

**ASEM-DUO WALLONIA-BRUSSELS
MOBILITY SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAMME**

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND
REGULATION 2026-2027**

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01. PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME

01.1 / THE ACADEMY FOR RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Academy for research and higher education (*Académie de recherche et d'enseignement supérieur* – ARES) is the federation of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (FWB), the French-speaking Community of Belgium. As a public interest body, it is responsible for supporting institutions in their teaching, research and community service missions. It brings together 5 universities, 19 university colleges, 16 colleges of arts and 81 adult education colleges, it organises the dialogue and promotes their cooperation nationally and internationally.

As a unique platform, ARES ensures global coordination for the higher education sector in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

ARES is the designated administrative body in charge of the implementation of the ASEM-DUO Mobility Scholarship Programme in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, in collaboration with the ASEM-DUO Secretariat based in Seoul. It is responsible for every aspect of the administrative management of the programme including : the publication of the call for applications, the receipt of applications, the selection of the applicants, the production of all the documents related to the scholarship, the payment of scholarships, the receipt of the mission reports.

- » **For further information** on the international relations strategy of ARES, its vision and missions, its objectives and the different tools it uses to achieve them, see: <http://www.ares-ac.be/fr/relations-internationales>.

01.2 / THE ASEM-DUO PROGRAMME

A specific cooperation process between Asia and Europe in the field of education – and more specifically higher education – has been set up in the context of the Asia-Europe Meeting. The ministerial meetings, which are held alternatively in Europe and Asia, are until now the sole instrument for cooperation at a higher political level between the two continents. This mode of functioning inspires itself of the experience and best practices of the Bologna Process. During the Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers of Education held in Kuala Lumpur in 2013, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation announced it would participate in the ASEM-DUO Mobility Scholarship Programme as of 2014.

Generally, the ASEM-DUO Mobility scholarship Programme (dating from 2001) aims at:

- » Promoting balanced mobility of higher education students and professors between the two regions,
- » Setting up regular exchange programmes between HEIs,
- » Reinforcing cooperation and dialogue across both regions.

ASEM-DUO is composed of sub-programmes through which the States offer “paired exchanges” for students or professors between partner institutions, one European and the other Asian.

DUO Wallonia-Brussels has been established at the Wallonia-Brussels Federation in order **to promote “paired exchanges” between professors and researchers from Wallonia-Brussels HEIs and Asian ones**. The list of partner countries is: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

» **To learn more** about ASEM-DUO, its vision, its mission and its objectives: <http://www.asemduo.org>.

02. ASEM-DUO WALLONIA-BRUSSELS MOBILITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

02.1 / WHO IS THIS SCHOLARSHIP FOR AND WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

The applicants must meet **all eligibility criteria**:

- » applications must be submitted by a duo of two **members of academic or scientific staff** from higher education institutions, one of whom is from the **FWB** and the other from one of the **Asia-Pacific countries** covered by the programme ;
- » the Asia-Pacific institution must be located in **one of the following countries** : Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam ;
- » candidates must be remunerated by their respective institutions and it must be their **main occupation** (full or part-time (50% minimum)). Priority will be given to candidates whose position within the institution extends for a minimum of three years ;
- » the **Wallonia-Brussels and Asia-Pacific HEIs must be recognised/accredited** by the competent authorities in the field of higher education ;
- » representatives of the Wallonia-Brussels and Asia-Pacific HEIs must **sign a cooperation agreement** or must have expressed the intention to sign one in the two following years ;
- » the call is open to all disciplines. The two members of the duo do not have to belong to the same disciplines ;
- » the citizenship of the candidate is not a criterion for eligibility ;

The following groups **are not entitled** for a scholarship :

- » students and PhD students ;
- » professors emeritus and honorary ;
- » teaching assistants.

Exemptions are possible for the colleges of arts. The selection committee will assess on a case-by-case basis.

The exchange must necessarily **take place between the two same institutions, but does not need to take place in the same time span, nor between two identical departments.**

A candidate may submit several applications, with different partners. In the event of multiple applications in the same year, a maximum of one application per candidate may be potentially selected, i.e. the one that obtains the highest score from the jury. A duo may apply no more than twice for the same project and may receive ASEM-DUO FWB funding no more than once for the same project.

If a candidate has already received other funding via the FWB ASEM-DUO programme, he/she must expressly mention this on the application form (type of funding, purpose, partner, year). Candidates who have received an ASEM-DUO scholarship within the past three years will be given lower priority.

If a candidate has already received funding for this project (from ARES or any other organisation), they must explicitly mention it in the application form (type of funding, purpose, partner, year). They should also clearly explain how an ASEM-DUO scholarship complements this funding.

02.2 / WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL TERMS OF THIS SCHOLARSHIP?

02.2.1 / AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

The amount of the scholarship awarded per "paired mobility" project is a lump sum of **€7,000**, to be shared between the two beneficiaries according to a distribution key set by them in the application form (for example €3,500 per person).

02.2.2 / CONDITIONS OF USE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

- » The scholarship is intended to cover **international travel expenses** and **per diem** capped at the amount of the individual scholarship;
- » **The exchange is done by pairs** : the beneficiary from the Wallonia-Brussels HEI is hosted by the Asian institution, and vice-versa ;
- » Mobilities shall start no earlier than **August 1st, 2026** and shall end no later than **August 31st, 2027** ;
- » The total duration of each person's stay is fixed at a **minimum of 18 days and a maximum of 60 days** (including travel days). This period may be divided into two stays ;
- » No later than 2 months after their final return date, the beneficiaries undertake to send back a **report of their stay** in PDF format using a form that will be sent to them at the same time as the agreement. This report will describe the results of the project in the partner country, according to the following structure:
 - » A summary of the project (10 lines),

- » The actions/research carried out during the visit and the results obtained,
- » The course of the visit,
- » The impact of the visit on the scholarship holder's institution,
- » The contribution of the ASEM-DUO programme to this particular project,
- » Positive points and improvements to be made to the ASEM-DUO programme.

02. 2.3 / TERMS OF PAYMENT

- » **ARES will proceed with the purchase of international transport tickets** (flight or train tickets in economy class) according to the dates communicated in the flight preference form, sending several options to each beneficiary beforehand ;
- » In the exceptional event that one or the other beneficiary wishes to purchase his/her own transport tickets (flight or train tickets), he/she shall inform ARES via the flight preference form and provide a copy of the transport tickets that he/she paid. The beneficiary who makes use of this possibility accepts that this personal purchase will not be reimbursed later by ARES and that the scholarship awarded will therefore correspond exclusively to the amount of the daily allowances (per diem) ;
- » **After the cost of the international transport tickets has been deducted from the individual scholarship, ARES undertakes to pay the amount of the per diem capped at the amount of the scholarship in two instalments to each beneficiary into the bank account indicated in the agreement.** Before the payment of the first instalment of the per diem, ARES will send a pre-filled form containing the beneficiary's bank details and the amount to be paid; this is a declaration of claim. The beneficiary will have to check, sign and return this document to ARES before his/her departure. In the event that the beneficiary makes two trips, the statement of claim will only be sent by ARES to the beneficiary for the second trip. The amount of the per diem varies from one country to another and is listed in the table¹ below :

Countries of destination	Daily allowance
Australia	98 €
Bangladesh	93 €
Belgium	100 €
Brunei	50 €
Cambodia	82 €
China	80 €
South Korea	86 €
India	68 €
Indonesia	95 €
Japan	105 €
Kazakhstan	77 €

¹ The daily allowances are determined by the ministerial order of 10 January 2023 (category 1) : https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2023/02/15_1.pdf#Page44

Laos	82 €
Malaysia	64 €
Mongolia	67 €
Myanmar	72 €
New Zealand	88 €
Pakistan	48 €
Philippines	99 €
Russia	89 €
Singapore	120 €
Thailand	78 €
Taiwan	82 €
Vietnam	61 €

- » **The per diem will be paid in two instalments** calculated as follows:
 - » 1st instalment (paid a few days before departure): 80% of the amount of the individual scholarship minus the cost of the flight and/or train ticket,
 - » 2nd instalment (paid on receipt of the report of the stay): 20% of the amount of the individual scholarship
- » **No proof is required** from the beneficiaries for the payment of the per diem.

02.3 / HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

02.3.1 / DOCUMENTS TO ENCLOSE

- » **The 2026-2027 application form** duly completed by both candidates (available on the ARES website and on the ASEM-DUO website). The form must be typewritten and in PDF format. Authenticated electronic signatures of PDF documents are allowed ;
- » A **copy of the academic cooperation agreement** (Memorandum of Understanding) between the FWB institution and the Asia-Pacific institution or, in the absence of MoU, a declaration of intent, i.e. a letter co-signed (or two separate letters signed) by the authorities of the two institutions, or their representatives, mentioning the intention of both parties to sign an inter-institutional agreement within the next two years ;
- » A **CV of no more than 5 pages** for each applicant, emphasizing work experience relevant to the ASEM-DUO programme.

02.3.2 / SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- » The application must be submitted as one single document in PDF format to ARES by the FWB institution applying, via the contact person indicated in the application form (e.g. the international relations officer) at the following e-mail address: asem-duo@ares-ac.be ;

- » If the candidate is not able to send the application file by email, then it will have to be sent by mail to the following address :

Académie de recherche et d'enseignement supérieur — ARES

Direction des relations internationales

Alexia VERCRUYSE

Rue Royale 180 – 1000 Bruxelles (Belgique) ;

- » Applications must be submitted **between January 19th, 2026 and March 13th, 2026 at 12h**. No applications will be accepted before or after these dates ;
- » An acknowledgement of receipt is sent to the applicants within 3 days after the reception of the application. Without any response after that time, please contact international@ares-ac.be.

02.4 / SELECTION

02.4.1 / SELECTION CRITERIA

ARES selects beneficiaries of the ASEM-DUO Wallonia-Brussels Mobility Scholarship programme based on the following criteria:

- » the **impact of the exchange and of the project** on the development or strengthening of ties between the higher education institution in the FWB and the institution in the Asia-Pacific region. Since the ASEM-DUO program aims to establish and enhance collaborations between institutions in the FWB and the Asia-Pacific region, applications demonstrating significant potential for developing collaboration between partner institutions will be given higher priority.
- » the **level of internationalisation** of the project, i.e. opportunities for developing collaborations that go beyond the project itself (international collaboration opportunities, network development, long-term impact of the internationalisation project, diversity of beneficiaries (students, faculty, scientific or administrative staff), etc.) ;
- » the excellence and relevance of the candidate's **scientific, academic or artistic background** (e.g. publications, publications with the partner institution, research or artistic project, exhibitions, work experience, competitions, academic background, etc.) ;
- » the **complementarity of the projects** submitted between the members of the duo (if the projects are different). The fact that the application involves two different projects is not restrictive; however, the complementarity of the projects is considered an added value for the evaluation of the applications. This criterion will not be considered if both partners are working together on the same project that is the subject of the application ;
- » The **explanation for the duration** of the trip of each applicant.

02.4.2 / JURY AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The administrative eligibility of applications is examined by the International Relations Department (DRI) of ARES. Admissible applications are presented to a jury responsible for analysing and evaluating them with a view to selecting the beneficiaries. This jury is composed of 5 university representatives, i.e. one from each university of the FWB, 2 representatives of university colleges and 1 representative of art colleges.

Admissible applications are evaluated by the selection panel on the basis of a score from 0 to 5 per criterion (0 being the least satisfactory and 5 the most satisfactory). On the basis of the scores obtained and the available budget, the jury proceeds to the ranking and selection of the applicants.

The members of the jury do not decide on applications submitted by candidates from their own institution.

The validation of candidate selection is a decision made by the ARES Board of Directors (decision-making body). It is an administrative decision with individual scope, which means that an appeal may be lodged against the decision with the Council of State, in accordance with the forms and deadlines prescribed by the procedure.

Finally, the candidates will be informed of the results of the selection and will be invited to sign a tripartite agreement binding themselves and ARES.

02.5 / PROVISIONAL CALENDAR

Date	Action	Responsibility
January 19 th , 2026	Publication of the opening of submissions	ARES
March 13 th , 2026	Deadline for submissions	ARES
July 1 st , 2026	Results of the selection procedure sent to the applicants	ARES
August 30 th , 2026	Signing of the agreements	ARES and scholarship holders
2026-2027	Mobilities and payment of per diem instalments	ARES and scholarship holders
October 30 th , 2027	Deadline for submission of mission reports	ARES

02.6 / VISA

Any visa application must be introduced by the recipient to the local Belgian diplomatic post. As per his request, he/she will receive a certificate from ARES attesting the granting of a scholarship in order to facilitate any administrative procedure.

Beneficiaries are invited to consult the list of third countries whose nationals are subject to the visa requirement on the website of the Immigration Office² in order to find out whether a short-stay visa is required for their entry into Belgium.

02.7 / REFERENCE TO ARES

The continuation of the ASEM-DUO Wallonia-Brussels programme is conditional on the demonstration of the ARES contribution. The beneficiaries therefore undertake to:

- » Highlight ARES as financial partner of the project for any publication or communication (report, article, monograph, communication at a conference, film, website, press release, etc.) which would be done in the frame or as a result of the project and namely using ARES' appropriate logo;
- » Highlight ARES as financial partner of the project during any event taking place as part of or following the project, for example during seminars, workshops, symposium, inauguration of facilities, etc.;
- » Respond to any requests from ARES for any public presentation of the project, for example in the form of an article published on ARES' website, or in the form of an oral presentation during a session organized by ARES.

02.8 / PRIVACY

As part of the ASEM-DUO program, ARES processes the personal data of applicants and awardees (hereinafter referred to as the data subject), who explicitly consent to this processing via the application form.

These data are processed in strict compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (GDPR). The processing of personal data is necessary to achieve the program's objectives, including the selection of the data subject and the administrative follow-up of the exchange (processing purposes). No processing is carried out unless it is absolutely essential for achieving these purposes, without prejudice to further processing for scientific or statistical purposes, provided that prior anonymization is applied.

Within the framework of ARES's processing activities, the personal data of the data subject may be disclosed to the following categories of individuals, strictly limited to the data necessary: personnel from the host institution and ARES, members of the selection jury, and the service provider organizing travel on behalf of ARES. All recipients take appropriate measures to ensure that personal data are treated confidentially and exclusively for the specified purposes. This access is restricted to individuals authorized to process such data, under the sole responsibility of the relevant parties, who may only access data related to the specific subjects of their processing.

² <https://dofi.ibz.be/fr/themes/entry/border-control/visa/visa-type-c/liste-des-pays-tiers-dont-les-ressortissants-sont>

All data are retained only for the time required to complete the necessary processing, in alignment with the intended purposes. In any case, ARES ensures that personal data that are no longer strictly necessary are destroyed, following potential archiving with prior anonymization.

The data subject has the following rights:

1. The right to information,
2. The right of access to data,
3. The right to rectification,
4. The right to restriction of processing,
5. The right to erasure of data (only if the data are no longer necessary for ARES to ensure proper processing).

ARES, as the data controller, facilitates the exercise of these rights. For any questions, the data subject can contact the data controller and its Data Protection Officer at the following email address: **vieprivee@ares-ac.be**.

When transmitting application files to the ASEM-DUO jury members, ARES undertakes to share the data subject's personal data via a regular, secure, and encrypted electronic transfer method.

More information on data processing is available on ARES's privacy page.

02.9 / BREACH OF OBLIGATIONS

In the event of non-compliance by the beneficiaries of the ASEM-DUO scholarship with the obligations laid down in these rules and in the agreement, ARES reserves the right to demand the total or partial reimbursement of the amounts already paid.

For example, if one of the partners of the duo is unable to complete his or her stay for reasons that do not fall within the scope of force majeure (see below) and therefore does not respect the condition of reciprocity of the mobilities, he or she will have to reimburse the totality of the expenses incurred by ARES for him or her **and** his or her partner within the framework of the ASEM-DUO programme (cost of transport tickets and per diem already paid).

Thus, if partner A has completed his/her mobility in January of the year in question, and partner B does not complete his/her mobility before 31st of August of the same year, he/she will be required to reimburse all the costs paid by ARES for partner A.

ARES also reserves the right to claim damages from the beneficiaries in the event of prejudice, in particular linked to the total or partial non-fulfilment of the obligations set out in this Regulation and in the agreement or in the event of damage to the image of ARES.

02.10 / FORCE MAJEURE

The Party affected by a case of force majeure, making it impossible to comply with one or more of its obligations under this Regulation and the Agreement shall immediately notify the other two Parties. A case of "force majeure" is defined by its irresistible, unforeseeable and independent nature.

That Party shall make every effort, in agreement with the other two Parties, to reduce as far as possible the harmful effects/damage resulting from this situation.

ARES reserves the right to verify and control the reality of the facts with the party that considers itself to be affected by the case of force majeure. If the ARES legal department confirms the case of force majeure, the party claiming force majeure is temporarily released from its obligations. In agreement with the other two parties, the party affected by the case of force majeure will, in the end, make every effort to find or propose alternatives so that the obligations contained in these rules and in the agreement can be fulfilled.

02.11 / COMPETENT COURTS

Any dispute regarding the execution of this agreement is the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the judicial district of Brussels.

03. CONTACTS AND FAQ

If you have any questions, please refer to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section available on the following link of the ARES website: <https://www.ares-ac.be/fr/asem-duo>

For any information related to this announcement, please contact:

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