

MERCi CALL FOR MEDITERRANEAN SEA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS TO GRADUATE AND POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

Current Academic Year 2026

Tender No.: 26/3

The Tender Bylaws

Definitions

The Center: The Mediterranean Sea Research Center of Israel;

The Partner Institutions: The Partner Institutions in the Center as defined above and detailed below are: University of Haifa, the Technion, the Weizmann Institute of Science, Tel Aviv University, Bar Ilan University, Ben Gurion University, the Hebrew University, The Ruppin Academic Center, Reichman University, Ariel University, The Geology Survey of Israel, Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research.

Teaching Committee: A Committee operating within the framework of the Center, whereby its primary activity is to encourage advanced degree students in the research and teaching field relating to Mediterranean Sea research and this by providing scholarships for excellence for research, focused and interdisciplinary workshops in Israel, enrichment courses overseas, study cruises on the Mediterranean Sea and such like.

The Effective Date: **March 15th, 2026 at 08:00** or another date to be published by the Center.

The Scholarship: The Mediterranean sea research scholarship will award up to 8 scholarships of amounts to be determined by the Center and which will not exceed 8,000 ILS (in words: Eight Thousand Shekels).

Interpretation

1. In any event of a conflict and/or discrepancy between the provisions in these Bylaws and other publications pertaining to the tender, including but not limited to publications through the media, the provisions in these Bylaws will trump for all senses and purposes.

Introduction

2. The Center and the Partner Institutions comprising it are interested in awarding scholarships to candidates holding advanced degrees interested in executing during the course of 2026 academic year research associated with Mediterranean sea research or the effects on the Mediterranean sea from technological or environmental science aspects.
3. The scholarship will be given by the parent institution that the student attends, as a direct scholarship and will serve for the purpose of the student's research (such as - purchasing materials, scientific equipment, scientific editing, software).
4. The purpose of these Bylaws is to determine rules to apply to the Tender to receive the scholarship.

Rules To Participate In The Tender

5. Participating in the Tender is contingent upon fulfilling the following accumulative conditions:
 - 5.1. The candidate is an active student for a Masters/ Doctorate / Post Doctorate degree at one of the partner institutions as defined above.
 - 5.2. The candidate's proposed research will be associated with the Mediterranean Sea research or the effects on the Mediterranean Sea from technological or environmental science aspects.
 - 5.3. The proposed research is expected to be conducted during the course of the academic year of 2026.
 - 5.4. The candidacy was submitted by the last date to submit candidacy.
6. Receipt of the scholarship is subject to the winning candidate registering as an active student in one of the Partner Institutions in the Center and receipt of signed confirmation from the institution in which the winning candidate studies in the format of Appendix B of these Bylaws.
7. Submitting a candidacy to the Tender means consenting to these Bylaws conditions unconditionally.

The Manner To Submit Candidacy

8. Candidacy will be submitted no later than the effective date as defined above, to the center via email to: merci@univ.haifa.ac.il
9. The candidacy will contain the following documents:

1. A detailed letter stating how the candidate's research is associated with Mediterranean Sea research and why the Center should support the funding thereof;
2. The candidate's Curriculum Vitae;
3. A list of the candidate's publications, if applicable;
4. Valid approval of studies from one of the Partner Institutions;
5. The candidate's grades sheet for students of a Master Degree 1st year - Bachelor Degree grade sheet; for students in 2nd year - current grade sheet up to the current semester; for Doctorate students - grade sheet for Master Degree and current grades, if applicable; post-doctorate students - publications;
6. Letter of recommendation from candidate's direct mentor;
7. Confirmation of the proposed research plan by the academic institution;
8. The scope of the research proposal will not exceed 5 pages (font size 11, line spacing 1.5). The research proposal will include:
 - A synopsis, not to exceed 250 words.
 - Background - purposes of the research and importance thereof.
 - The research plan - the main approaches and methods intended to execute the research.
 - The research status - description in a paragraph of the stage the candidate is at and what was done up to the stage the candidacy was submitted.
 - Preparation of a detailed budget with the required sections (sea hours, depletable, travel, etc.)
10. The candidate must submit the documents above as one document in PDF format and according to the order presented above. Attach as the first page a list of documents and mark ☒ the documents that are submitted.
11. A candidate's proposal who does not attach all the requisite documents may have his proposal disqualified by the Center.
12. Without derogating from the above, the Center will be entitled to request from the candidate to supplement documents or clarifications in respect of its proposal and any other detail.

Selection of Winner/s

13. The Judging Committee (Hereinafter: "**The Committee**") will be comprised of members of the teaching Committee including the Committee chairman. The candidates' proposals that satisfy the participation conditions will be remitted to the judging Committee who will review them and select the winning candidate/s. Every member of the Committee will examine all the proposals except proposals from the Committee member's academic institution. Every proposal will be reviewed by at least two Committee members. Grading the proposals in general will be in accordance with criteria and weights as appearing in Section 14 below. In the event and after such grading a decision cannot be made in respect of the identity of the winning candidate/s, the Committee will hold an open discussion and the voting in respect of the winning candidates will be pursuant to a majority of votes.

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14. The Committee will base its decision *inter alia* on the basis of the following criteria:
 - 14.1. Average Grades - 10% (Post Doc - 10% for publications)
 - 14.2. The stage of the candidate's degree - 5% (the more the candidate's research proposal or research plan is approved by the supervisor, the higher the score will be).
 - 14.3. Research excellence - the scorers assessment of the candidate and his proposal's research excellence - will be based on the research proposal as submitted, and the rest of the documents submitted - 35%
 - 14.4. The scorers assessment pertaining to the proposal meeting the tender requirements - 25%
 - 14.5. The scorers opinion of the direct mentor's recommendations - 10%
 - 14.6. General assessment by the scorers - 15%
15. Notwithstanding the above, the Committee may refrain from selecting a proposal as the winner, to allow a variety of candidates to win from various disciplines/ departments and different institutions.
16. The Committee may request clarifications from the candidates insofar as their research is concerned.
17. The Committee may remit, of its discretion, a certain research plan or research plans to be examined by an expert or additional experts who are not members therein. The provisions in the external expert's opinion only express's his position and will be of his sole responsibility, and will not constitute a basis to any argument against the Committee or the Center. Furthermore, it is clarified that such an opinion will not be binding on the Committee but rather will constitute one of the considerations the Committee considers within the framework of its discretion.
18. The Committee may determine the number of winners of the Tender and the scholarships amounts in accordance with the Center's discretion and budget provided that each scholarship does not exceed 8,000 ILS.
19. Final approval of the Committee's decision will be given in accordance with the available budget and subject to receiving the Center's executive's approval and budgetary approval and subject to the Center's procedures.
20. The Center or whoever on its behalf will notify the candidate that his research proposal won in an email message or by telephone, pursuant to the details remitted to it at the time his proposal was submitted. Notices will be remitted by the Center's staff also to candidates whose research proposal was not selected.
21. The scholarship will be awarded to the winning candidate/s directly from the parent institution that he attends and in accordance with the regulations of that institution and subject to the fact that all the conditions in these Bylaws are satisfied and only after he/ they signs the format of the declaration **Appendix A** of these Bylaws and **Appendix B** of these Bylaws were presented to the Center signed and approved by the parent institution's authorized signatories which they attend.
22. If a candidate who won cannot with reasonable diligence be contacted and/or if a candidate who won did not meet the funding requirements to receive a

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scholarship listed in these Bylaws and/or he was disqualified pursuant to the Committee's decision due to a special reason, the Committee may decide on another winner.

23. The University's legal adviser or someone on its behalf will rule any time there is a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the Bylaws and will rule on any dispute between the Center and the winners or someone alleging he won.

General

24. The Committee, as stated above will select the winner. Every participant releases the Center and the Partner Institutions and/or their representatives and/or employees and/or the rest of the participants in the Tender of any claims or claim relating to the Tender.
25. The scholarship under no circumstances can be converted to money equivalent and/or other prize.
26. The name of the winner/s and the gist of the research may be published and the Center's public relations and/or the Institution at which the winner attends in the various forms of media, and the winner/s hereby waive any claim and/or demand in respect of such a broadcast and/or use of their name and/or details and/or their works and/or the gist of the works within the framework of publications in connection with this Tender and/or other publications of the Center and the Partner Institutions.
27. The Center and the Partner Institutions release themselves of any liability to send submission forms, appendices thereto, via electronic mail.
28. It is clarified that the Center's records and/or of anyone on its behalf pertaining to receipt of the submission forms via electronic mail, is conclusive proof of receiving the submission forms.
29. The mere participation in the Tender will be considered as consent, approval and a declaration that the participant therein read these Bylaws, agrees to its conditions and is bound to act pursuant thereto, and even if he did not read the Bylaws, he consents to these Bylaws applying to him as if he read them and will be bound by them for all senses and purposes. The Participant is obligated to comply with the proper rules of conduct and not to act contrary to any law.
30. The Center and the Partner Institutions may at any time, of their sole discretion and for any reason act as follows - to stop or cancel the Tender and/or change the conditions in these Bylaws and/or change the Tender participation conditions and/or change the Tender period and/or the dates and/or the scholarship amount and each participant waives any claim in respect thereto.
31. Without derogating from the provisions in these Bylaws it is clarified that the Center and the Partner Institutions will not bear any liability in the event of an act and/or omission by a third party, including but not limited to a dispute with a third party in connection with this Tender and/or these Bylaws and/or the scholarship subject matter of the Tender.
32. The Center and the Partner Institutions will not bear any liability for any direct and/or indirect damage, including but not limited to shortening the Tender period, and including but not limited to direct and/or indirect expenses incurred

as a result of and/or in connection with participating in the Tender and/or in connection with a scholarship, including but not limited to damages resulting from a force majeure, accidents, diseases, theft, loss of any property, mental anguish etc., and/or any decision and/or action taken and/or to be taken by a participant in reliance upon him participating in this Tender and/or winning the scholarship.

33. In any event the winning participant will not have any claim and/or demand and/or claim against those holding the Tender and any other body affiliated thereto, or on behalf of any of these, in respect of any matter and purpose and anything associated, directly or indirectly, to this Tender, including but without derogating from the generality of the above, anything associated with the manner the Tender is conducted, the manner the research proposals are reviewed and the manner the scholarship is received and realized.
34. Liability to realize the scholarship lies solely with the winner/s. The Center and the Partner Institutions will not bear any liability for the winning candidate/s not realizing the scholarship in full or in part.
35. It is clarified that any tax, deduction or demand for payment of tax, of any type, will be the winner/s sole responsibility and solely at their expense. The Center and the Partner Institutions may remit to the tax authorities, if required to do so by law, the details of the winner/s and/or deduct tax at source. The Center and the Partner Institutions will not be obligated to pay tax in connection with the win.
36. In any event it is proven that due to the negligence of the Center and the Partners Institutes or anyone on their behalf a participant was unable to participate in the Tender and/or win the scholarship and/or in the event a participant raises a claim and/or demand in connection with the Tender and this is found to be justified, the maximum compensation amount that the participant will be entitled to receive will be limited to 8,000 ILS only.
37. For further details and questions, you may contact Mrs. Shimrit Haimzon merci@univ.haifa.ac.il
Chairman of Educational Committee: Dr. Shiri Zemah Shamir shiri.zemahshamir@runi.ac.il
38. In these Bylaws, use of masculine form is solely for convenience purposes, and the provisions also relate to feminine form impliedly.

Appendix A. By-laws Grantee Declaration

The Mediterranean Sea Research Center of Israel – MERCI – has decided to award you a Mediterranean Sea research scholarship for the 2026 academic year based on your successful application.

Prior to receiving the scholarship, you must complete your details below and statement.

I, the undersigned, _____ bearer of I.D. No. _____,
Hereby declare and confirm that:

1. Winning the scholarship was not obtained in violation of the bylaws and/or contrary to its conditions and that in the event it is clarified to the contrary, I undertake to return the scholarship without prejudicing any relief and rights of MERCI and the Partners' Institutions therein - pursuant to the law.
2. I am aware that I will receive the scholarship from the institution that I attend, and that I do not and will not have (nor will anyone on my behalf) any claim and/or demand from MERCI and the Partner Institutions therein and/or anyone on their behalf insofar as the tender and/or the scholarship is concerned
3. I agree that my name and work that I submitted or the gist thereof may be published by MERCI and the Partner Institutions therein and I hereby waive any claim and/or demand in respect of such publication and/or use of my name and my work within the framework of the publications relating to this tender and/or other publications of MERCI and the Partner Institutions therein.
4. I confirm that any publication derived from my research will acknowledge the support from MERCI according to the following format: "Funding (or support) was provided to XXX by the Mediterranean Sea Research Center of Israel".
5. I am aware that any tax, deduction or demand for tax payment, of any kind, will be at my expense and at my expense alone. MERCI will be entitled to transfer to the tax authorities, if required by law, my details and/or withholding tax. MERCI will not be obligated to pay any tax regarding the winnings.

This is my name, this is my signature and the content of this statement of mine is true.

In witness whereof, I hereto set my hands: _____

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Appendix B. By-laws. Confirmation by the Parent Institution

CALL FOR MEDITERRANEAN SEA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS TO GRADUATE AND POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

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Applicant's name: _____

Supervisor's name (academic or research faculty): _____

Applicant's Academic Institution (Hereinafter "The Institution")

**The requested scholarship amount for the candidate within the framework of
participating in the aforementioned tender is: _____ ILS.**

The Institution undertakes as follows:

1. If MERCI grants a scholarship to the applicant, the Institution undertakes to pay the applicant directly the scholarship amount he wins, as stipulated above.
2. The institution undertakes that the awarding of the scholarship will be in accordance with the rules practiced by it.
3. The Institution confirms that the applicant is engaged in Mediterranean Sea research that aligns with the conditions published on behalf of the Mediterranean Sea Research Center of Israel in Tender No. 26/3 and pursuant to the Center's procedures.
4. At the end of each academic year the Institution undertakes to remit to the University of Haifa a financial report signed by the Institution's accountant regarding the use of the above scholarship funds in the format required by the Planning and Budget Committee.

Date _____

Authorized Signatory's Signature

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____