

## Call for 51 places for postgraduate courses (Ph.D.) at the Scuola Normale Superiore for the academic year 2024-2025 (40<sup>th</sup> cycle).

### Art. 1. Number of scholarships, subject areas, educational objectives

1.1 The Scuola Normale Superiore (SNS) announces a call for the academic year 2024-2025, based on qualifications and tests, for a total of 51 places for Ph.D. courses in the Faculties of Sciences and Political and Social Sciences in the following subjects and locations:

#### Faculty of Sciences - Pisa site

Course	Number of places
Computational Astrophysics and Cosmology (COMPAC)	3 to benefit from the resources of the NRRP HPC CUP E53C22000790001 project
Physics	6
Mathematics	6
Computational methods and mathematical models for the sciences and finance	7
Chemistry	4
Quantum Technology and Nanoscience	7 (1 of which on a specific topic in cooperation with Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia and 1 of which in cooperation with Fondazione Pisana per la Scienza)
Neurosciences	5

#### Faculty of Political and Social Sciences - Florence site

Course	Number of places
Political Science and Sociology	13

1.2 Additional places in collaboration with external institutions or from research projects, as well as those that could be activated from the resources of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan assigned to the SNS may be made available for this call before the deadline for submission of applications.

1.3 All successful candidates will be awarded scholarships and additional resources for their study and research activities as specified in article 6 below; enrolment and attendance on the courses are free of charge.

1.4 Some of the Ph.D. scholarships envisaged in this call may have as their subject the development of specific research topics, for which particular skills are required which will be assessed by the selection

commissions in accordance with the provisions of subsequent article 4. These scholarships may specify that a significant part of the research activity will be carried out at the funding institution. The particular modalities of the course, the topics and the conditions of the scholarships, which the candidates must respect, are published at the following page: <https://www.sns.it/it/borse-tema-e-sede-specifici>. At least one postgraduate scholarship will be awarded with reference to the research areas on the topics of the 2030 UN Sustainability Agenda.

- 1.5 For each Ph.D. course, one place is reserved for candidates who have obtained a qualification valid for admission to the call at non-Italian universities. Reserved places not assigned owing to a lack of suitable candidates can be made available with the sliding of the relevant ranking.
- 1.6 Further admissions to the courses are possible based on specific agreements funded by international institutions; these admissions are managed in excess of the present call and are governed by the provisions of each agreement.
- 1.7 The Ph.D. courses have a duration of four years. All courses will start on 1 November 2024.
- 1.8 The teaching activities of the courses are mainly in English.
- 1.9 The call is aimed at assessing, through assessment of qualifications and of a research project and with an oral test, the candidate's high level of preparation, talent, motivations and aptitude for scientific research.
- 1.10 Candidates' admission to the oral test is based on the assessment of their qualifications and of a research project written in Italian or English (please do not exceed the maximum limit of 20,000 characters, including spaces). The research project must enable the assessment of the candidate's scientific interests and their adherence to the scientific lines promoted by the SNS, but does not influence the subsequent choice of the thesis topic. The project must demonstrate the candidate's full knowledge of the state of the art in the specific sector, as well as mastery of the research methodologies within the subject; it must also include an adequate bibliography.
- 1.11 The courses are divided into lectures, seminars and research activities: the teaching programmes, geared to the individual student, are intended to broaden the students' cultural base and to prepare them for research activity with the aim of achieving a particularly high specialisation in the scientific field. The students of the courses carry out their studies according to plans approved annually and may be authorised, possibly with a specific financial contribution, to spend periods of study and research in other highly qualified Italian and non-Italian university and scientific institutions. At the end of the course, with the fulfilment of the required obligations, the student obtains the title of Philosophiæ Doctor (Ph.D.).
- 1.12 In accordance with D.M. No. 226 of 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021, Ph.D. courses can be activated only after accreditation, or if the accreditation requirements are deemed valid by the Ministry of Education, University and Research and by the ANVUR. Therefore, after the publication of the merit ranking, the SNS will be able to enrol the successful candidates only if the accreditation for the 40th cycle has been received.

## **Art. 2. Admission requirements**

- 2.1 The Scuola Normale particularly welcomes applications for admission from young candidates who are highly motivated towards research.
- 2.2 The application can be submitted by students with any citizenship and by those who:

- a. have a master's degree or an equivalent non-Italian qualification, attained no earlier than five years prior to the deadline for the first session of the call, that is, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Applicants who plan to obtain the qualification required for admission by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 can also apply: if the application is successful, failure to obtain the qualification by that date will invalidate the admission. The eligibility of the foreign qualification is ascertained, for the sole purpose of selection, by the call commission in compliance with the regulations in force in Italy and in the country where the qualification was issued and with the international treaties or agreements regarding the recognition of qualifications for the continuation of studies.
- b. have no convictions that have been res judicata for a term of imprisonment of more than three years;
- c. have not been subject to "expulsion", a disciplinary sanction provided for in the educational regulations of the SNS;
- d. are not in possession of a Ph.D. qualification issued by an Italian university, and in any case have not benefited from a scholarship to attend a Ph.D. programme in Italy.

### **Art. 3. Participation in the selections**

3.1 Selections will take place in two sessions, with differing deadlines depending on the Faculty offering the courses. Applications must be registered online through the electronic procedure indicated in the section dedicated to the call on the SNS website (<https://www.sns.it/it/concorso-phd>) by the following deadlines:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>deadline session 1</b>	<b>deadline session 2</b>
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Sciences	7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences	7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2024

3.2 Applications registered by the system after the aforementioned deadlines will not be taken into consideration, regardless of the cause of the delay.

We recommend that you check that you have received the notification via e-mail regarding the completion of the application; the SNS is not responsible for any online application not properly completed by candidates.

The SNS is not responsible for any malfunctions due to technical problems and / or overload of the communication line and / or of the application systems; candidates are therefore advised not to wait until the last few days before the deadline for submission of applications.

The SNS is not responsible for any loss of mail due to incorrect information relating to the candidate's address or due to delayed communication of change of address indicated in the application, nor for any errors attributable to third parties, accidents or force majeure.

3.3 In their application candidates must state:

- a. their personal and contact details
- b. their possession of the requisites as specified in Art. 2;

- c. the course - or the courses - for which they intend to apply. Candidates interested in one or more of the scholarships with specific topics and sites referred to in Article 1.4 above must state their option during the application phase, but are also candidates for the scholarships not tied to a specific topic of the course.
- d. their level of competence in Italian and in English, with reference to the EUROPASS grid.  
<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>
- e. any need for help or extra time for taking the tests, if they benefit from Article 20 of Law No. 104 of 5<sup>th</sup> February 1992, “Framework law for assistance, social integration and the rights of disabled persons”;
- f. any need for help or extra time for taking the tests, if they benefit from Law No. 170 of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and subsequent modifications thereto (candidates with diagnoses of specific learning difficulties resulting from proper certification issued no earlier than three years previously by national health (SSN) structures or by specialists or structures accredited by the latter);

3.4 Candidates may also indicate the name and e-mail address of at least one scholar, to whom the SNS will request the reference letter to support the application - via the IT application platform. The letter of presentation must be sent exclusively through the online application platform, no later than the deadline of the competition session. The absence of reference letters does not constitute a reason for exclusion from the application procedure.

3.5 Candidates must also attach to their application the following documents in PDF format. The attachments must be in English or Italian; if in another language, they must be accompanied by a translation into Italian or English, under the responsibility of the candidate.

- a. a copy of a valid identity document (for citizens of countries not belonging to the European Union it is preferable to attach a copy of their passport, with reference to the pages with photograph, personal details, number, place and date of issue);
- b. curriculum vitae et studiorum written in the Europass-CV format, available at the following web site: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>
- c. the complete text of their master’s degree thesis, including an abstract written in English (maximum limit 15,000 characters, including spaces); candidates who have not completed their master's degree by the application deadline are required to submit an extended abstract in Italian or English (maximum limit 25,000 characters, including spaces); the extended abstract is also mandatory if the thesis is written in a language other than Italian or English;
- d. “diploma supplement” or certification of examinations taken and the degree results attained (*transcripts*);
- e. copies of any publications;
- f. the research project as described in Article 1.10 of this call (maximum limit 20,000 characters, including spaces) including an abstract in English (maximum limit 3,000 characters, including spaces);
- g. a separate research project must be submitted for each course for which the candidate intends to apply; candidates who choose the option for one or more specific scholarships with specific research topics as referred to in Article 1.4 may, in addition, produce separate research projects for each of them.

- 3.6 The admission tests may be taken in Italian or English, with the exception of the admission tests for the courses in “Chemistry”, “Computational methods and mathematical models for the sciences and finance” and “Political Science and Sociology”, for which the tests must be taken exclusively in English.
- 3.7 Candidates who did not pass the first session of selections may submit a new application in the second session of the competition.
- 3.8 Candidates are admitted with reserve and exclusion from the call due to lack of requisites can be arranged by the person in charge of the application procedure, at any time during the procedure. Exclusion from the call and the reasons for the exclusion will be communicated to the candidate in question.

**Art. 4. Assessment of qualifications and tests**

- 4.1 For the assessment, aimed at ascertaining the candidates’ aptitude for scientific research and their basic preparation for the course programme, each admissions commission has one hundred points: sixty points for the assessment of qualifications and forty points for the oral test. Candidates who have obtained at least forty points in the assessment of qualifications will be admitted to the oral test. In order to pass the oral test candidates must obtain at least thirty points. Candidates must pass the oral test in order to enrol in the PhD course.
- 4.2 In the assessment of qualifications, the latter are considered as a whole.
- 4.3 The tests take place at the SNS according to the following schedule:

First session:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Publication of results of qualification assessment</b>	<b>Start of oral tests</b>	<b>Publication of results of orals and classifications</b>
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Sciences	by 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2024	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences	by 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2024	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2024

Second session:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Publication of results of qualification assessment</b>	<b>Start of oral tests</b>	<b>Publication of results of orals and classifications</b>
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Sciences	by 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024
Courses pertaining to the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences	by 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024

- 4.4 The oral tests are taken in person at the SNS sites; at the request of the candidate, the oral test may be taken online, with procedures that guarantee the identification of the candidate and the public nature of the test. Applications to take the test online can be submitted after the publication of the results of the assessment of the qualifications and research projects and in the modes communicated by the Offices of the Scuola Normale. Candidates must show a valid document of identification at the oral tests. Failure to participate in the oral test, for any reason whatsoever, will lead to the candidate's exclusion from the call.
- 4.5 The oral test will in any case be held online in the event of an epidemic outbreak restricting national or international mobility. Oral tests online may be requested by the individual candidate or arranged by the SNS for all candidates.
- 4.6 For the non-Italian students admitted, Italian language courses at different levels will be available.
- 4.7 The results of the assessment of the qualifications and the list of candidates admitted to the oral test will be published, together with the date and time of the tests, on the SNS website and on the SNS official online register. Inclusion in the list of admitted candidates means that the interested parties should attend the test on the day and time indicated without further notice. This publication fulfils the obligation to publicize the documents.
- 4.8 On the basis of the assessment of the qualifications and research programme and the results of the oral test, the admissions commission declares the suitability of the candidates and arranges them in descending order of ranking.
- 4.9 In the courses that envisage scholarships with specific research topics and sites, after assessing the qualifications and the oral test the commissions will create distinct lists, one for each of the scholarships with specific research topics and one for all the others. For the assigning of the places reserved in accordance with Art. 1.5 of the call herein, specific-theme scholarship rankings are not drawn upon.
- 4.10 In the event that two or more candidates obtain the same results on conclusion of the test, the youngest candidate is placed first in the ranking.
- 4.11 Candidates who, on positive assessment of their qualifications, take the tests in person will be reimbursed for documented travel expenses, in accordance with the following table:

	minimum threshold	Maximum threshold
Residents in Italy	50.00 €	350.00 €

Residents abroad	50.00 €	700.00 €
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Only the following travel expenses will be reimbursed:

- a. train (second class)
- b. scheduled bus routes
- c. sea travel
- d. plane (tourist class and only for distances between the sites of the Scuola Normale and the place of residence greater than 600 km).

For applicants residing in Sardinia or Sicily, reimbursement of air travel expenses is always allowed. For the calculation of the reimbursement, the place of departure/ return is considered to be the place of residence or, if less costly for the Scuola Normale, the place of actual departure.

Requests for reimbursement, together with the original travel documentation, including boarding passes, must be submitted by 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024. All requests are subject to the application of the 50 euro excess.

#### **Art. 5. Nomination of successful candidates, loss of eligibility and renouncement**

- 5.1 The Director of the SNS approves the final merit rankings created by the commissions and nominates the successful candidates in accordance with the number of places available.
- 5.2 Successful candidates lose their eligibility if they do not accept their place by the deadline set by the SNS.
- 5.3 Successful candidates who do not obtain a qualification suitable for admission, as described in article 2.2 of the call herein, by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2024 will lose their eligibility.
- 5.4 Successful candidates must submit to the SNS, by the given deadline, the following documentation:
  - a. a declaration of acceptance of the regulations of the Statute and of the regulations of the SNS, with exemption from any responsibility of the SNS for the consequences deriving from their non-compliance;
  - b. a digital passport-size photo;
  - c. certification regarding the details declared in the application, in the cases specified by Italian legislation;
  - d. successful candidates must also provide an e-mail address which can be used by the SNS for activities dedicated to students at the end of their academic career.
- 5.5 PhD candidates with a non-Italian qualification who are admitted must produce, at the time of enrolment, their qualifications, translated, legalised in Italian and accompanied by the Declaration of Value issued by the relevant Italian diplomatic authorities in the country where the qualification was attained (<https://www.miur.gov.it/dichiarazione-di-valore>). As an alternative, candidates may submit the Statement of Comparability of the university qualification issued by the ENIC-NARIC centre in Italy (CIMEA) containing all the information necessary for the assessment of the qualification. Those with a qualification from a country in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) need only submit the Diploma Supplement.
- 5.6 Pursuant to Article 71 of the President of the Republic's decree No. 445 of 28<sup>th</sup> December 2000 (consolidated text of the legislative and regulatory provisions on administrative documentation) and subsequent amendments thereto, the SNS reserves the right to verify the veracity of the details declared in the application. Should the latter details be declared not valid, the candidates in question will lose their place.

- 5.7 For social security purposes and in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 26 of Law No. 335 of 8<sup>th</sup> August 1995 and subsequent amendments and additions thereto, the successful candidates will also have to contribute to the "Gestione Separata " (the separate social security fund) managed by the INPS.
- 5.8 Successful candidates are required to pay to the Azienda Regionale per il Diritto allo Studio Universitario della Toscana (the regional office for the right to university study) the regional tax for the Diritto allo Studio Universitario (DSU) (the right to university study) or a receipt of the request for exemption from payment, respecting the modalities and deadlines specified by the Azienda (for further information on the regional tax, please visit the website <http://www.dsu.toscana.it>). For the academic year 2024-2025, a total refund of the aforementioned tax is payable if actually due and paid; to obtain the reimbursement, the students must fulfil the procedures for exemption as specified by the Azienda Regionale per il Diritto allo Studio Universitario della Toscana, or submit to the SNS the documentation attesting to their economic status (the ISEE certificate) that proves the non-existence of the requirements to obtain exemption.
- 5.9 Successful candidates from non-EU countries are required to comply with national and EU immigration rules and to regularise their position; for this purpose they will be able to refer to the relevant offices of the SNS, who will promptly communicate the details to them.
- 5.10 The successful candidates must be present at the SNS for the beginning of the course starting from the date indicated in the nomination notice. Otherwise, in the absence of a request to the SNS for valid reasons, they will be considered as having forfeited their place.
- 5.11 In the event of renunciation or forfeiture on the part of a successful candidate, the SNS has the right to proceed with a new assignment of the place within thirty days from the beginning of the course, following the order of the final ranking of the candidates, in addition to the specific lists set up for the assignment of scholarships with a specific research topic.

#### **Art.6. Ph.D. scholarship and grant**

- 6.1 The scholarship is paid in twelve deferred monthly instalments of the same amount; the payment is in any case subject to the fulfilment of the student's study obligations.
- 6.2 For the academic year 2024-2025, the scholarship amounts to € 18,043.00, inclusive of a lodging allowance. Students are also entitled to free board at the SNS facilities or affiliated facilities, for the entire duration of the course with the exclusion of academic vacation periods.
- 6.3 Instead of the scholarship as specified in the preceding paragraph, the successful candidates of the places with a specific topic and site may be given research contracts in the form of research grants or of *collaborazione coordinata e continuativa* (co-ordinated and continuous collaboration) as detailed in the web page: <https://www.sns.it/it/borse-tema-e-sede-specifici>.
- 6.4 Students can request to use the lodging allowance, within the limits of availability of the facilities, in the residences of the SNS.
- 6.5 In addition to the PhD scholarship, the SNS contributes to the expenses incurred by course students for formally authorised off-site study and research activities, in Italy and abroad.
- 6.6 Students of the Faculty of Sciences can participate in the selection procedures for admission to the "Science and Management" (sMBA) programme, carried out in collaboration with the Collège des Ingénieurs - Italy. The program aims to provide participants with theoretical and practical management training. Further information about the sMBA programme is available at the web page <https://www.sns.it/it/programma-science-management-mba>.
- 6.7 Non-European Union students are reimbursed for travel expenses incurred for the start of the course,



up to a maximum limit of € 1,000 and upon submission of original and fiscally valid travel documents, including boarding passes.

- 6.8 Non-European Union students can request, within one year from the discussion of their PhD thesis, the reimbursement of expenses incurred for returning to their country of origin, up to a maximum limit of 1,000 euros and upon submission of original and fiscally valid travel documents, including boarding passes. This request can also be made by those who do not complete the course due to loss of place, provided that at least one year has elapsed since the beginning of the course.

#### **Art. 7. Obligations and rights of students, incompatibilities**

- 7.1 The status of the students, their obligations and their rights are governed by the Statute and by the regulations of the SNS, in particular by the regulations of the Ph.D. Courses.
- 7.2 As set out in Article 11 of the Ph.D. courses regulations of the SNS, admission to the course implies an exclusive full-time commitment and is not compatible with employment or self-employment, nor with the exercise of professional activities. However, with the permission of the Ph.D. Board that assesses compatibility with study and research commitments, the following activities and their due compensation are allowed: a) collaboration with newspapers, journals, encyclopaedias and similar; b) the economic use by the author or inventor of intellectual works and industrial inventions; c) participation in conferences and seminars. Ph.D. students may be authorized to carry out further paid activities limited to those relating to the acquisition of skills related to their field of Ph.D. study.
- 7.3 The applicable legislation regarding leave or special leave applies to public employees who win a place at the SNS.
- 7.4 Attendance on SNS postgraduate courses is incompatible with simultaneous enrolment in other Ph.D. courses in Italy or abroad, except in cases of specific international agreements. Upon nomination, successful candidates who are enrolled in one of the aforementioned courses must, within fifteen days, regularise their position under penalty of forfeiture. In any case, successful candidates are obliged to declare any enrolments in study courses other than the Ph.D. course herein, even those made subsequently to the acceptance of the place.

#### **Art. 8. Processing of personal data**

- 8.1 EU Regulation 2016/679 on General Data Protection Regulation is applicable to the candidates' personal data processing.
- 8.2 The Data Controller of the personal data provided by the interested parties is the Scuola Normale Superiore, a public university institute, located in Piazza dei Cavalieri, 7 Pisa - 56126, in the person of its Director and pro tempore legal representative.
- 8.3 Personal data will be collected by the Scuola Normale as part of the selection/admission procedure of candidates/students and processed for the completion of the latter; likewise, for the successful candidates, for the subsequent management of their student career and for all related activities.
- 8.4 Personal data are processed to perform tasks of public interest within the institutional activities of the Scuola Normale, including the purposes of archiving, historical research and analysis for statistical purposes. Personal data will be processed, also with automated tools (software and databases administered by the Scuola and hosted by the contracting entities SERSE and CINECA), in compliance with the principles of accountability, lawfulness, correctness, minimisation, transparency, integrity, accuracy, confidentiality and proportionality.
- 8.5 The collected personal data will be communicated or transferred to third parties (public and/ or private

parties) in the context of institutional relations, for the fulfilment of legal obligations or regulations or of contracts, within the services required by the Scuola Normale (placements, tutoring, access to facilities, etc.).

- 8.6 The personal data collected may be communicated or transferred to established parties in third countries, only if suitable data protection guarantees and conditions have been ascertained.
- 8.7 The personal data collected will be published on the official online register and on the institutional website of the Scuola Normale if specified by the law and/or other regulations of the Scuola Normale.
- 8.8 The personal data collected will be processed and stored for the time strictly necessary to achieve the purposes for which they have been collected, with the application of the regulations concerning documentation storage by public institutions.
- 8.9 The data subject may at all times exercise the following rights:
- a. access to their personal data, as specified in Art. 15 of the Regulations;
  - b. the rectification, erasure or restriction of the processing of their personal data, as specified in Articles 16-18 of the Regulations; erasure is not permitted for the data included in the documents that must be stored by the Scuola Normale;
  - c. the portability of their data, as specified in Art. 20 of the Regulations;
  - d. objection to the processing of their data, under Article 21 of the Regulations;
  - e. the right to submit a complaint to the Italian Data Protection Authority. The aforementioned rights may be exercised by sending a request by e-mail to [privacy@sns.it](mailto:privacy@sns.it) or via certified e-mail (PEC) at [protocollo@pec.sns.it](mailto:protocollo@pec.sns.it). For any further information, please contact the Data Protection Officer (DPO), e-mail: [dpo@sns.it](mailto:dpo@sns.it).

#### **Art. 9. Final provisions and referral, information**

- 9.1 The Head of the Teaching Area of the SNS is also responsible for the administrative procedure of the call.
- 9.2 For anything not specified in this call, the provisions of the Statute and of the regulations of the SNS are valid, and are available on the SNS website <http://www.sns.it>.
- 9.3 This call will be published on the <http://www.sns.it> website, on the European Euraxess website and on the MUR website.
- 9.4 For information, interested parties can consult the web page <https://www.sns.it/it/concorso-phd>, or contact:
- a. for the Ph.D. courses based in Pisa, the staff of the Student Office at the following e-mail address: [phd@sns.it](mailto:phd@sns.it), or the phone numbers +39 050 509026, +39 050 509218 or +39 050 509685.
  - b. for the Ph.D. courses based in Florence, the Academic activities Service of the Polo Fiorentino at the following e-mail address: [didattica.firenze@sns.it](mailto:didattica.firenze@sns.it), or the phone numbers +39 055 2673317, +39 055 2673319 or +39 055 2673318.