

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) call

Type of financial support: Tuition and Enrolment Fee Waiver

Cycle 1 – Academic Year 2026/2027

Area of expertise: Public Administration

Opening date: 17 September 2026

Application deadline: 18 November 2026

Project	Virtual Worlds Innovation Masters: Shaping Future Digital Skills Europe (UPRAISE)
Grant Agreement No	101225920
Call	DIGITAL-2024-ADVANCED-DIGITAL-07-KEYCAPACITY
Funding scheme	Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP)
Managing institution	University of Napoli Federico II (UNINA) - Department of Economics, Management, Institutions (DEMI)
Number of grants	4 Tuition and Enrolment Fee Waivers
Maximum support	Up to EUR 5,000 per recipient
Total call budget	EUR 20,000
Official webpage	https://www.unina.it/it/ , https://upraiseproject.eu/

1. About UPRAISE

UPRAISE – Virtual Worlds Innovation Masters: Shaping Future Digital Skills Europe is implemented under the Digital Europe Programme and coordinated by the University of Bologna. The project aims to strengthen advanced digital skills in Europe through innovative and interdisciplinary education and training related to Virtual Worlds and their applications in different economic and societal domains. Within UPRAISE, the University of Napoli Federico II contributes to the Public Administration application area, focusing on the organizational, managerial and institutional implications of digital transformation and emerging digital technologies in the public sector.

2. Purpose of the Call

The University of Napoli Federico II launches this Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) call within Task T5.2 – “Mobility, mentorship and (non-)financial support for students” of the UPRAISE project. The call aims to facilitate access to advanced education and training opportunities connected with UPRAISE and to reduce financial and socio-economic barriers to participation.

For Cycle 1, UNINA proposes to award financial support in the form of Tuition and Enrolment Fee Waivers to eligible students admitted to the educational pathway described in Section 3.

3. Educational pathway covered by the Call

For Cycle 1, the UNINA UPRAISE educational pathway will be developed in connection with the following postgraduate programmes offered by the Department of Economics, Management, Institutions (DEMI) for academic year 2025/2026:

-Master in Public Managerial Practice (Master in Pratica Manageriale Pubblica); -Master in Digital Transformation of Public Administration (Master in Trasformazione Digitale della Pubblica Amministrazione).

FSTP beneficiaries will also be required to participate in a dedicated UPRAISE specialized learning activity/self-standing module in the Public Administration area, entitled: “Digital Transformation, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Worlds for Public Administration”.

The UPRAISE specialised learning activity will consist of 24 hours of online learning and will complement the educational activities of the relevant Master programme. It will focus on the application and organisational implications of advanced digital technologies in Public Administration, with particular reference to: Artificial Intelligence and data-driven public services; Virtual Worlds, immersive technologies and digital twins; organizational and managerial implications of emerging technologies; innovation in public services.

The activity is intended to enable participants to understand and critically assess the opportunities, organisational implications and governance challenges associated with the adoption of these technologies in the public sector, and to apply the knowledge acquired to relevant Public Administration contexts.

Completion of the UPRAISE specialised learning activity requires attendance of at least 70% of the scheduled activities and a positive final assessment. Participants who successfully complete the activity will receive a UPRAISE Certificate of Completion. For cycle 1 this activity does not award ECTS credits.

Participation in and successful completion of the UPRAISE specialised learning activity are mandatory conditions for FSTP beneficiaries and for maintaining the financial support awarded under this Call.

4. Financial support available

For Cycle 1, the UNINA allocation is:

- maximum number of beneficiaries: 4;
- maximum FSTP support per beneficiary: EUR 5,000;
- maximum total Cycle 1 allocation: EUR 20,000.

The support will take the form of a full or partial Tuition and Enrolment Fee Waiver. The maximum amount of support will depend on the tuition fee applicable to the selected programme: Master in Public Managerial Practice: tuition fee EUR 4,000; maximum FSTP support EUR 4,000; Master in Digital Transformation of Public Administration: tuition fee EUR 10,000; maximum FSTP support EUR 5,000. In all cases, the amount awarded shall comply with the prohibition of double funding.

5. Eligible applicants

Applicants must:

- meet the academic entry requirements of the relevant programme;
- be formally admitted to or enrolled in the programmes identified in Section 3;
- undertake the associated UPRAISE specialized learning activity/self-standing module;
- satisfy the nationality/country eligibility conditions applicable under the UPRAISE Grant Agreement and Digital Europe Programme;
- comply with the applicable administrative requirements of the University of Napoli Federico II;
- not receive other EU financial support covering the same tuition/enrolment costs;
- provide the documents and declarations required under this call.

Admission to the Master programme and selection for FSTP financial support are separate procedures. Admission to the Master does not automatically entitle an applicant to FSTP support.

6. Inclusion, widening participation and financial need

In accordance with the UPRAISE objectives and FSTP framework, the selection and determination of financial support shall take account, through transparent criteria, of financial need, socio-economic circumstances, geographical/widening considerations, diversity and inclusion, as applicable. Applicants may voluntarily provide information relevant to these criteria, including socio-economic circumstances, disability or other conditions relevant to widening participation. Such information will be processed in accordance with applicable data protection rules. The specific scoring mechanism is set out in Section 11.

7. Language requirements

Applicants must demonstrate an adequate level of proficiency in the language of instruction of the selected programme and associated UPRAISE learning activities, in accordance with the requirements established by UNINA. Where applicable, some UPRAISE activities, learning materials, seminars or international sessions may be delivered in English.

8. Application procedure

Applications shall be submitted electronically through the procedure specified by UNINA. The call shall remain open for at least two months. This call contains opening and closing dates, submission platform (to submit send application package via email to FSTP Call contact -see email address par.23 below) and contacts for administrative and technical enquiries. Applications submitted after the deadline or through channels other than those indicated in the call will not be considered.

9. Required documents

In line with the FSTP Guidelines, applicants should provide, as a minimum:

1. Transcript of Records or equivalent academic documentation;
2. Curriculum Vitae, maximum 3 pages, without photograph, including academic history, relevant professional experience, skills and achievements;

3. Personal Statement/Motivation Letter, maximum 3 pages, addressing motivation for participation, relevance to UPRAISE and the proposed educational pathway, and expected academic/professional impact;
4. copy of a valid passport or identity document;
5. any additional documents required by UNINA to verify eligibility.

Applicants may be required to provide a declaration concerning other financial support and compliance with the applicable double-funding rules. Where relevant to the published financial-need, widening or inclusion criteria, applicants may voluntarily provide the information and supporting documentation expressly identified in the final call. UNINA will not request sensitive personal data beyond what is necessary and legally permissible for the implementation of the published criteria.

10. Eligibility check

Following the deadline, UNINA will conduct an eligibility check. Only applications satisfying the eligibility requirements, submitted on time and accompanied by the mandatory documentation will proceed to evaluation.

11. Evaluation and selection criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated by a Selection Committee appointed by UNINA on the basis of clear, objective and transparent criteria, in accordance with Section 5.3 of the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines. Applications will be assessed on a maximum score of 100 points according to the following criteria

Criterion	Description	Weight
Academic background	Academic and Professional Background – academic records, previous qualifications, relevant professional experience and achievements, and overall preparedness for the proposed advanced digital skills learning pathway.	65 points
Motivation and proposed activity	Motivation and Expected Contribution – motivation to participate in the programme, interest in the thematic areas addressed by UPRAISE, expected contribution to the applicant's professional and/or academic development, and potential contribution to the broader objectives and impact of the project	25 points
Curriculum Vitae	Additional Academic and Non-Academic Experience – additional relevant academic, professional and non-academic experience, skills and achievements documented in the Curriculum Vitae.	10 points
		100 points

In accordance with the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines, the quality and relevance of the proposed participation in relation to the applicant's educational and professional objectives will be considered within the above assessment criteria. Applicants must demonstrate an adequate level of proficiency in the language of instruction of the selected programme, in accordance with the requirements specified by UNINA. Diversity, equity, inclusion and widening participation considerations will be taken into account in accordance with the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines. In the case of equal or comparable evaluation results, preference may be given to applicants from underrepresented groups, subject to applicable legal and institutional rules.

Applicants achieving an overall score of at least 70/100 may be considered for funding, subject to compliance with all eligibility requirements and availability of financial resources.

12. Selection committee

The Selection Committee will be appointed in accordance with UNINA rules. Its members shall act independently and impartially and comply with applicable confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements. The Committee will assess eligible applications against the published criteria, assign scores and establish the ranking.

13. Ranking, reserve list and award decision

Financial support will be awarded, subject to availability of funds, to the highest-ranked eligible applicants meeting the minimum threshold. A maximum of four beneficiaries will be funded under this Cycle 1 call. Eligible applicants above the threshold but not funded may be placed on a reserve list in ranking order. Where fewer than four applicants satisfy the eligibility and quality requirements, fewer than four applicants may be awarded financial support under this Call. If a selected applicant withdraws, declines the award, fails to accept it within the prescribed deadline or loses eligibility, UNINA may offer the support to the next eligible applicant on the reserve list.

14. Communication and acceptance of results

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure in accordance with the FSTP Guidelines. Successful applicants will receive information concerning the financial support awarded and the procedures for its acceptance. Applicants placed on the reserve list and applicants whose applications are declared ineligible or unsuccessful will be informed in accordance with the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines.

15. Conditions for maintaining the support

Beneficiaries must maintain eligibility and participation in the relevant educational pathway, successfully complete the associated UPRAISE specialised learning activity in accordance with the attendance and assessment requirements set out in Section 3, comply with applicable academic and administrative requirements, provide information required for project monitoring and promptly communicate changes affecting eligibility or funding. Beneficiaries shall comply with the participation and reporting obligations established by the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines and by the relevant UNINA educational programme.

16. Fee waiver and administrative arrangements

The FSTP support under this Call is intended to cover tuition/enrolment fees through a full or partial fee waiver. No part of the financial support, including any difference between the applicable tuition/enrolment fee waiver and the maximum FSTP support of EUR 5,000 per beneficiary, will be paid directly to beneficiaries or provided in another form. The maximum support is EUR 4,000 for beneficiaries enrolled in the Master in Public Managerial Practice and EUR 5,000 for beneficiaries enrolled in the Master in Digital Transformation of Public Administration. The amount of the benefit will be individually recorded. The administrative and accounting mechanism will comply with UNINA procedures and the UPRAISE Grant Agreement.

17. Double funding

Financial support awarded under this Call shall comply with the applicable rules on double funding, in accordance with the UPRAISE Grant Agreement and FSTP Guidelines.

18. Monitoring, records and audits

UNINA will retain the documentation required to ensure an adequate audit trail for publication, applications, eligibility checks, evaluation, selection, award and implementation.

19. Redress procedure

A redress procedure will be provided in accordance with the UPRAISE FSTP Guidelines and the applicable UNINA procedures.

20. Data protection

Personal data submitted in connection with this Call will be processed in accordance with the applicable data protection legislation and the relevant University of Napoli Federico II privacy notice.

21. Publication and visibility

Following the required review and confirmation procedure, the call will be published simultaneously through the channels required by the UPRAISE/HaDEA implementation arrangements, including the EU Funding & Tenders Portal, the Digital Skills and Jobs Platform (DSJP), the UPRAISE project website and the institutional website of the University of Napoli Federico II. The call will remain open for at least two months. The English version will be the reference version; an Italian version may also be made available.

22. Disclaimer

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 UPRAISE. Any financial support awarded under this call will be granted directly by UPRAISE to the successful applicants, in its own name and under its sole responsibility. UPRAISE's own responsibility includes the preparation and drafting of this call as well as the selection of successful applicants that 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 to increase 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 UPRAISE.

23. Contact

University of Napoli Federico II
Department of Economics, Management and Institutions – DEMI
UPRAISE Project – UNINA Unit
Scientific Coordinator: Prof. Paolo Canonico pcanonic@unina.it
FSTP Call contact: Dr. Lucio Todisco lucio.todisco@unina.it

24. Indicative timeline

Phase	Indicative timing
Publication	17 September 2026
Application period	2 months
Eligibility check	After call closure
Evaluation and ranking	2 weeks after call closure
Communication of results	1 week after evaluation
Application of fee waiver	Following award and completion of UNINA procedures
UPRAISE learning activities	2026/2027

25. Final provisions

Participation in the final call will imply acceptance of its conditions. For matters not expressly regulated, the relevant provisions of the UPRAISE Grant Agreement, approved FSTP Guidelines and applicable UNINA rules shall apply.