Committee and without any increase in the scholarship amount:
  - tutoring, including paid tutoring, of students enrolled in undergraduate and master's degree programmes;
  - supplementary teaching activities, within the limit of 40 hours per academic year.

For the activities referred to in this paragraph, PhD students shall be paid the allowances referred to in Article 1(1)(b) of Decree-Law No. 105 of 9 May 2003, amended and converted into Law No. 170 of 11 July 2003. The performance of these activities shall be included in the PhD student's personal records. This is without prejudice to specific teaching activities, in accordance with the ad hoc regulations, regarding which the relevant provisions shall apply. All other forms of teaching are strictly forbidden, and it is the coordinator's responsibility to enforce this provision.

19. All information of an administrative nature concerning PhD applicants, as well as their careers, will be made available on the website at the following link:  
<https://www.unimercuratorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca>. Posting on the website replaces any other communication and successful applicants are therefore required to log on to the said site for constant updates.

### ART. 13

#### Final Examination and Awarding of the Qualification

1. The qualification of *Dottore di Ricerca*, abbreviated as "*Dott. Ric.*" or "Ph.D.", is awarded on the basis of a positive evaluation of a research thesis that contributes to the advancement of knowledge or methodologies in the chosen field of investigation. The PhD thesis must be written in Italian or English. It may also be written in any other foreign language, subject to authorisation by the Teaching Committee.
2. The thesis is discussed at the end of the PhD programme, subject to admission to the final examination by the "examiners"; the thesis discussion may be postponed for up to a maximum of 6 months, if requested by the "examiners", in the event that they deem significant additions or corrections to the thesis to be necessary.
3. As regards the procedures and deadlines for submitting the thesis, PhD students must comply with the provisions of the "University Regulations on PhD Programmes" (*Regolamento di Ateneo*).

4. The title of PhD is awarded by the Rector.

**ART. 14**  
**Processing of personal data**

1. Personal data shall be processed in compliance with the principles set out in EU Regulation No. 679/2016 on the protection of personal data. Attached to this Call is specific information on data processing (Annex 1.E).

**ART. 15**  
**Unit Responsible for the Procedure**

1. The organisational unit responsible for the admission procedure is the *Ufficio Dottorati per la Formazione alla Ricerca*, based at Piazza Mattei, 10 - 00186 Rome (Italy); email contact [dottorati@unimercatorum.it](mailto:dottorati@unimercatorum.it) - Person in charge of the procedure: the Director General, Ms Patrizia Tanzilli.

**ART. 16**  
**Reference Regulations**

1. The University Regulations containing rules on PhD programmes mentioned in the introduction (*Regolamento di Ateneo*), which can be consulted on the University website at the following link: <https://www.unimercatorum.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca>, shall apply for all matters not covered by this Call.

THE RECTOR  
Prof. Giovanni Cannata



## Annex 1

### ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

- Annex 1.A - Profile of the Industrial PhD Programme in “Big data and Artificial Intelligence”
- Annex 1.B - Application for Admission
- Annex 1.C - Standard Research Project Template
- Annex 1.D - Declaration in lieu of certification and affidavit (pursuant to Presidential Decree no. 445 of 28 December 2000)
- Annex 1.E - Policy statement on data processing