

**Minutes of the Academic Board of the SAAF PhD n. 1 (Cycles XLI)**  
**Meeting of 16 July 2025**

Composition of the Academic Board:

			P	AJ	A
1.	Abdelfattah	Ahmed			X
2.	Abenavoli	Maria Rosa	X		
3.	Agosteo	Giovanni	X		
4.	Badagliacca	Giuseppe	X		
5.	Barreca	Francesco	X		
6.	Benalia	Souraya	X		
7.	Bernardi	Bruno	X		
8.	Bombino	Giuseppe		X	
9.	Campolo	Orlando	X		
10.	De Luca	Anna Irene		X	
11.	Di Fazio	Salvatore	X		
12.	García-Ruiz	Roberto		X	
13.	Gelsomino	Antonino	X		
14.	Giuffrè	Angelo Maria	X		
15.	Gulisano	Giovanni	X		
16.	Gullo	Gregorio	X		
17.	Li Destri	Giulia	X		
18.	Lombardi	Fabio			X
19.	Lucas-Borja	Manuel Esteban		X	
20.	Lupini	Antonio	X		
21.	Marcianò	Claudio	X		
22.	Marziliano	Pasquale	X		
23.	Modica	Giuseppe	X		
24.	Monti	Michele	X		
25.	Musarella	Carmelo Maria	X		
26.	Musco	Adele Maria	X		
27.	Nicolosi	Agata			X
28.	Palmeri	Vincenzo			X
29.	Piscopo	Amalia Rosa Maria	X		
30.	Poiana	Marco	X		
31.	Porto	Paolo			X
32.	Praticò	Salvatore	X		
33.	Proto	Andrea Rosario	X		
34.	Scerra	Manuel	X		
35.	Schena	Leonardo	X		
36.	Sicari	Vincenzo	X		
37.	Sidari	Rossana	X		
38.	Sorgonà	Agostino	X		
39.	Spampinato	Giovanni	X		
40.	Strano	Alfio	X		
41.	Sunseri	Francesco	X		
42.	Tassone	Valentina C.			X
43.	Zema	Demetrio Antonio		X	

44.	Zimbalatti	Giuseppe		X	
45.	Zimbone	Santo Marcello		X	

The meeting takes place in person in the Francesco S. Nesci room of the Department of Agriculture. The meeting is chaired by the Coordinator, Prof. Leonardo Schena. Prof. Prof. Manuel Scerra acts as secretary for the minutes. The special channel "PhD SAAF (Cycles XXXVIII/IX/XL) - MEETINGS" created by the Coordinator in the Microsoft Teams platform is activated to allow the participation of the members of the College residing abroad (Dr. Abdelfattah, Prof. García-Ruíz, Dr. Lucas-Borja, Dr. Valentina C. Tassone). Prof. García-Ruíz and Dr. Lucas-Borja are considered absent justified for having previously sent a request by e-mail to the Coordinator. Dr. Abdelfattah and Dr. Tassone are considered absent because they have not sent any requests and do not connect to the meeting on the platform. The Coordinator, noting that the Board has been duly convened by invitation sent by e-mail on 10 July 2025 and that it is in the position to deliberate, declares the meeting open at 3:35 p.m. The agenda is as follows:

1. Communications
2. Change composition of PhD QA group
3. Co-funding/funding doctoral fellowships

### 1. Communications

- The Coordinator informs the Council that the accreditation proposal for the PhD course in Agricultural, Food and Forestry Sciences (XLI cycle) has received a positive evaluation by AVUR. He expresses his satisfaction for the result obtained and thanks everyone for their cooperation.
- The Coordinator reports that in line with the provisions of the current University Regulations on the Doctorates (Art. 6, paragraph 3), after acquiring the availability, he appointed Prof. Manuel Scerra as Vicar. Prof. Schena thanks Prof. Scerra for his availability. He also thanks Prof. De Luca, Vicar in the previous mandate for the precious collaboration and the excellent work done.

The Council takes note of this

### 2. Change composition of PhD QA group

The Coordinator points out that following the resignation of Prof. Anna Irene De Luca as a member of the Quality Assurance (QA) group of the PhD, due to incompatibility with the subsequent appointment as Coordinator of the Quality Assurance Commission of the Department of Agriculture, it is necessary to change the composition of the QA group appointed by the Academic Board in meeting no. 8 of 21.11.2023. He also points out that Dr. Edda Francomano, previously elected as a representative of the doctoral students, is incompatible for this role as she is already a member of the joint Teacher-Student Commission of the Department of Agriculture. The Coordinator reports that he has acquired the availability of Prof. Scerra, current Vicar of the doctorate, to replace Prof. De Luca, Vicar in the previous three years. As for students he reports that contacted and acquired the availability of Dr. Giulio Scarpino, PhD student of the XL cycle, elected representative of doctoral students for the two-year period 2025/2026 within the Council of the Department of Agriculture (D.R. no. 44/2025 – note Prot. 0004228 of 06.02.2025). Since other members, previously appointed, have confirmed their availability to be part of the QA group of the Doctorate, the following composition is proposed:

- Prof. Leonardo Schena (PhD Coordinator);
- Prof. Scerra Manuel (Coordinator vicar);
- Prof. Agostino Sorgonà (Member of the PhD Board);
- Dr. Giulio Scarpino (Representative of PhD students);
- Dr. Simone Santacaterina (Technical and Administrative Staff).

After a brief discussion, the Board unanimously approves.

### 3. Co-funding/funding doctoral fellowships

The Coordinator recalls that on 26 June 2025 he sent a communication to all the members of the Board (XLI cycle) highlighting the possibility, strongly desired by the administration, of financing/co-financing PhD scholarships. There are basically 2 funding possibilities:

- funding of the full amount of the scholarship (75,000 euros for the three-year period) in order to activate additional scholarships to the 4 provided by the SAAF Doctorate, concerning research topics to be agreed with the funding bodies/subjects;

- partial funding of one of the 4 scholarships allocated to the SAAF Doctorate on research topics to be agreed with the funding bodies/subjects.

The Coordinator reports that on 10 July 2025 the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies of Bari (CIHEAM Bari) sent a formal letter of commitment to the central administration to co-finance a PhD scholarship within the PhD course in "Agricultural, Food and Forestry Sciences" (XLI cycle) for a total amount over the three years of eighteen thousand euros (18,000/00). Suggested research topic: "Characterization, detection and control strategies of anthracnose disease of olive and nuts". The Coordinator also reports that on 30 June 2025 and on 16 July 2025 he received e-mail communications from Prof. Carmelo Musarella with which he reported the possible financing of an entire PhD scholarship with funds of the projects Riforest@Metroreggio1 and Riforest@Metroreggio2. Unfortunately, to date, no formal commitment has yet been received from the funding body (metropolitan city of Reggio Calabria).

The Board, after a brief discussion, expresses a favorable opinion on the partial funding of a PhD scholarship by CIHEAM Bari, approving the proposed topic. The Board also expresses a favorable opinion on the possibility of financing an additional scholarship with funds of Riforest@Metroreggio1 and Riforest@Metroreggio2 provided that a formal communication from the funding body arrives in good time, i.e., by the closing of the PhD call, scheduled for 31 July 2025.

Since there are no other topics for discussion and having dealt with all the items on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

The Coordinator  
Prof. Leonardo SCHENA

The Secretary  
Prof. Manuel Scerra