



Press Release

THE NEW EU-FUNDED PROJECT 'SAFE' FOR SUPPORTING AT-RISK RESEARCHERS WITH 60 FELLOWSHIPS IN EUROPE

Rome - October 16th, 2024. Up to 60 fully funded fellowships for PhD/doctoral and postdoctoral researchers of any non-EU nationality to work at a research institution in the EU, this is what is foreseen by the SAFE 'Supporting At-risk Researchers with Fellowships in Europe' project. As a pilot fellowship scheme funded by the European Union (EU), the project aims to help at-risk researchers escape the threat they face and continue their research in safety in an EU Member State.

Since 2011, Scholars at Risk's Academic Freedom Monitoring project has documented serious attacks on researchers, scholars, students and higher education communities, involving tens of thousands of victims in over 100 countries. Researchers need special support and encouragement to stand up for academic freedom.

UNIMED is pleased to announce that the SAFE project has officially started and will provide up to **60 fellowships** to **non-EU at-risk researchers** from all over the world for a research stay at a European higher education and research institution for a period of **up to 24 months**. The call for applications will be launched during the **week of 18 November 2024**.

“The SAFE project is being launched at a time when conflicts and crises are endangering the lives and careers of researchers like never before. By providing 60 fully funded fellowships for at-risk researchers and facilitating a tailored matchmaking process with host institutions, the SAFE project not only protects individual scholars but strengthens the role of universities in defending the values of freedom, critical thinking, and knowledge-sharing that are essential for building peaceful and prosperous societies”, affirmed the UNIMED Director Marcello Scalisi.

Researchers eligible for a SAFE fellowship are non-EU nationals at PhD/doctoral or postdoctoral level in any field of research, and must be facing qualifying risks such as discrimination, persecution, suffering and violence.

From mid-October 2024, the SAFE programme will help match at-risk researchers with potential host institutions in the EU with the aim of developing a joint proposal in response to the SAFE call for applications. The **SAFE matchmaking service** provides support for researchers at risk, by connecting them with a suitable host institution in the EU and for potential host institutions, by assisting them in finding suitable researchers for their institution.

Applications have to be submitted by the host organisations, and not by the individual researchers themselves. The same host institution can send one application only.



More information on the SAFE project is available on the project's website:
<https://saferesearchers.eu/>

The European Union is supporting the project with **€12m in 3 years**. The SAFE project is implemented by a consortium of partner organisations: the [DAAD](#) (coordinator, Germany), [Campus France](#), the [PAUSE programme](#) (hosted by the Collège de France) and [UNIMED](#) (Italy).

The project is also supported by several associate partners: [Alexander-von-Humboldt-Stiftung](#) (Germany), [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki](#) (Greece), [DZS](#) (Czech Republic), [European University Association](#) (Belgium), [EDUFI](#) (Finland), [NAWA](#) (Poland), [Nuffic](#) (Netherlands), [Sofia University](#) (Bulgaria).

UNIMED

UNIMED is a network of higher education and research institutions that supports academic cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and the Western Balkans.

UNIMED brings together more than 160 associated universities from 25 countries and institutional partners with whom it carries out projects and initiatives, including in the area of the integration of refugees and migrants in HE and society. UNIMED's mission is to facilitate international academic and research cooperation in order to enhance the scientific, cultural, social, and economic development of the region. Among its core activities, it organises national and international conferences, workshops and roundtables across the EU and South Mediterranean.

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