

# CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR DOCTORAL POSITIONS 2026

Launch of the call: February 11, 2026

Deadline of the call: April 24, 2026, at noon

Results: June 3, 2026

Acceptance of PhD Contract: June 10, 2026

Doctoral students' start date: No later than  
December 1, 2026

## SUMMARY

SPECTRUM, The Formal, Physical and Engineering Sciences Graduate School at Université Côte d'Azur, specializing in fundamental sciences and engineering, is launching its 2026 call for applications for PhD contracts:

This program aims to support outstanding research projects. Special attention will be given to **international interdisciplinary projects** with high potential for **scientific and technological breakthroughs**:

- **6 half PhD contracts** in the following fields: mathematics, physics, astrophysics, Earth sciences, chemistry and engineering.
- **1 full doctoral contract** specifically dedicated to **quantum technologies**.

## PURPOSE OF THE CALL

The multidisciplinary SPECTRUM Graduate School relies on the excellence of its laboratories to offer **high-quality master's and doctoral training in various scientific fields.**

This call, **in collaboration with the ANR QuantEdu-France project and the IDEX UCAJEDI program**, aims to fund:

- **6 3-year PhD half-contracts, each in line with the school's themes, co-financed with a partner** (at least €72K required per half-contract per partner).
- 1 PhD contract in quantum technologies (including a mandatory teaching load of 64 hours (including science outreach activities related to quantum science), funded by the ANR QuantEdu-France project, **with or without co-funding**).

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### ARTICLE 1 - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The host research team must be affiliated with one of the laboratories within our school.
- For doctoral contracts co-financed by our school, 50% of co-funding (at least €72K) is required. The co-funding must be transferred to Université Côte d'Azur (UniCA).
- The repayment agreement or research agreement must be drawn up in advance and signed before the doctoral student takes up his/her post at UniCA.
- For the PhD contract in quantum technologies, co-funding is strongly encouraged but not mandatory.

### ARTICLE 2 - SELECTION CRITERIA

The PhD project must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Have an international outlook, with a strong collaboration (thesis co-supervision) with a foreign university.
- Demonstrate an industrial link and/or potential for innovative industrial development.
- Be interdisciplinary within the school's scope (between two or more laboratories) or within UniCA's scope.
- Be disruptive, i.e. have potential to be submitted for an ANR or ERC grant during the PhD or, at the latest, at the end of the PhD.

When assessing applications, all the following points will be considered:

- The scientific quality of the proposed project (see required documents for the research project – Article 4 below of the call).
- The quality of the supervisor(s) (see required documents to be provided by the supervisor – Article 4 below of the call. The availability of the supervisor(s) in relation to other ongoing supervisions will also be a factor of assessment).
- The excellence of potential candidates (see required documents to be provided by the candidate – Article 4 below of the call).

### **ARTICLE 3 - SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection process for projects and candidates takes place in two distinct phases:

#### 1) Preselection Phase

- Examination of applications submitted, by a sub-committee of the SPECTRUM Graduate School's CoSP, with the collaboration of QuantAzur members for the funding concerned.
- Selection of projects meeting scientific excellence and eligibility criteria.
- Interview of thesis supervisors (members of the SPECTRUM Graduate School's subcommittee and the QuantAzur institute for the relevant funding).

#### 2) Selection Phase

- Interviews of preselected doctoral candidates for each project (conducted by the head of the relevant discipline of the Doctoral School of Fundamental and Applied Sciences).
- Validation by the steering committees of the school and the QuantAzur institute.

### **ARTICLE 4 - LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

The application must be written in English and include the following documents merged into a single PDF file, in the exact order listed below:

- **Regarding the research project:**
  - ♦ A half-page summary of the project.
  - ♦ A detailed description of up to 6 pages (including challenges, originality, and technical feasibility, considering the 3-year contract duration and key project milestones, while specifying any potential for innovative industrial development). A bibliography should be attached.
  - ♦ A commitment letter from the co-funder specifying the following:



- The transfer of funds to UniCA will be effective if the application is successful in this call and specifying the timeframe (depending on the PhD start date).
- The source of the funds and, if applicable, the management mandate, as well as the end date of expenditure eligibility.
- The minimum amount of co-funding for the awarded contract will be equal to or greater than €72k if management fees are to be applied (up to a maximum of 20%).

If this is not possible, please contact the school's administration at [eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr](mailto:eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr).

- **Regarding Supervision**

- ♦ CV of the supervisor and, if applicable, the co-supervisor (maximum 2 pages per CV), specifying that the "Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches"(HDR) has been obtained.
- ♦ List of key publications over the past three years and involvement in projects related to the targeted fields.
- ♦ Recommendation letter from the director of the laboratory or research team responsible for hosting the selected candidate.

- **Regarding the Candidate (Deadline: May 10, 2026)**

- ♦ CV(s) of the potential candidate(s) with their name(s) and indication of an order of preference (main list and complementary list).
- ♦ Transcripts of M1 and M2 grades, as well as class ranking (if applicable) from the bachelor's and master's degrees.
- ♦ Motivation letter (1 page).
- ♦ Two recommendation letters.

**The cover page of the application must specify the type of funding sought.**

Incomplete applications as of April 24, 2026, will not be considered (*except for candidate-related documents, which must be submitted no later than May 10, 2026, via email at [eur-spectrum.aap@univ-cotedazur.fr](mailto:eur-spectrum.aap@univ-cotedazur.fr)*).

## ARTICLE 5 - TIMETABLE OF THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- February 11, 2026: Launch of the call for applications.
- **April 24, 2026:** Deadline for submission of applications (same as the UniCA ministerial doctoral contract competition).
- **May 10, 2026:** Deadline for submission of CVs from doctoral candidates.
- May 14, 2026: Notification of preselected projects for the thesis supervisors' interview.
- **May 20 to 22, 2026:** Interviews of the supervisors of preselected projects.

- May 22, 2026: Notification of the final ranking to project leaders.
- **May 28, 2026:** Interviews (potentially by videoconference) of the preselected students with the head of the relevant discipline from the Doctoral School of Fundamental and Applied Sciences.
- June 03, 2026: Notification of scholarship awards to candidates.
- **June 10, 2026:** Deadline for acceptance of the PhD scholarship.
- June 11, 2026: Publication and communication of results.

## ARTICLE 6 - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Submitted applications must be signed by the Director of the Research Unit of the project leader.
- All required documents must be compiled into a single PDF file named according to the following format: *LAST NAME of the project leader\_Acronym of the project\_2026.pdf*
- Complete applications must be submitted via the Nuxeo platform by clicking on [this link](#).

## ARTICLE 7 - RECRUITMENT AND FUNDING TERMS

- The positions offered are fixed-term contracts of three years, beginning on December 1, 2026, at the latest. If this date is not convenient, please contact the SPECTRUM Graduate School ([eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr](mailto:eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr)).
- The employer will be Université Côte d'Azur (UniCA). **All co-funding must therefore be paid to UniCA.** If some of the items cannot be provided, please contact the SPECTRUM Graduate School ([eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr](mailto:eur-spectrum.direction@univ-cotedazur.fr)).
- The fund transfer agreement **or research agreement must be signed before the PhD start date.**
- The SPECTRUM School provides co-funding of €72,000. The project leader must ensure co-funding of at least 50%, in addition to potential VAT costs (20%) and potential additional management fees of up to 20%.
- The student must reside near the host laboratory for the duration of the contract (with the exception of joint supervision). Thus, the place of residence must allow daily access to the laboratory.
- The gross monthly salary will be approximately €2,800.

## **ARTICLE 8 - OTHER GRANTS**

These individual PhD contracts cannot be combined with other grants.

Successful candidates will therefore have to work 100% of their time on the selected research project, with the exception of a possible assistant teaching obligation within the SPECTRUM Graduate School and a mandatory teaching obligation at the QuantAzur institute of 64 hours (TD equivalent) per year.


## **ARTICLE 9 - CHANGE OF STATUS**

It is the responsibility of the successful candidate to notify the Doctoral School of any change in situation or status that may occur during the term of their contract (in particular in the event of recruitment to a permanent contract or official position).

*Contact:*

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