



# Phortify Master Thesis Grants - Pilot Call

## Eligibility & Evaluation

### **Nationality eligibility**

Applicants must be nationals of an EU Member State, an associated country, or a country with which the European Union has an ongoing cooperation agreement under the Digital Europe Programme.

Eligible countries include, inter alia, countries participating in Digital Partnerships, Trade and Technology Councils, digital dialogues, or other forms of ongoing international cooperation with the European Commission in the field of digital technologies.

#### ***Authoritative list of eligible countries:***

*Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea (South Korea), Kosovo, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United States (US), Libya.*

### **Eligibility**

Applicants are eligible for Phortify Grants for Master Thesis Projects if they:

1. are enrolled in one of the participating Phortify Master's programmes at a consortium university
2. participate in the Phortify project through their enrolment in the Master's programme for which the grant is awarded

In all cases, eligible applicants must be students at the time of the internship, and the internship must:

- be directly related to the thematic areas and objectives of the Phortify project;
- contribute to the academic and professional development of the student;
- be carried out during the student's period of study;
- be implemented under the responsibility of a Phortify partner institution.

## **Required documents**

- **Latest official academic BSc and MSc (if applicable) transcripts demonstrating a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.2/4.0, 16/20, or 80%** (or an equivalent grading scale)
- **A Phortify-specific motivation letter**, describing the applicant's motivation for applying for Phortify funding and their alignment with the objectives of the Phortify project
- **A curriculum vitae (CV)**

## **Evaluation and selection**

The predefined evaluation framework applicable to this call is published on the Phortify website as a dedicated evaluation framework document and applies to all partner institutions.

### ***1. Purpose and Scope***

This description defines the evaluation framework applied to applications submitted under the Phortify Grants for Master Thesis – Pilot Call. The framework ensures transparency, equal treatment of applicants, consistency across partner institutions, and alignment with the objectives of the Phortify project, including its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) principles.

### ***2. Evaluation Principles***

The evaluation process is based on the following principles:

- Transparency and traceability of decisions
- Equal and fair treatment of all applicants
- Merit-based selection
- Consideration of DEI objectives in line with EU guidance

### **3. Evaluation Process Overview**

The evaluation consists of two sequential stages:

- Eligibility verification (pass/fail)
- Comparative assessment and ranking

### **4. Stage 1 – Eligibility Verification**

Applications are checked for compliance with all eligibility requirements defined in the call text. Applicants must submit all required supporting documentation, including academic transcripts, a Phortify-specific motivation letter, and a curriculum vitae (CV).

Applications that fail to meet the eligibility requirements or that do not include the required documentation are declared ineligible and are not further evaluated.

### **5. Stage 2 – Comparative Assessment**

Eligible applications are assessed comparatively using the criteria below. Each criterion is scored independently on a scale from 0 to 5 points.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

- **Academic Excellence (0/5):** Academic performance, relevance of previous studies, and preparedness for the proposed Master's thesis project.
- **Motivation and Alignment with Phortify Objectives (0/5):** Quality, coherence, and relevance of the motivation letter, including alignment with Phortify's educational and societal objectives.
- **Overall Applicant Profile (0/5):** Skills, experience, background, and potential contribution to the Phortify community, as reflected in the CV.

Maximum total score: 15 points.

### **Ranking and Allocation of Funding**

Funding under this call is awarded following a **rolling call** procedure. Applications may be submitted at any time while the call is open. Applications are **evaluated at regular intervals, typically every 2 to 3 months**, or earlier if the number of submitted applications or budget availability so requires.

Following each evaluation round, eligible applications are ranked in order of merit, and funding is allocated until the available budget under this call is exhausted. **In cases of oversubscription**, priority is given to higher-ranked applications. Where applications receive identical or comparable evaluation results, tie-break rules promoting underrepresented groups, including women and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, will be applied in line with Phortify DEI objectives.

## **Selection Committees**

Applications are evaluated by local selection committees established by SMART Photonics, in coordination with the Phortify Consortium. Committees apply this evaluation framework consistently and impartially. Members must declare any conflicts of interest and ensure appropriate mitigation measures.

## **Documentation and transparency**

Evaluation outcomes and funding decisions are documented by the partner institutions. Awarded scholarships are communicated to the Phortify Coordinator. Aggregate data will be reported in accordance with the project's reporting obligations.

## **Contact**

For more information on the Phortify project, the Pilot Call funding or the participating programmes, please contact Phortify at: [info@phortify.eu](mailto:info@phortify.eu).

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