



Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca
Alta Formazione Artistica, Musicale e Coreutica
Conservatorio di Musica "Giovann Battista Martini" di Bologna

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE 42ND CYCLE OF THE PHD PROGRAM

Protocol No. 9251 of 02/10/2026

Annex 2 – Presentation of the PhD Program 42nd cycle

**"Musical Universes and Sound Architectures:
Sources, Spaces, Instruments, and Performative, Interpretive, and Technological Practices"
(DOT259LW9E)**

Accreditation MUR 00000929 of 30/10/2025
4 positions: 4 assigned scholarships

Description of the training project

The PhD in *Musical Universes and Sound Architectures: Sources, Spaces, Instruments, and Performative, Interpretive and Technological Practices* stems from the need to respond to the demand for tracing the cultural sources of our time: to understand and enhance the role that sound, in its multiple manifestations – musical, environmental, performative, electronic - has played and continues to play in the configuration of cultures, of territories. In a society dominated by digital mediation, which filters, selects and often marginalizes the complexity of our sound heritage, it becomes essential to rethink musical and auditory memory through critical tools, embodied practices and interdisciplinary strategies that restore to music its value as a historical agent.

At the core of this project lies a conception of performance as a *mediation* between material and traditional heritage: it is both an outcome and a matrix of knowledge, a space for the verification of sources and contexts. Performance is, in this perspective, a research practice, a space of memory as a transformative agent. The PhD aims to train researchers capable of combining poetic-aesthetic reflection and interpretative praxis, in a constant dialogue between the different expressions of art-making.

The project fits into the framework of the development strategies for the third cycle of the Alta Formazione Artistica, Musicale e Coreutica (AFAM), constituting an experimental laboratory open to cross-sector collaboration with universities, research centers, archives, museums, libraries, collections and cultural institutions, and foundations both in Italy and abroad. The Doctoral College, composed of

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leading figures from different disciplinary fields, bears witness to the markedly interdisciplinary vocation of the course, intended as a place of convergence of various fields of knowledge.

The PhD develops a thematic and methodological framework based on a complex network of interconnected axes: written and oral musical sources, instruments and construction techniques, architectures and performance spaces, soundscapes, technologies applied to images. The sound element is thus recognized as a shaping force that forges matter, generates spaces, molds collective memory and activates dynamics of cultural transmission and transformation.

The PhD course is based on a strong connection with the territory, in the awareness that artistic knowledge, in order to be fully generative, must be rooted in real contexts and oriented towards a shared restitution. Through the activation of AFAM networks, Erasmus+ collaborations, partnerships with European conservatories and foreign universities, the project builds a training and research infrastructure oriented towards innovation and the production of shared knowledge.

Course objectives

The PhD in *Musical Universes and Sound Architectures: Sources, Spaces, Instruments, and Performative, Interpretive and Technological Practices* aims to train a new generation of performer-researchers capable of critically questioning their artistic practice, of placing it in a broad and interdisciplinary theoretical framework, and of returning it with cultural, historical and social awareness. The objective is to build highly qualified figures, capable of acting in the contexts of artistic research, higher education, cultural design and sound heritage mediation, with skills that integrate the theoretical dimension, methodological rigor and creative sensitivity.

The PhD program encourages a constant interaction between theory and practice, in which performance is not only the outcome of reflection, but also its epistemological driving force. The PhD student will be guided to think and document performance as a space of embodied knowledge, as a device for interrogating sources, as a form of modelling and re-signifying sound contexts. In this perspective, performative and compositional practices become both tools and objects of research.

Expected competences include: advanced mastery of vocal and/or instrumental practices; critical and interdisciplinary reading of sources; design of cultural and artistic interventions in local and international contexts; conscious use of digital technologies for the sonification of images; processing and transmission of musical and sound heritage.



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Preferred methodologies include *research-creation*, performance-informed research, critical performance analysis, and music philology. The approach will be strongly interdisciplinary and will favor the development of *mixed methods* capable of bringing together humanistic, artistic, technological and scientific knowledge.

Within the research environment, the use of sound and iconographic archives, instrumental collections, research laboratories and digital platforms will be encouraged. Collaborations with universities, conservatories and international research centers, as well as with museums, foundations and cultural institutions, will constitute a strategic network for the internationalization of the course and for the active inclusion of PhD students in contexts of advanced cultural production. In particular, mobility abroad and participation in Erasmus+ projects, academic alliances and interactive platforms for the shared documentation of sound heritage will be promoted.

The expected educational outcomes include the ability to operate within highly interdisciplinary contexts, to design complex cultural experiences, and to produce theoretically grounded and socially relevant artistic knowledge. The PhD students will be able to devise innovative educational programs.

The outgoing profile will be that of a professional aware of the transformative function of musical art, capable of activating networks of dialogue between the worlds of research, artistic production, education and social commitment. The PhD will thus contribute to the development of critical and creative thinking, capable of influencing reality and orienting the future of music and sound culture.

Expected occupational and professional outlets

The PhD program is designed to train researchers and professionals with a highly flexible and innovative profile, capable of competently operating in academic contexts, AFAM institutions, public and private bodies active in artistic, musical and cultural production, as well as in the fields of heritage mediation and sound and visual design. The proposed training integrates performative practices, and advanced use of technologies, thus boosting a broad range of employability skills in the various fields of contemporary culture.

Alongside the artistic and performance outlet, the PhD opens up concrete prospects in the field of AFAM research.

The outgoing profiles will be able to operate in cultural and professional environments of high complexity, in which design, technological and multimedia issues intertwine.



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The open and experimental configuration of the course also favors the exploration of new areas of research application, also in relation to the evolution of the third mission, and to the new trajectories of PhD training, increasingly oriented towards giving back knowledge to the community and to the productive and institutional fabric. In this sense, performance, intended as a cognitive and relational device, offers itself as a privileged tool to activate connections with realities outside the academy, capable of enhancing the sound heritage in a creative, participatory and inclusive key.

The reference sectors include music, musical theatre, cinema, digital media, music and performance education, sound design for spaces and environments, as well as the field of new technologies applied to the arts. The PhD thus prepares figures capable of inhabiting and crossing the boundaries between artistic research, critical reflection and technological innovation with awareness.

Course organization

The PhD program, with its administrative headquarters at the "G.B. Martini" Conservatory of Music in Bologna, is structured as a single course. The program lasts three years and culminates in the award of the degree of Doctor of Research (PhD) by the Bologna Conservatory, in accordance with Ministerial Decree 470/2024 and the ANVUR guidelines for the accreditation of AFAM doctoral programs.

The presentation of the project for the purposes of application, the oral interview, the writing of the thesis, and the final discussion will be conducted in Italian.

The Faculty Board may authorize, upon reasoned request by the PhD student, the full or partial use of a language other than Italian for the writing of the thesis, provided that the thesis is accompanied by an appropriate abstract written in Italian.

In the case of theses carried out under a joint supervision agreement with a foreign university, in accordance with Article 15 of the Regulations for PhD courses at the "G.B. Martini" Conservatory, the language of writing and discussion of the thesis is established by the related joint supervision agreement. In such cases, however, the preparation of an abstract in Italian remains mandatory, unless otherwise provided for in the international agreement.

The training activity, which is compulsory for all PhD students, can be carried out in person or, with the authorization of the Board, remotely, and is structured in a three-year teaching plan consistent with the ANVUR model, including:

- theoretical modules



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- research activities
- research-creation laboratories
- interdisciplinary workshops
- international mobility activities
- tutoring and research monitoring
- artistic and scientific production consistent with the objectives of each research area.

These activities may be conducted both internally at the Conservatory and externally (in qualified organizations, institutions and corporate partners), with the relative evaluation in terms of credits assigned by the PhD Board.