



SCUOLA SUPERIORE SANT'ANNA
INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN AGROBIODIVERSITY
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS A.Y. 2011-2012

ART. 1
(Available positions)

1. The Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (hereafter called "School"), announces a public competition for 6 positions supported by scholarships for the Academic Year 2011-2012 to participate in the three-year International Doctoral Programme in Agrobiodiversity (hereafter called "Programme").
2. The selection is opened to University graduates from any country. Candidates from Developing Countries are particularly welcome.
3. The positions are assigned as per art. 6 par. 5 and 6 below.
4. The amount of the scholarship and contributions is defined in article 9. No tuition fee is charged.
5. The School may also admit additional eligible candidates up to a maximum of 6 positions. The admission of these candidates is decided by the Examination Committee appointed by the Director of the School.

Art. 2
(Aims of the Programme)

1. The course is aimed to enhance human resource capacities to study and conserve plant genetic resources and to utilise and manage biodiversity in agricultural systems as to improve their sustainability for the well-being of present and future generations.
2. The Programme is structured into two *curricula*:
 - Curriculum A - *Plant genetic resources*;
 - Curriculum B - *Functional biodiversity in agroecosystems*.
3. Research areas include the analysis of:
 - (i) genetic variation in single genes and entire genomes of agricultural and forestry plants and their wild relatives;
 - (ii) mechanisms that control the variability in genes and/or groups of genes, as those involved in resistance to pathogens and/or pests and tolerance to environmental stresses;
 - (iii) role of functional biodiversity, including interactions between pests/pathogens/weeds and domesticated/volunteer/wild plants, to support agroecosystem resistance, resilience and stability;
 - (iv) role of functional biodiversity at genes/species/habitat levels to support agroecosystem services, (e.g. crop yield, produce quality, crop protection, soil quality) and multifunctional land use.
 - (v) Physiology of plant adaptation to the environment.

ART. 3
(Candidates requirements)

1. Applicants, with no restriction on nationality, must hold a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree or equivalent title in Experimental Sciences, at an Italian or foreign university and must be younger than 35 years (date of birth after October 10, 1976).
2. The suitability of foreign degrees will be assessed by the Examination Committee solely for the purpose of the Competition, as indicated in Art. 6.

ART. 4
(Applications)

1. Candidates are requested to apply online at: www.sssup.it/phdapplicationonline by **October 10th 2011**, 12.00 pm CET. In case of problems with the online application, candidates can contact the PhD Administration Office (tel. +39 050-883.336/383/220, e-mail: agrobiodiversity@sssup.it).

A hardcopy of the application (signed by the candidate) together with the enclosures as per art. 7, must reach the following address by **October 19th 2011**:

Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna
Servizi di Supporto alla Formazione
International Doctoral Programme in Agrobiodiversity
Piazza Martiri della Libertà 33
I - 56127 PISA, Italy

The envelope must contain the indication "Application International Doctoral Programme in Agrobiodiversity".

2. Applications must include:

- a) the curriculum of the Programme (A or B) chosen for this call (to be selected in the first step of the online application);
- b) family name(s), first name(s), place and date of birth, and nationality;
- c) declaration that the candidate has never been convicted for a criminal offence or that she/he has no pending criminal proceedings;
- d) declaration that the candidate possesses an academic degree, as per Article 5 above, specifying the degree title, its duration and the name of the University that awarded the degree. The Examination Committee will establish the equivalence of degrees only for the purposes of the current competition;
- e) the Academic Year in which the candidate has started her/his undergraduate studies;
- f) the date of graduation (MSc degree or equivalent) and the mark achieved, when applicable;
- g) the English Language Proficiency, IELTS, CPE or other documents certifying a good knowledge (written and spoken) of the English language, unless the candidate has obtained her/his academic degree in a University whose official language is English;
- h) acceptance of all the conditions set by the present announcement;
- i) the permanent address and the mailing address (if different) where applicants wish to receive paper communications concerning the application. Applicants must immediately contact the School should these addresses change;
- j) the e-mail address, that is compulsory for the purposes of this application, and a telephone number where the candidate can be reached;

ART. 5
(Application enclosures)

1. Applicants must attach to their hardcopy application:

- a. copy of a valid identity document. Non Schengen area citizens must provide a photocopy of their passport;
- b. copy of their *curriculum vitae et studiorum*;
- c. photocopy of the candidate's university degree. University degree and study certificates (except those written in English, French, German, Portuguese or Spanish) must be translated into Italian and legalized by an Italian Embassy or Consulate;
- d. copy of results of the English language proficiency test (TOEFL or IELTS or CPE) or other documents certifying the knowledge of the English language;
- e. copy of a proposed doctoral research project, including:
 - Title;
 - Rationale and state of art, with relevant literature (max 1 page);
 - General and specific research objectives (max 2 pages);
 - Materials and methods (max 2 pages);
 - Expected results (max 1 page);
 - Time schedule of activities.

The submitted research project is meant for evaluation purposes. The actual research project of selected candidates will be framed in the activities of ongoing research projects run by the Programme Faculty.

- f. The indication of candidate's major skills (maximum three fields, using numbers (1, 2, 3) to indicate the primary, secondary and tertiary fields) among the following:

- Agroecology
 - Agronomy/cropping systems
 - Biotechnology
 - Breeding
 - Crop/Plant Ecology
 - Crop/Plant Physiology
 - Entomology
 - Genetics
 - Genomics and/or Proteomics
 - Plant Molecular Biology
 - Plant Pathology
 - Weed Science
 - Other (specify)
- g. at least two letters of presentation from former supervisors;
- h. one passport-size photograph with the name written on the back;
- i. any document and/or publication that the candidate deems worthy of consideration, including any formal association with research institutions/organisations;
- j. a numbered list of the documents attached.

2. The School does not accept incomplete applications: all the documents required must be received within the terms and according to the procedure set out in paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. The School's Administration does not take any responsibility for missed or late communication resulting from wrong address information by the applicant or from late communication of the change of address specified in the application or from mailing delivery problems that cannot be ascribed to the School Administration.

ART. 6 *(Selection of candidates)*

1. Selection of candidates is based upon the evaluation of all the submitted documents and publications.
2. The Examination Committee, appointed by the Director of the School can, with unanimous decision, move applications from Curriculum A to B and vice-versa according to the actual relevance of the research proposal to the themes included in the two Curricula.
3. The Examination Committee assigns to each candidate a score between 1 and 100 based on academic achievements, submitted scientific publications and quality and relevance of the research project to the Programme objectives and areas. Candidates who obtain a score lower than 70/100 are declared non eligible and are excluded from the ranking list.
4. The ranking list of the eligible candidates (scores equal to or above 70/100) will be published on the School's website (www.sssup.it) no later than **December 17th, 2011**.
5. Selection, according to art. 17 of the Ministerial Decree of August 5th, 2004, will pay special attention to candidates from Developing Countries, to whom a minimum of four scholarships are awarded.
6. **The scholarships will be assigned to the first 4 (four) eligible candidates of Curriculum A and the first 2 (two) eligible candidates of Curriculum B.**
7. The selected candidates are informed of the results of the competition by e-mail and are asked to confirm acceptance of the scholarship to: agrobiodiversity@sssup.it within 15 days. In case of lack of response by that date the candidate will lose her/his position.
8. The judgement of the Examination Committee cannot be appealed.

Art. 7 *(Beginning of the Programme)*

1. The Programme starts on **January 19th, 2012**. Failure to show up by this date implies loss of the scholarship, except for documented health reasons. In case of difficulties with the issue of the visa for non-EU students, the School may exceptionally postpone the entry date to no later than **February 28th, 2012**. Non-EU students are strongly advised to apply for a Visa immediately upon acceptance.
2. Should a selected candidate forfeit or relinquish her/his position, the School will assign the vacant position to the next eligible candidate of the same curriculum according to the ranking list;
3. A one-year postponement may be allowed for students who have to fulfil their military obligations or to students on maternity leave as to the Italian Law No. 53/2000.
4. Selected candidates doing their military service need to show a certificate issued by the military authority, indicating the expected date of completion of their service.

5. To enter Italy, non-EU selected candidates must obtain a visa for study purposes, issued by the Italian Embassy/Consulate in their country of residence. Within eight (8) days upon arrival, the admitted candidates must go to the Police Office (Questura) of Pisa to apply for a residence permit for study purposes.

6. The School reserves the right to ask a judicial record certificate to the competent authority of students' country of residence.

Art. 8
(Students' Obligations and Rights)

1. Students commit themselves to follow research and training activities set forth by the School within the Programme and cannot accept any professional task which the School considers incompatible with their duties.

2. Students commit themselves to comply with the rules set forth by the Statute and Regulations of the School.

3. The Programme Faculty appoints a supervisor to each student. The task of the supervisor is primarily to help and support the student to successfully participate in teaching and research activities, to monitor her/his progress, and to verify her/his attendance to the School's activities.

4. To obtain the degree of *Philosophy Doctor* (PhD) students must pass a final examination. During the examination candidates will defend a written dissertation before a Commission of international experts in the field. The dissertation must offer original scientific findings of a standard adequate to publication on international, peer-reviewed scientific journals.

5. Students have the right to elect one representative who will attend the meetings of the Programme Faculty.

6. Students may participate, upon authorization from the Programme Faculty, in research activities and stages at other research institutions/organisations in Italy and abroad.

Art. 9
(Student Allowances and Benefits)

1. PhD students with grants will receive a monthly allowance including additional costs and national health contributions (INPS Gestione separata) as to the norms regarding Doctoral Scholarships granted by Italian Universities. The gross amount of the scholarship is 16.165,49 € per year, and its net amount is €12,500.00; all inclusive (e.g.: travel costs to/from Italy to student's Country and living allowance).

2. The School provides all doctoral students an accident insurance during the three-year programme.

Art. 10
(Return of Submitted Documents)

1. All candidates, if interested, may collect the documents sent to the School at their own expenses, **within two (2) months** from the date on which the results of the competition are released. Once this two-month period has elapsed, the School Administration cannot be held responsible for keeping these documents.

Art. 11
(Person in charge of the Procedure)

1. 1. The person in charge of the competition procedure, as per this Announcement, is the Head of Students Affairs – Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna – Piazza Martiri della Libertà n.33 – 56127 Pisa – tel. 050/883273, fax 050/883250, e-mail: agrobiodiversity@sssupsup.it.

Art. 12
(Treatment of Personal Data)

1. Personal data supplied by the applicants will be automatically processed by the School in accordance with Art. 11 of the Legislative Decree No. 196/2003 ("Code concerning the Protection of Personal Data") for the purposes of competition procedures. The data - made anonymous - will also be used for statistical purposes.

2. Any interested person can, at any time, exercise the rights provided for by Art. 7 of the above-mentioned Legislative Decree, in writing to the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna - Servizi di Supporto alla Formazione (Students Affairs)- Piazza Martiri della Libertà, 33, Pisa (Italy).