

**Scholarships for Palestinian Students offered by the  
Government of Malta for Postgraduate Studies  
at the University of Malta**

**Call for Applications 2016**

The Government of Malta announces the third call for applications for Palestinian students wishing to pursue post-graduate studies at the University of Malta. The Scholarships are designed to facilitate the formation of young Palestinian professionals in two key areas which have become increasingly recognised as critical pillars for the creation of a more sustainable future for Palestine, namely humanitarian action, and cultural heritage. Malta is an ideal meeting point for the realization of this goal, not only because of the relevant expertise it offers in these two sectors, but also because of the strong historic and cultural ties it enjoys with the Arab world as well as with Europe.

**Objective**

The specialised formation of young and promising Palestinian citizens is an important pillar for the ongoing capacity-building efforts in Palestine. Two of the emerging sectors where more young professionals are needed on the ground are humanitarian action, and the conservation and management of cultural heritage. An investment in the specialised formation of professionals in these two sectors is an investment in the future of Palestine, with a better and more sustainable quality of life for its citizens.

**Why sponsor students in Conservation of Built Heritage?**

The main objective of the international community's engagement in Palestine is the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel. Cultural heritage is widely recognised as a powerful medium for the formation of a sense of identity, civic pride and community regeneration. A number of Palestinian initiatives are already exploring the immensely rich patrimony of Palestine to help build a better future for the country. The formation of more young professionals will directly support the growth and consolidation of these home-grown initiatives.

A fundamental principle of sound and sustainable heritage conservation and management is the empowerment and the enablement of local communities with the skills and tools to conserve and manage their own cultural heritage resources. The formation of heritage management and conservation/restoration professionals within a community is the most essential step in this process of emancipation from an excessive and long-term dependence on external expertise.

A second principle of sustainable heritage management is the development of conservation/restoration and management techniques that are suited to local materials, traditions and skills, in order to ensure that they may be replicated and sustained with the least possible dependence on externally-devised solutions.

There are a number of distinct similarities between Maltese and Palestinian built heritage. For this reason the training and expertise offered by the University of Malta are highly relevant to the Palestinian context. These common characteristics should also facilitate the creation of long-term synergies between the University of Malta and Palestinian universities.

The scholarship scheme will directly support the successful and sustainable delivery of these goals through capacity-building at a local level, in order to help develop a professional workforce on the ground that is capable of developing and maintaining an indigenous heritage conservation and management practice.

### **Why sponsor students in Humanitarian Action?**

The overall situation in Palestine and particularly in Gaza, as well as the continued existence of large refugee camps calls for a high degree of expertise in humanitarian action. Humanitarian issues related to the Palestinian situation are also continuously on the agenda of international organisations, including the United Nations and its various agencies. It is imperative that Palestinians have the capacity and professional knowledge to take the lead in shaping both policy and practice related to humanitarian action in Palestine at the international, regional, and local levels.

Humanitarian action today emphasizes local ownership, participation and bottom-up approaches. Thus, it is only logical from this perspective to develop extensive Palestinian expertise on an issue which, unfortunately, affects the Palestinian people on a daily basis.

The Master of Arts in Humanitarian Action of the University of Malta combines theory and practice in such a way as to enable the students to work on a range of issues related to humanitarian action, from humanitarian diplomacy, via forced migration to management and evaluation in humanitarian action, all issues of particular interest in the Palestinian context.

## **Malta-Palestine relations**

### **Brief overview of bilateral relations between Malta and Palestine**

Ever since its independence Malta has traditionally held close and friendly relations with the Palestinian people. Malta was one of the first European countries to support the principle of a two-state solution to the long-standing conflict in the Middle East. To this end its foreign policy has consistently supported international efforts aimed at a peaceful and negotiated resolution to the conflict and the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel.

Throughout the years Malta and Palestine have also sought to deepen their bilateral relations through the intensification of cooperation in various sectors. In 1979 the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) opened a representative office in Malta and in 1989 Malta accepted the nomination of the first Ambassador of Palestine to Malta. The PLO representative office was subsequently awarded the status of an embassy. During July 2008 President Mahmoud Abbas, paid a first visit to Malta. In June 2009 Malta inaugurated its Representative Office in Ramallah. The Hon. Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta paid a first visit to Palestine on 17 October 2013. During his visit the Prime Minister of Malta reaffirmed Malta's commitment to state-building efforts in Palestine and in line with this policy he announced the setting up of the present scholarship scheme. The Hon. George W. Vella, Foreign Minister of Malta, last visited Palestine during October 2014 and was the first Foreign Minister to visit Gaza following the hostilities of the previous summer.

### **Overview of Malta's Assistance to the Palestinian National Authority**

Malta remains committed to complement its political engagement with practical assistance to state-building efforts. Apart from a financial contribution of €137,567 to the *Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique* (PEGASE) Malta also contributes regularly to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the latest being €25,000 during January 2014 and €25,000 during May 2014. During 2014 Malta donated a total of €150,000 to UNRWA.

Furthermore, Malta has regularly participated in donor conferences and pledged contributions.

In the aftermath of the Annapolis Conference, Malta participated in the December 2007 Paris Donors' Conference. At this conference Malta pledged to contribute directly to the Palestinian Authority's budget and to provide expertise on water supply, health and education, the training of public servants and the ICT sector.

Malta also participated in the 2008 Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and Rule of Law. At this event, Malta offered a one-month familiarisation visit for three Palestinian police officers. During the visit, which took place during July-August 2009, the officers were assigned to various sections of the police forces of Malta, including the Administrative Law Enforcement

Section, the Economic Crime Unit, the Money Laundering Unit, the CID, Police Academy, the SAG, and the Drug Squad.

At the Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza held in Sharm El Sheikh during March 2009, Malta pledged the sum of €20,000. This amount was transferred in June 2009.

In further fulfilment of the pledge made at the Paris Donors' Conference, following the opening of the Representative Office of Malta in Ramallah, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta awarded €25,000 in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funds to a University in Bethlehem and a hospital in East Jerusalem. During 2014 Malta allocated €29,200 for the implementation of ODA projects in cooperation with educational and health institutions and non-governmental organisations based in East Jerusalem and other cities in the West Bank.

In another initiative, Malta sponsored a workshop on the conservation of built heritage in Palestine. The workshop, organised by Heritage Malta and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation & Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), was hosted in Bethlehem during December 2011. A follow-up workshop, held in Ramallah during September 2012 finalised work on the Charter on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in Palestine (The Palestine Charter). During February 2013 the Palestinian Minister for Tourism and the Antiquities launched the Charter - the first of its kind in the Arab world.

During 2012 Malta donated a consignment of clothes and shoes to the residents of the Gaza Strip. The shipment was delivered in coordination with UNRWA.

In addition to these ad hoc contributions, Malta has a well-established tradition of offering two scholarships annually for Master's programmes at the University of Malta and at the Malta-based Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC). Over forty students have benefited from these scholarships and graduates from these programmes are currently working at the Office of the President, Palestinian ministries, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other public and private institutions in Palestine. In addition, twice a year, Malta sponsors the participation of two Palestinian officials in MEDAC seminars.

During his visit to Palestine on 17 October 2013 Malta's Prime Minister pledged €46,800 towards the creation of a new scholarship scheme for Palestinian students to study in Malta. The scheme was formally launched during June 2014 and the first beneficiaries of the Scholarship Scheme started their studies at the University of Malta during October 2014. A second group of beneficiaries commenced their studies in October 2015. This commitment has been renewed for 2016.

## **The University of Malta**

The University of Malta is the highest teaching institution in Malta. It is publicly funded and is open to all those who have the requisite qualifications. Over the past few years, the University has reviewed its structures in order to be in line with the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area. Conscious of its public role, the University strives to create courses which are relevant and timely in response to the needs of the country. The supreme governing bodies of the University are the Council and the Senate. The present structure of the University was established by the 1988 Education Act.

There are some 11,000 students following full-time or part-time degree and diploma courses, all of which run on the modular / ECTS credit system.

The University is geared towards the infrastructural and industrial needs of the country so as to provide expertise in crucial fields. Over 3,000 students graduate in various disciplines annually. The degree courses at the University are designed to produce highly qualified professionals, with experience of research, who will play key roles in industry, commerce and public affairs in general. There are a further 2,800 pre-tertiary students at the Junior College which is also managed by the University.

The University today has fourteen faculties: Arts; Built Environment; Dental Surgery; Economics, Management & Accountancy; Education; Engineering; Health Sciences; Information & Communication Technology; Laws; Media & Knowledge Sciences; Medicine & Surgery; Science; Social Wellbeing and Theology.

A number of interdisciplinary Institutes and Centres have been set up in various fields. The Institutes include Anglo-Italian Studies; Baroque Studies; Confucius; Digital Games; Earth Systems; European Studies; Islands & Small States; Linguistics; Maltese Studies; Physical Education & Sport; Public Administration & Management; Sustainable Development; Sustainable Energy; Tourism, Travel & Culture; the Edward de Bono Institute for the Design & Development of Thinking; the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies and the Mediterranean Institute.

The Centres comprise: Centre for Biomedical Cybernetics; Centre for English-Language Proficiency; Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation; Centre for Environmental Education and Research; Centre for Labour Studies; Centre for Literacy; Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research; Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Insular Coastal Dynamics; European Centre for Gerontology; European Centre of Educational Resilience & Socio-Emotional Health and the IOI - Malta Operational Centre.

The University of Malta has also set up a School of Performing Arts and an International School for Foundation Studies.

The campus is home to the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI).

## **The University of Malta as a host for international students**

Lying at the cross-roads of the Mediterranean, the University of Malta has, over its 400-year history, been the hub for international academic exchange on the island. This legacy has been carried on to the present day as the University hosts close to one thousand international students from 86 different countries, active collaborations with universities in Europe, Asia, the United States, Africa and Australia and a host of international visitors, experts and external examiners from different parts of the globe which have turned the University into an international campus which celebrates the diversity and cultural richness of all those who frequent it. With English as its language of instruction and wide-ranging support services to meet the needs of its local and international community, the University consistently seeks to embark on projects and initiatives in order to continue boosting its international student figures and extending its network to new partners in order to create sustainable collaborations in diverse fields of interest.

The University of Malta currently hosts over 11,000 students, of which 10% are international students from 93 different countries, following courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level. For the academic year 2015/16, the University hosted 400 students on Erasmus (European) and other exchange programmes with the US, Japan, Australia, Canada and China whilst another 860 international students are currently reading for a full degree.

The principal contact point for prospective and registered international students/visitors is the International and EU Office: <http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international>

## **Current University of Malta/Palestine academic/professional relations**

The University of Malta's Department of International Relations in the Faculty of Arts, and Department of Conservation and Built Heritage in the Faculty for the Built Environment have for a long time been committed to developing a strong relationship with their colleagues and counterparts in several Universities in Palestine, as well as NGOs active in their field. Collaborations over recent years have included a series of visits, exchanges, meetings, lectures, a round table discussion and an exhibition, all of which have underlined the potential benefits and paved the way for greater collaboration between the two countries in these fields. The University of Malta signed bilateral agreements for the mobility of staff and students with four Palestinian Universities in March 2015 in its bid for funds through the Erasmus + programme.

A number of other departments of the University of Malta hold excellent academic ties with Palestinian counterparts and as explained previously, the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies has been a host for Palestinian students and academics for several years.

## **The Courses for which Palestinian students may apply for a scholarship**

### **Master of Science in Conservation of Decorative Architectural Surfaces, within the Department of Conservation and Built Heritage, Faculty for the Built Environment**

#### **Brief Description**

This multidisciplinary Master of Science course deals with the conservation of decorative architectural surfaces including wall paintings, stone, and mosaic. The course contains extensive hands-on works in the laboratory and on-site (carried out throughout the academic years and as conservation placements), a dissertation and an equal balance of theoretical and practical subjects, including: conservation history and ethics; research methods; materials and technology in architectural surfaces and sculpture; composition and properties of building and decorative materials; scientific analyses applied to conservation; the deterioration of stone and related building materials; environmental assessment for conservation; conservation management and conservation materials and methods.

All students shall be required to undertake two compulsory conservation placements, as indicated in the programme of study. These conservation placements cannot be carried out during term time. At least one of these conservation placements shall be carried out abroad at an institution approved by the Board.

The full-time programme comprises three semesters of taught study-units (80 ECTS), two summer conservation placements (10 ECTS), and a dissertation (30 ECTS) that is undertaken during the second semester of the second year.

The MSc in Conservation of Decorative Architectural Surfaces offers students:

- a clear understanding of what the practice of the conservation of cultural heritage entails through discussions, seminars, presentations and reports
- familiarisation with a variety of methods for examination, analysis, documentation and conservation of materials relative to their field
- the skills required to document, analyse and record the state of conservation of architectural surfaces
- the ability to reflect critically on conservation practice, including their own
- the ability to work independently according to the highest ethical standards, and according to negotiated deadlines
- the ability to carry out a professionally designed conservation treatment on a complex surface using the principles of minimum intervention, retreatability and reversibility where applicable
- the skills required to produce professional quality conservation reports for presentation to professionals in the same or related fields

- the ability to continue to develop their manual skills and advance their theoretical knowledge and understanding of conservation treatments.

A more detailed description may be viewed at:

<http://www.um.edu.mt/ben/overview/PMSCCDAFTT2-2016-7-0>

The programme of study may be viewed at:

<http://www.um.edu.mt/ben/programme/PMSCCDAFTT2-2016-7-0>

The detailed course bye-laws may be viewed at:

[http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/161098/MSc-Cons-of-Decor-Arch-Surf-BL-2013.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/161098/MSc-Cons-of-Decor-Arch-Surf-BL-2013.pdf)

### **Admission Requirements**

In order to be considered for admission into the MSc programme in October 2016, applicants are required to hold

- a) a Bachelor's degree obtained with at least Second Class (Honours) or Category II the main focus of which is in Conservation and Restoration, and directly related to the programme of study of the Course *or*
- b) qualifications deemed by Senate, on the recommendation of the Faculty Board, to be comparable to the qualifications listed in (a) *or*
- c) to have successfully completed a preparatory programme comprising 60 ECTS credits, with an overall average mark of 65% or better, prior to their registration as regular students on the Course.

In addition to the qualifications mentioned in (a) and (b), in order to be admitted to the Course, candidates must also obtain a mark of at least 65% in a test or tests as established by the Faculty Board, and held not later than one month before the start of the academic year.

Applicants are required to present an internationally recognized English Language proficiency Certificate at the required level. Further information is available at: [http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international/english\\_language\\_requirements](http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international/english_language_requirements)

### **Ideal Student Profile**

This course is a challenging and wide-ranging one, focusing on developing professionals with highly transferable skills. The ideal applicant, besides holding the qualifications indicated above, will be highly motivated to acquire and develop the specialised knowledge and skills to become an effective practitioner in the cultural heritage conservation sector, will show a strong commitment to work in Palestine, and will aspire to make a significant contribution to the public sector in this field.

## **Master of Arts in Humanitarian Action**

The Master's programme approaches humanitarian and development action from both a practical and an analytical perspective. Students develop the necessary knowledge and skills to critically analyse humanitarian action, and work effectively in the humanitarian and development field. The programme is taught by a combination of in-house experts and experienced guest lecturers. Candidates for the M.A. in Humanitarian Action will gain a comprehensive understanding of:

- The variety of humanitarian and more long-term responses to crises across the globe
- How such responses are shaped and what consequences they have
- The institutional and legal framework for humanitarian action
- Medical and public health aspects of humanitarian action
- Management and humanitarian action
- Anthropology and humanitarian action
- Media and humanitarian action
- Applied ethics in humanitarian action
- Human security, forced migration and humanitarian action
- Humanitarian evaluation in theory and practice
- Applied research methods in humanitarian action

The M.A. also offers the possibility of placements for those students who wish to expand their hands-on experience of what working in the humanitarian and development fields entails.

The programme is intended for individuals working in, or aspiring to work in, humanitarian agencies, multilateral aid institutions, NGOs and private foundations, government agencies, large corporations with in-house development/outreach work, and think tanks and research centres.

The M.A. enables students to develop a range of skills, including:

- The ability to analyse critically humanitarian and development action, how it is framed, structured, and delivered
- The ability to plan, programme, implement, and evaluate effectively humanitarian and/or development interventions
- The ability to navigate among the numerous players involved in humanitarian and development assistance
- Confident oral presentation skills on the topics covered
- Analytical writing in the area of humanitarian and development cooperation

## **Admission Requirements**

1) A recognised degree as deemed relevant by the Faculty Board of Arts.

Given the multidisciplinary character of humanitarian work, students are expected to hold a first degree second class or equivalent, in any subject considered to be relevant by the Admissions Committee.

2) English Language Proficiency.

Applicants who have not studied in Malta are required to present an internationally recognised English Language Proficiency Certificate at the required level. Further information about English Language Requirements is available at:

[http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international/english\\_language\\_requirements](http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international/english_language_requirements)

3) Further details.

For further details, see Bye-Laws for Degree of Master of Arts available at [http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/95147/MA-Arts-BL-2009.pdf.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/95147/MA-Arts-BL-2009.pdf.pdf) and the Course Overview and Programme available at:

<http://www.um.edu.mt/arts/overview/PMAHMAFET12-2015-6-O>

## **Ideal Student Profile**

The ideal applicant should have a serious and manifest commitment to humanitarianism, with some prior experience in the humanitarian and/or development sector and a strong motivation to pursue postgraduate studies. The applicant should have intercultural communication skills. Knowledge of languages beyond English and Arabic is an asset.

## The Scholarship

The scholarship will cover

- Payment of the University of Malta Tuition Fees and/or Enrolment fee.
- Health Insurance to cover a premium up to a maximum of EUR 500 per year. Students will be guided on this and other arrangements upon arrival.
- Reimbursement for the obligatory Health Test to be carried out in Malta as required for the processing of the Residence Permit. (Information about the health test that will be carried out upon arrival in Malta is available at: <http://www.um.edu.mt/int-eu/international/healthtests>).
- A monthly subsistence allowance amounting to EUR 950 per month to be used towards accommodation, living, transport and academic expenses and any other expenses that may arise.
- One return journey to Palestine the cost of which is capped at EUR 1000. Any additional trips or travel costs higher than this amount will have to be covered by the student.

Two scholarships will be awarded – one for the candidate selected for the Master of Arts in Humanitarian Action and another one for the candidate selected for the Master of Science in Conservation of Decorative Architectural Surfaces.

**The scholarship holders will be requested to attend the Orientation Programme that is organised for all new international students joining the University of Malta. This will be held at the end of September (selected candidates will be duly notified).**

### Instructions to Applicants and Conditions of Selection

- Applicants need to have submitted their application online and provided copies of their academic qualifications and all other requested documentation to the University of Malta by the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Information is available at: [http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/232200/octoberadmissioninfo.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/232200/octoberadmissioninfo.pdf)
- Applicants are requested to pay the application fee to the University of Malta in order for their application to be considered. The application fee is non-refundable. Details concerning the applicable fees are available at: [http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/232200/octoberadmissioninfo.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/232200/octoberadmissioninfo.pdf)
- Applicants who wish to be considered for the scholarship are required to present a letter of motivation and three letters of reference. These are to be submitted as signed and scanned copies to the Director, International and EU office by email at: [stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt](mailto:stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt) **AND** to Mr Reuben Gauci, the Representative Office of Malta in Palestine at [reuben.gauci@gov.mt](mailto:reuben.gauci@gov.mt). The covering message is to include reference to the application

code generated by the online application and should also be submitted by the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Documents that are submitted after the deadline cannot be considered.

- Applicants for the above mentioned courses who intend to apply for the scholarship must meet the entry requirements set out by the University of Malta and the conditions for joining the specific programmes indicated above at the time of application. Applicants who can only be considered on a conditional basis (i.e. are not in a position to provide proof of attainment of the academic qualifications required to join the programme) at the time of application cannot be considered for the scholarship. This also refers to the requirement to present an internationally recognized English Language proficiency Certificate at the required level.
- Applicants may be required to attend an interview at the Representative Office of Malta in Palestine.
- Applicants for other courses cannot be considered for these scholarships.
- Applicants should be Palestinian Nationals, are currently residing in Palestine and show a clear intention to return to Palestine at the end of their studies in Malta.
- Candidates employed in public office in Palestine, or working actively with NGOs in Palestine, will be preferred.
- Preference will be given to candidates who would be unable to attend the programme without the scholarship.
- The scholarship holder will be requested to enter into an agreement with the University of Malta for the duration of his studies in Malta, which agreement will be binding in terms of the observation of rules and regulations of the host University and host country, to seriously engage in studies, register monthly progress with his academic tutor/coordinator and complete the set programme within the established time-frame.

**Further information is available through:**

The Director, International and EU Office, University of Malta – Ms Stefania Agius Fabri: [stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt](mailto:stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt)

The Representative Office of Malta in Ramallah – Mr Reuben Gauci: [reuben.gauci@gov.mt](mailto:reuben.gauci@gov.mt)

Master of Arts in Humanitarian Action, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta -Dr Anna Khakee: [anna.khakee@um.edu.mt](mailto:anna.khakee@um.edu.mt)

Master of Science in Conservation of Decorative Architectural Surfaces, Department of Conservation and Built Heritage, Faculty for the Built Environment, University of Malta – Dr Reuben Grima: [reuben.grima@um.edu.mt](mailto:reuben.grima@um.edu.mt)