

DIGI-ME

Annex 1 - UNIPV Open call
guidelines for applicants V1.0



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1. Introduction

This document sets out the guidelines for participating in the UNIPV Open Call, part of the DIGI-ME project - a European initiative funded under the Digital Europe Programme, Grant Agreement number: 101123009, Call identifier: *DIGITAL-2022-SKILLS-05–Specialised education programmes in key capacity areas*.

In addition to this document, applicants are invited to become familiar with the DIGI-ME Website and the additional documentation available.

2. About DIGI-ME

The DIGI-ME project, co-funded by the European Union, aims to build and sustain a dynamic community of innovators ready to address Europe’s emerging challenges. Through strategic collaboration with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), technology parks, research centers, and SMEs, we are developing the Digital Ecosystem for Transformative Innovation (DETI), which is a collaborative hub that connects expertise, delivers high-quality learning experiences, and offers meaningful opportunities for learners and professionals in the digital age. More information about the project is available on the DIGI-ME website: <https://digime-project.eu/>

Educating a new generation of European leaders, equipping them with the skills to leverage digital tools and processes for transformative innovation in business and management is one of the principal objectives of this project. It provides personalized educational programs for master’s students and lifelong learners, empowering them to lead digital transformation and create value for businesses, industries, and communities.

Talented students from EU and associated countries will be selected to enroll into the master and training programmes offered by DIGI-ME. The DIGI-ME partners are firmly committed to promoting diversity and inclusion within their academic community. Their policies are designed to create an equitable environment that welcomes and supports students from all backgrounds, including those from under-represented groups. The partners actively strive to remove barriers to access and participation, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed and thrive in their educational journey. Through targeted outreach, support services, and inclusive practices, the parties aim to foster a culture that values and celebrates diversity in all its forms

DIGI-ME also provides Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP), funded by the EU, to help eligible students participate in the educational programs.

2.1 DIGI-ME Team

DIGI-ME brings together a consortium of three world-leading Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the area of innovation, international business and entrepreneurship (University of Pavia, Grenoble Ecole de Management, Vaasa University), three SMEs at the intersection of digital technologies and entrepreneurship (LEF, Obloo and DomyN), an excellence center in the field of innovative teaching and personalized didactical approaches (National Research Council). To discover more about the team behind DIGI-ME visit the partners section on our website.

2.1.1 About University of Pavia (UNIPV)

UNIPV is an international oriented university based in Pavia. The University of Pavia (UNIPV) is one of the world's oldest academic institutions: it was founded in 1361 and until the 20th century it was the only university in the Milan Area and the region of Lombardy. Today it is a comprehensive university, which covers all subject areas - Science and Technology, Engineering, Life Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences - and is composed of 18 Departments offering study programmes at all levels, from Bachelor's degrees to Doctorate programmes.

The academic staff counts more than 900 professors and researchers. 24,000 students, from both Italy and overseas, study at the University of Pavia. The University of Pavia participates in more than 400 international agreements with universities all over the world, and it collaborates in research projects with the most advanced international laboratories and organizes Masters and PhD research programs.

Visit Website

3. About DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call offer

The DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call presents a valuable opportunity for students aspiring to advance their advanced digital skills in fields related to the digitalisation of innovation, entrepreneurship and international management.

3.1 Funding and Awards

Through this call, up to five (5) selected candidates will receive a scholarship to support their double degree programme exchange.

- **Award type:** Scholarships are provided as a lump sum to support their double degree programme at the University of Vaasa as part of the DIGI-ME educational offering.
- **Financial value:** Each selected beneficiary will receive a lump sum as indicated in the call for application.
- **Payment mechanism:** The DIGI-ME scholarship is paid in three instalments: a first tranche equal to 80% of the total estimated amount of the scholarship; a second

tranche with a balance of 20%, paid at the end of the mobility, subject to verification of compliance with the conditions indicated above.

- Disbursement is subject to signing the mobility agreement, confirmation of enrolment, and compliance with all eligibility and reporting requirements outlined in the Open Call.

Acceptance of the mobility period constitutes a formal commitment by the candidate. Cancellations must therefore be limited to serious and duly documented cases of force majeure. Any cancellation of the assigned mobility period must be communicated in writing to the DIGI-ME coordinator, must be adequately justified, and must be submitted promptly. Cancellation entails the refund of any financial contributions already received. The reason for the cancellation and/or failure to communicate it may be evaluated for the purposes of possible exclusion of the candidate from the subsequent selection process for the University's international mobility programs.

3.2 Eligible UNIPV Programme

The call targets students who wish to participate in the double degree programme with University of Vaasa at UNIPV for the upcoming 2026-2027 academic year. DIGI-ME scholarships are available for UNIPV students matriculated in academic year 2025-2026 at the Master in International Business and Entrepreneurship (MIBE).

DIGI-ME Course Selection Requirements:

To fulfil DIGI-ME project requirements, applicants are supposed to select courses from the University of Vaasa DIGI-ME educational offering for the academic year 2026-2027. The list of courses is available at the following links:

- Link to the call for the Master's Programme in International Business – Sustainable Global Business (English): [Master's Programme in International Business – Sustainable Global Business | Digital Skills and Jobs Platform](#)
- Link to the call for the Master's Programme in Strategic Business Management (English): [Master's Programme in Strategic Business Development | Digital Skills and Jobs Platform](#)

3.3 Application Period

Applications will be accepted from **1 April 2026 (09:00 CET, Brussels time) until 1 June 2026 (17:00 CET, Brussels time)**.

3.3.1 Application Process

To ensure a seamless experience for all candidates, the DIGI-ME scholarship at UNIPV follows a structured process.

The **initial stage focuses on the competitive evaluation** of your application.

- **Formal Submission:** Applicants must submit all required documentation through the [dedicated form](#) within the designated call period.

- **Academic Evaluation:** A dedicated selection committee will review your profile, focusing on your academic excellence, professional background, and motivation to join the DIGI-ME educational path.
- **Selection Notification:** Successful candidates will be officially notified of their selection as DIGI-ME scholarship beneficiaries.

Once you have been selected as a beneficiary for the scholarship, the transition to UNIPV begins.

1. **Official Invitation:** Beneficiaries will receive a formal invitation from UNIPV to join the double degree programme at Vaasa University.
2. **Administrative Support:** Following your invitation, the **Double degree Office at the Department of Economics and Management of UNIPV** will contact you directly. They will serve as your primary point of contact, providing expert guidance through the formal enrolment process and ensuring your exchange semester is correctly registered.
3. **Enrolment Completion:** Under the guidance of the Double Degree Office, you will complete the necessary steps to be officially recognised as an exchange student at UNIPV. For further details please refer to Section 7.

Table 1. UNIPV Application process overview

Step	Action	Application Period
1. DIGI-ME Scholarship Application	Submit the application and required documentation through the dedicated form .	1 April 2026 – 1 June 2026
2. Internal Evaluation	Applications are reviewed by the committee of professors based on academic criteria.	2 June 2026 - 05 June 2026
3. UNIPV Placement Invitation	Successful candidates are notified by DIGI-ME and formally invited by UNIPV as double degree students.	09 June 2026

4. About UNIPV Scholarships for MIBE programme

4.1 Objectives

The scholarships will support students to undertake their double degree programme at the Vaasa University, according to the Course Selection Requirements outlined in Section 3.2. The scholarship will provide a lump sum to economically support the student mobility and

their stay at the Vaasa University during the double degree exchange programme. The courses are associated with the Master in International Business and Entrepreneurship (MIBE).

5. Eligibility Criteria

All applicants must meet the following general requirements to be considered eligible for the DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call. An eligibility check will be conducted to discard non-compliant proposals.

5.1 General Eligibility Conditions

5.1.1 Academic/Professional Background

Applicants must be enrolled at the master in international business and entrepreneurship (MIBE), at the University of Pavia, matriculated in MIBE in academic year 2025-2026, full-time students, who have not exceeded the standard duration of the curriculum, not on academic leave.

5.1.2 Nationality

Applicants must be a passport holder from an EU/EEA countries or Digital Europe Programme (DEP) associated countries.

5.1.3 English Language Competency

All applicants must demonstrate certified English language proficiency with an official score report from one of the following tests:

- **IELTS Academic** (computer-based, paper-based, or online): Minimum overall score of 6.5
- **TOEFL iBT** (including the Internet-based test, Special Home Edition, or Paper Edition): Minimum score of 88
- **Cambridge English** (C1 Advanced - CAE or C2 Proficiency – _CPE): Minimum overall score of 180
- **Having successfully completed a bachelor's degree which is fully taught in English**

Note: Documentation for the English language competency is not required for native English speakers. English is the official language of both the DIGI-ME Open Call and the entire master's programme. Applications submitted in any other language will not be considered.

5.1.4 Double funding

According to European Union's rules, it is forbidden to receive double support for the same incurred costs. Hence, the scholarship covered by this call is INCOMPATIBLE with other EU

funds allocated for the same purpose. All applicants must declare they have not received other European Union's funds in the [dedicated form](#).

5.2 UNIPV Open Call Application Submission

The **online submission** form must be adequately filled in and submitted via the [dedicated form](#) within the official submission period (1 April 2026 at 09:00 CET – 1 June 2026 at 17:00 CET).

5.3 Required Documents

The following documents must be submitted through the [dedicated form](#) by the deadline (1 June 2026 at 17:00 CET):

- **Transcript of Records:** Transcripts for the passed exams and related grades, within the MIBE programme
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** A detailed CV outlining academic history, professional experience, skills, and relevant achievements (no photo required, max 3 pages).
- **Personal Statement/Motivation Letter:** A statement (max. 3 pages) explaining motivation for applying, interest in the programme, and how applicants background aligns with the DIGI-ME path of the double degree programme at Vaasa University.
- **English Language Competency:** Certified evidence of English proficiency meeting the specified minimum scores above.
- **Copy of passport or ID card:** copy of a valid passport or identity card.

6. Evaluation

6.1 Methodology

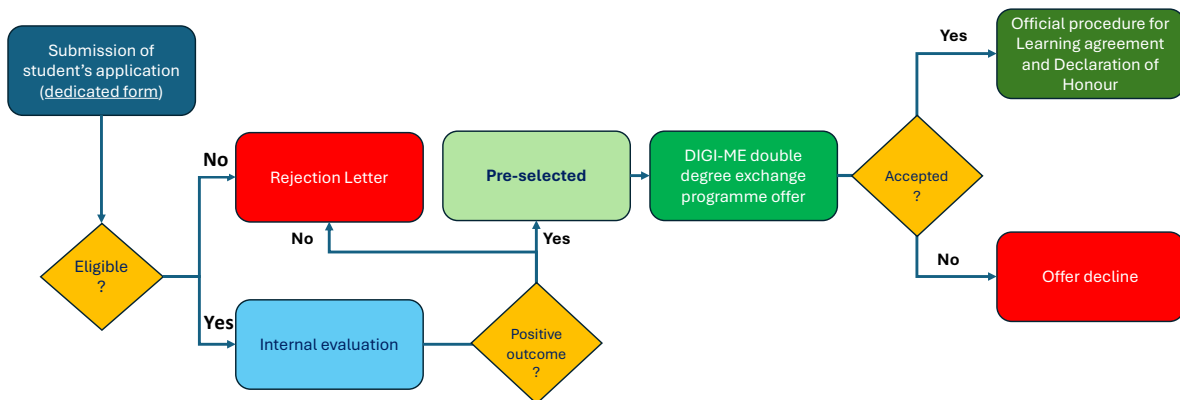
All applications must be submitted **EXCLUSIVELY** through the [dedicated form](#).

A complete list of applicants will be compiled, including basic information for statistical and transparency purposes (which will be also shared with the European Commission).

Application submission will close on **June 1st, 2026, at 17:00 CET**. There will be no deadline extensions.

The evaluation process for the DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call is structured in a **three-step methodology** to ensure a fair, transparent, and thorough assessment of all applications as follow: **(1)** Admissibility and eligibility check; **(2)** Internal evaluation by experts; and **(3)** Ranking and selection of applicants. The process is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. UNIPV Open Call - Evaluation overview



6.1.1 Admissibility and Eligibility Check

An initial admissibility and eligibility verification will be done to filter out and discard non-eligible applications. An application is only considered eligible if it meets all the eligibility criteria and requirements listed in Section 5, as well as the submission of all required documents, among others. Table 2. UNIPV Open Call - Eligibility check presents the Eligibility checklist.

This eligibility check enables the establishment of a shortlist of applications to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process.

Applications marked as non-eligible (for not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria) will receive a rejection letter with a justification.

Table 2. UNIPV Open Call - Eligibility check

Eligibility Criterion	Met Yes/No (Y/N)	Reason for non-eligibility (if 'N')
1. Academic Background	[Y/N]	Insufficient academic qualification based on applicants grades (GPA or equivalent) as well as the applicant's extracurricular research experiences or publications, relevant work experience, relevant teaching experience, awards from competitions and extracurricular activities.
2. Nationality Eligibility	[Y/N]	Not a passport holder from an eligible country.
3. English Language Competency	[Y/N]	Insufficient English language score OR no certified evidence provided.
4. Application submission and completeness	[Y/N]	Incomplete/inadequately filled form OR not submitted to the dedicated form .
5. Year of first enrolment	[Y/N]	Not a student enrolled in the MIBE cohort 2025-2026
6. Double funding compliance	[Y/N]	Having received EU funds for the same purpose of this call
7. Required Documentation		
7.1 CV	[Y/N]	CV missing
7.2 Copy of passport/ ID card	[Y/N]	Copy of passport /ID card missing.
7.3 Transcript of results provided	[Y/N]	Transcripts missing/inadequately submitted
7.4 Proof of English language competency	[Y/N]	Proof of English language competency missing.
7.5 Motivation letter	[Y/N]	Motivation letter missing.

6.1.2 Internal Evaluation by Experts

Applications that pass the eligibility check will undergo an internal evaluation, conducted by a panel of three experts from UNIPV. This approach ensures a fair, impartial, and thorough assessment of each application, leveraging the diverse expertise within the faculty.

The collective judgement of the panel ensures that selections are based on recognised academic standards, the strategic objectives of the DIGI-ME initiative, and the specific requirements outlined in this Open Call.

6.1.2.1 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Only eligible candidates will be evaluated. Successful candidates must reach an **evaluation threshold of 70%**.

Table 3. UNIPV Open Call - Evaluation criteria

Percentage	Criteria
65%	Academic background (This will be assessed based on the weighted average grade, adjusted by the ratio of earned to expected ECTS credits)
25%	Positive mindset towards advanced digital skills in innovation, international business and entrepreneurship assessed based on the motivation letter
10%	Additional academic and non-academic experience assessed on the information reported on the applicant's CV

DIGI-ME and UNIPV are committed to promoting diversity, social and economic equality, and gender balance in all aspects of this open call. We particularly encourage applications from women, individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, applications from low-DESI countries, individuals living with disabilities, and applicants belonging to minority groups.

As part of our selection process, applicants will have the option to provide information on gender, age, and socio-economic background. In the case of equal scores assigned to more than one applicant, the selection committee will prioritize female applicants, applicants from low socio-economic backgrounds, applicants experiencing disabilities, applicants from low DESI-countries, and applicants belonging to minority groups, in this order, ensuring a fair and balanced approach to admissions.

Note: All information provided regarding gender, age, and social background will be collected voluntarily and treated confidentially in accordance with GDPR/Data Privacy regulations. These data will be used solely to inform our diversity monitoring and inclusive selection measures.

6.1.3 Ranking and Selection process

Following the experts' evaluation, all eligible applicants will be ranked according to their final assessment scores. Scholarships will be awarded based on this **order of merit**, beginning with the highest-ranked candidates.

Evaluation results will be compiled into an **Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)**. Applicants will be notified of the results via email, as follows:

- For Accepted Applicants: An Evaluation Summary Report.
- An invitation to proceed to the enrolment phase and following steps.
- For Rejected Applicants: An Evaluation Summary Report for those who passed the eligibility check and underwent internal evaluation phase.
- A rejection letter to ineligible applications.

Successful applicants must **confirm their acceptance** of the placement offer **within five (5) business days** by replying to the DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call team at digi-me@unipv.it.

6.1.3.1 Reserved List Policy

If the number of qualified applicants exceeds the available places, candidates who meet the quality threshold but fall below the offer cut-off will be placed on a **reserve list**, ranked by score. Applicants on the reserve list may receive a waiver offer if selected candidates decline or fail to accept their offer within the stipulated deadline.

6.1.3.2 Redress Process

Applicants who are not satisfied with the evaluation of their application, may submit a **written appeal within three (3) business days** of receiving their result. Appeals will be reviewed by a panel, chaired by two UNIPV DIGI-ME representative, and one external member.

Appeals are typically not allowed for disagreements with the academic judgment (score) or if the decision was based on the applicants misunderstanding of the application instructions. Valid grounds for appealing scholarships offer decision generally focus on errors in the assessment process or claims of discrimination.

All requests for appeal must be sent to the DIGI-ME UNIPV Open Call team at digi-me@unipv.it.

7. Programme Enrolment

To secure your DIGI-ME UNIPV Scholarship, you'll need to formally accept the offer via email and sign the Declaration of Honour within five (5) business days of receiving the email from the DIGI-ME Open Call team. The acceptance confirms your agreement to the academic and participation conditions designed to ensure your success in the programme. These conditions include:

- Completing your double degree programme by October 2027.
- Adhering to the specified course requirements.

- Actively participating in student ambassador activities.

Registration of DIGI-ME students

When the students are selected, a list of successful applicants will be shared with the Unit for International Relations at UNIPV, Department of Economics and Management. A manual registration application for each student will be done by the Unit in the nomination admission commonly used for regular incoming exchange students.

The following information will be required from each successful applicant:

- Name
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Citizenship
- Email address
- Home university (Active exchange agreement with UNIPV)

Once students are registered, they will be asked to upload documentation and note which course they want to take in a comments field in the application. This process ensures UNIPV has received all the information needed to be able to register the candidates as students at UNIPV.

8. Crafting your application

8.1 Step by step guide

This section provides a detailed walkthrough of the application process. To ensure your application is complete, eligible, and submitted on time, please follow all steps carefully.

Carefully read the entire Guidelines for Applicants document to fully understand the terms and conditions of this Open Call.

Step 1: Get Started on the [dedicated form](#).

- Create your applicant profile on the [dedicated form](#).

Step 2: Prepare your documentation

Gather and prepare all required supporting documents in PDF format. Ensure no printing restrictions are applied to your files.

Mandatory Documents:

- Transcript of Records
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Motivation letter
- English Language Competency
- Copy of passport or ID card

If selected, you will be required to sign the following:



- Declaration of Honour
- Learning Agreement

Step 3: Complete and submit your application on the [dedicated form](#).

- Complete All Sections: Fill in all parts of the application form directly on the [dedicated form](#).
- Upload Files: Ensure all mandatory documents listed above are uploaded.
- Final Review: Thoroughly review your application before submission.
- Submit by Deadline: Applications must be submitted no later than 1 June 2026 at 17:00 CET. Late submissions will not be accepted.

9. Timeline

Figure 2. UNIPV Open Calls - Timeline



Note: While every effort will be made to adhere to these dates, they are indicative and may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances or operational needs. Any significant changes will be communicated via the MIBE website.

10. General Information

10.1 Data protection

In order to process and evaluate applications, and manage project implementation, the DIGI-ME consortium will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data.

- UNIPV will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the [dedicated form](#) for these purposes. Please see our privacy policy [here](#).
- A Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been appointed by UNIPV generally, to ensure compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and that personal data is collected, processed, and stored in a secure manner.
- The [dedicated form](#) design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).
- Each applicant will accept the [dedicated form](#) terms to ensure compliance.
- Apart from the [dedicated form](#), data will also be stored in the project repository on Microsoft Teams managed by the project coordinator UNIPV.
- Note that the DIGI-ME consortium must retain generated data until five years after the balance of the DIGI-ME project is paid or longer if there are ongoing procedures

(such as audits, investigations or litigation). In this case, the data must be kept until their conclusion.

10.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality obligations:

- Selected applicants are required to maintain confidential any project data, documents, invoices and other materials (in any form) during the implementation of the activities and for 5 years after project completion.
- This confidentiality period can be extended by agreement with the EC and the DIGI-ME consortium.
- Information shared during the project, whether written or spoken, is only considered non-confidential if DIGI-ME agrees and confirms it in writing within 15 days.
- Confidential information must only be used for project implementation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Any information shared during the application stage will be treated as confidential.

10.3 Origin of funds

Once an applicant has been selected for funding, they will be required to sign a dedicated Learning Agreement with UNIPV. It is important to note that the funds attached to the DIGI-ME programme come directly from the funds of the Digital Europe Programme DIGI-ME project, which has been co-funded by the European Commission.

The Learning Agreement represents a commitment from the sub-grantees who will receive funding. The relationship between sub-grantees and the European Commission through the DIGI-ME project carries a set of obligations for the sub-grantees with the European Commission. These obligations will be outlined in the Learning Agreement, which the selected applicants will need to review and agree to. It is the responsibility of the sub-grantees to ensure that they fulfil these obligations, and the DIGI-ME consortium partners will provide guidance and support as needed. All selected applicants should carefully review the terms of the agreement and ensure that they are able to meet their obligations to receive the funding and successfully carry out their programme.

10.4 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation

System (ECTS)

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool of the **European Higher Education Area** for making studies and courses more transparent. It helps students to move between countries and to have their academic qualifications and study periods

abroad recognised. ECTS allows credits taken at one higher education institution to be counted towards a qualification studied for at another. ECTS credits represent learning based on defined learning outcomes and their associated workload. ECTS enhances the flexibility of study programmes for students. It also supports the planning, delivery and evaluation of higher education programmes. It is a central tool in the **Bologna Process**, which aims to make national education systems more comparable internationally. ECTS also helps make other documents, such as the **Diploma Supplement**, clearer and easier to use in different countries.

ECTS has been adopted by most of the countries in the European Higher Education Area as the national credit system and is increasingly used elsewhere. For more information on ECTS please refer to the **European Education Area** website.

10.5 Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, the DIGI-ME Consortium reserves the right to make updates to the Guidelines for Applicants. Any significant changes will be officially announced on the DIGI-ME and clearly communicated to the Applicants.

11. Contacts

The DIGI-ME Consortium serves the following support:

- **Support team:** for any technical issue on the application process - digi-me@unipv.it
- **DIGI-ME Open Call Documents:** <https://digime-project.eu/educational-offer/call-for-application/#>
- -for administrative information after the selection procedure: outgoing.mobility@unipv.it

Legal notice

This call (as well as the financial support that will be provided through it) is NOT an EU action. This call is launched solely by the University of Pavia (UNIPV). The financial support to the selected successful applicants will be provided **directly** by UNIPV **in its own name and under its own responsibility**. UNIPV's own responsibility includes the preparation and drafting of this call as well as the selection of successful applicants who will receive the said financial support. The publication of this call in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal is made solely for information purposes with the aim of increasing the visibility of this call to the general public, including to potential applicants (i.e. students). The said publication shall not be construed as direct or indirect approval of the content and conditions of this call by the relevant EU authorities or as any form of waiver from the above-described responsibility of UNIPV.

