

Call Master Mind Scholarships

Academic year 2026-2027

1. **General description**

The Flemish Ministry of Education awards scholarships to outstanding students for Master programmes in Flanders and Brussels. The programme aims to promote Flanders and Brussels as a top study destination.

Applications will be accepted from all Flemish universities, Schools of Arts and the Antwerp Maritime Academy.

The total budget available for the Master Mind Scholarships programme 2026-2027 is €480.000. It is estimated that 30 international students can benefit from the Master Mind Scholarships.

2. **General eligibility criteria**

- ✓ The applicant applies to take up a Master degree programme at a Flemish higher education institution (hereafter 'Host institution').
- ✓ The applicant should have a high standard of academic performance:
 - The student has a Grade Point Average of **3.5 out of 4.0**. The GPA will be calculated based on the most relevant completed Bachelor's or Master's degree.¹
 - The student has a good knowledge of the English language and can provide proof thereof that is no older than 3 years at the time of application processing by the higher education institution (April 2026):
 - an overall band score of minimum 7.0 on the IELTS test²;
 - a minimum total score of 94 on a TOEFL test³;
 - a C1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference;
 - or a similar result in another official language test (recognized by the host institution).

Students who apply for a Master programme at a *School of Arts* have at least:

 - an overall band score of minimum 6.5 on the IELTS test²;
 - a minimum total score of 90 on the TOEFL test³;
 - a B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference;
 - or a similar result in another official English language test (recognized by the Host institution).
- ✓ The Host institution also performs an academic check of the student's file. The student has to be accepted by the host institution to be able to receive the scholarship. Even if the Host institution's decision to accept the student is taken after the selection of the Master Mind Scholarships programme, this criterion applies.

¹ The tool used for the calculation of the GPA is <https://www.scholaro.com/gpa-calculator/> (see annex 1 How to calculate your American GPA).

² Online language tests of IELTS will also be accepted: IELTS Indicator (<https://www.ieltsindicator.com/>)

³ Online language tests of TOEFL will also be accepted: TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition (<https://www.ets.org/s/cv/toefl/at-home/>)

- ✓ The applicant can be nominated by only one Flemish higher education institution. If the applicant is preselected by more than one Flemish higher education institution, they have to choose one Flemish higher education institution to submit their application into the Mobility-Online tool.
- ✓ All nationalities⁴ can apply.
- ✓ The previous degree obtained, for which the student has been approved for the master programme, should not have been obtained at a Flemish higher education institution. International students who have been on credit mobility in a hosting Flemish higher education institution are still eligible for a Master Mind Scholarship.
- ✓ Students who are already enrolled in a Flemish higher education institution cannot apply. The only exception is made for international students who, at the moment of their application in Spring 2026, are already enrolled in a specific preparatory programme in order to start a master programme in September 2026.
- ✓ Students who enroll for the following types of programmes for the academic year 2026-2027 are not eligible for the Master Mind Scholarship:
 - preparatory programmes;
 - bridging programmes;
 - distance learning.
- ✓ Student mobility during the master programme is allowed. However, at least half of the credits of the master programme must be obtained at the Flemish host institution.

3. Modalities

- ✓ The duration of mobility is one academic year for a Master programme of 60 ECTS and two academic years for a master programme of 120 ECTS.
- ✓ The incoming student is awarded a maximum scholarship of €10.225 per academic year according to the modalities mentioned in *Annex 2 - Payment of the scholarship*.
- ✓ If a student completes a one-year Master programme, but does not obtain the Master degree at the end of the academic year in 2027 (July or September) the final installment of €1.525 will not be awarded.
In case of a two-year Master programme at least 54 ECTS of the Master programme must be obtained in the first academic year in 2027 (July or September) to be able to receive the final installment of €1.525 of the first year and to be entitled to the scholarship for the second academic year. More information can be found in *Annex 2 - Payment of the scholarship*.
Exceptions to this rule can only be granted by VLUHR in agreement with the host institution and the Department of Education and Training.
- ✓ The host institution can ask the applicant for a tuition fee that equals the lowest rate of the yearly tuition fee for a student who receives a study grant from the Flemish Government. The rate for the academic year 2026-2027 is €140. This rate may increase slightly from year to year.
- ✓ If a student loses their Master Mind scholarship, the student will have to pay the full tuition fee if they want to continue the programme without the scholarship.

⁴ All nationalities, except for Russian, can apply.

- ✓ There are a number of scholarships reserved for students from certain countries: Japan (3), Mexico (3), Palestine (2) and USA (5). If these numbers of scholarships are not taken up, they will be awarded according to the ranking of the candidates as decided by the Flemish Selection committee.
- ✓ Students should not combine the Master Mind scholarship with:
 - another scholarship from the Flemish Government;
 - an Erasmus Mundus scholarship;
 - a BAEF scholarship;
 - a Fullbright scholarship.
- ✓ Upon completion of the mobility all students are expected to submit an essay for which a format is provided and to fill in a short questionnaire about their mobility.
- ✓ A maximum of 20 applications can be submitted per Flemish higher education institution.

4. Application

Step 1: The applicant submits their application to the host institution. Internal deadlines set by the host institution may differ (see section **6. Timing**).

Step 2: The host institution accepts the application of the candidate and preselects the eligible applications.

Step 3: The host institution starts the application procedure for the Master Mind scholarship by creating the candidate's application file in the Mobility-Online tool.

Step 4: The applicant receives an email generated by the Mobility-Online tool notifying them of being preselected for a Master Mind scholarship.

Step 5: The applicant registers in the Mobility-Online tool and completes their application file in the Mobility-Online tool before the deadline.

Documents that need to be uploaded in the Mobility-Online tool:

- Profile picture of the candidate
- Copy of the International passport or national ID
- A Curriculum Vitae (including your American GPA out of 4.0 and if applicable your publications, academic awards, previous scholarships, etc.)⁵
- Transcript of records; if written in another language than Dutch, French, German or English, a certified translation must be enclosed.
- English language test results or Letter of exemption provided by the Host university
- Letter of motivation written in English
- Two signed letters of recommendation from professors of your (previous) home university, University of Applied sciences, School of Arts or recent employer written in English
- Copy of acquired diploma(s); if written in another language than Dutch, French, German or English, a certified translation must be enclosed
- Three reasons of motivation for submission (at least 150 words) of the candidate's application formulated in English by the Host institution; this document needs to be uploaded by the Host institution.

⁵ <https://www.scholaro.com/gpa-calculator/> (see annex: How to calculate your American GPA)

Step 6: The host institution validates and submits the completed application file in the Mobility-Online tool before the deadline of 27th April 2026 23h59 GMT+1. Applications validated submitted after 27th April 2026 23h59 GMT+1 will not be accepted.

5. Selection

A Selection Committee will do the selection after the application deadline, based on the following criteria:

- the quality of the applicant's motivation (30 points);
- the applicant's previous study results in the Transcript of records (30 points);
- the reasons for recommending the applicant in Recommendation letter 1 (10 points);
- the reasons for recommending the applicant in Recommendation letter 2 (10 points);
- the motivation for submission by the host institution (10 points);
- the top talent profile of the applicant (10 points).

The selection committee consists of experts in the field of higher education and internationalisation. Each application will be read by two independent jury members. During the selection committee meeting every application will be discussed by the two jury members. In case of more than 8% of difference between the final scores for the same application, the application file will be reopened and reevaluated. Benchmarks will be built into the selection process, in order to guarantee equal chances for each application. At the end of the selection committee meeting a final ranking will be made based on the consolidated scores of each application.

Exclusive scholarships will be reserved for students from certain countries: Japan (3), Mexico (3), Palestine (2) and USA (5). These countries are priority countries for the Flemish government. If these numbers of scholarships are not taken up, they will be awarded according to the ranking of the applicants as decided by the Selection committee. If a selected student from one of these countries cancels or declines the scholarship, the opportunity will first be offered to the next highest-ranking applicant from the same country before moving to the general reserve list.

6. Timing

- Information on the upcoming call: January 2026
- Deadline for application at Flemish host institutions (will be published [on our website](#) as soon as they are confirmed)
- Start application procedure in Mobility-Online: from 16th February 2026 onwards
- Deadline for application: 27th April 2026 23h59 GMT+1
- Selection: May 2026
- Announcement of selection results: End of May 2026
- Start of the study programme: September 2026

Should you have questions about the scholarship programme, please contact the Host institution or the VLUHR-secretariat: mastermind@vluhr.be
