



SCUOLA INTERNAZIONALE SUPERIORE DI STUDI AVANZATI  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED STUDIES  
Via Bonomea 265, 34136 Trieste, Italy

**Welcome** to SISSA and to the Theoretical Particle Physics (TPP) PhD! The Staff, all the group members, and myself look forward to meeting you and getting to know you individually.

These few notes are an attempt to give you some useful information about scientific and logistical aspects of the life here. Please take a moment of your time to read them carefully, and feel free to ask questions in the forthcoming meeting. There is also a Student's Wiki page [http://wiki.sissa.it/students/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wiki.sissa.it/students/index.php/Main_Page), which provides useful information. For any PhD-related information you should refer to our web site <http://www.sissa.it/tpp/>.

**\*\* STARTING UP in SISSA \*\***

**DESK** – You will be located in room 523 for the first year (while you are mainly following lecture courses) and will then move to one of the smaller, quieter offices at the beginning of the second year. There should be enough computers for all of you in the room, and sockets/cables are available for those of you who want to connect their own laptops.

**COURSES/EXAMS** – The teaching activity in our group is divided into Basic and Advanced Courses. The latter are mostly dedicated to senior students, postdocs and staff members, while you are supposed to attend the former. The Basic Courses will start on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and will typically take place on 4 days of the week (Mon-Thu, in the morning), continuing until June. The current Basic-Courses lecture plan (content and timetable) can be found at <http://www.sissa.it/tpp/phdsection/courses.php>, but note that the timetable is subject to occasional changes due to other commitments of the lecturers (and of the students). Check frequently the group web pages.

The Basic Courses aim to cover a range of the most important topics in theoretical particle physics, and you are welcome to attend all of them, or the most you can. Take advantage of this opportunity (probably your last one) to have someone available to teach you about this wide range of topics. At the end of the lecture courses we will ask you for feedback on what can be improved.

You are required to take a number of exams, following a “credit” system, as detailed on <http://www.sissa.it/tpp/phdsection/teaching.php> (ask each lecturer on what is required to pass his/her exam).

As integral part of the training, you are encouraged, if needed, to regularly attend the (free of charge) English classes/course, organized by SISSA (ask the Student Secretary about details) during the first and/or second year.

**SEMINARS** – The Group organizes seminars, journal clubs, *etc.* (some jointly with other Institutions in the Trieste area) giving an opportunity to learn about various current aspects of Particle Physics and to share our own research expertise. You are requested to attend these events as an integral part of your training. The seminar plan can be found at <http://www.sissa.it/tpp/activity/activity.php>. In order to be updated about the activities of the group, please subscribe the TPP seminars mailing list <https://lists.sissa.it/mailman/listinfo/he-sem>. We advise you to subscribe also to the Astroparticle mailing list <https://lists.sissa.it/mailman/listinfo/astroparticle> as well as that of the ICTP High Energy Group, <http://www.ictp.it/research/hecap.aspx>, sending an email to [he-sem@lists.ictp.it](mailto:he-sem@lists.ictp.it). Also keep in mind that SISSA offers opportunities to learn about research in other subjects through SISSA Colloquia, interdisciplinary seminars and the lectures for the Master's Course in Science Communication (see its web pages for details): do not underestimate these possibilities to broaden your knowledge and learn different skills and techniques.

**RESEARCH** - During the third term (that is between April and June), you should talk to all staff members about possible projects for your PhD, so as to decide on what interests you most, and who might be your supervisor (it is primarily your responsibility to find out about this). Collaborations with external advisors are possible, in principle, but this is to be approved by the staff members, and generally is discouraged. On the other hand, working with an ICTP or local INFN staff member is allowed, due to the close collaboration that the TPP group has with them. You should finalize the official choice of your PhD advisor (and communicate it to the group coordinator) by the end of July.

You are expected to start your research work immediately after the end of the courses (concurrently with completing the exams which you decided to take). The whole PhD program is expected to last four years, but it can be finished in three years in exceptional cases. In the end of your second year, you will be expected to give a progress report, a seminar to the whole group illustrating the progress made in your research project. This will be a relevant element for the approval of your admission to the third year of PhD. At the end of your third year, you will be expected to give a further progress report, again important for the approval of your admission to the following fourth year of PhD.

**STAFF** – You can have an overview of the current group members at our web pages <http://www.sissa.it/tpp/people.php>. By clicking on their names, you should also be able to see the specific research interests of each one of us. We aim to be an integrated research community and we strongly encourage you to interact with the people named above as well as with postdocs, visitors and other students (as well as with colleagues in other groups of SISSA). Interaction is a key resource in research and is invaluable for broadening your knowledge and developing new ideas as well as for getting specific help.

**SECRETARIAL HELP** – Contact the Student Secretariat (room 222, [phd@sisssa.it](mailto:phd@sisssa.it)) at your arrival

to be registered, getting magnetic cards to enter SISSA out of working hours, etc. and subsequently for any general matters concerning administration and/or fellowship. For any issue regarding forms, please refer to the dedicated secretarial support [areamissioni@sissa.it](mailto:areamissioni@sissa.it).

**I.N.F.N. Association** – One of our main partner Institute is INFN. The web page of the local Trieste branch is <https://www.ts.infn.it/en/>. It is also an important financial source for us and in particular it supports some of our travel expenses when we need to travel for working reasons. To access INFN funds you should be associated to it. To start the association procedure, you can write to the INFN secretary Tiziana Tenze [tiziana.tenze@ts.infn.it](mailto:tiziana.tenze@ts.infn.it).

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES** – There is one elected representative of the Theoretical Particle Physics students, currently Giulio Barni ([gbarni@sissa.it](mailto:gbarni@sissa.it)). There are also elected representatives for all students at SISSA. You can directly contact them at the mail address [studentreps@sissa.it](mailto:studentreps@sissa.it). The charter of SISSA and other official documents regarding the school can be viewed at <http://www.adm.sissa.it/> (some of them available only in their original Italian version though, momentarily). In particular, the School Council has established an ethical code regarding different types of harassment and nominated Confidential Counselors, who can be contacted for any situation involving harassment, mobbing, and other forms of psychological pressure. To get more detailed information, please check <http://students.sissa.it/issues/confidentialcounsellor.html>

**MISSIONS** – We will try to support your needs in terms of travelling for meetings and collaborations; however, this must always be subject to your supervisor's agreement and our budgetary situation. Whenever you plan to go on a mission – whether to be paid for by SISSA or not – you will always need to ask in advance and, if the mission is approved, fill the mission forms: M1 before leaving and M2 after coming back. The forms can be found on the SISSA web page, under Administration > Mission Forms. These cover possible financial requests but are also necessary for insurance purposes. There are administrative rules regulating which expenses can be reimbursed by SISSA and which cannot. Please consult them at <http://www.adm.sissa.it/missioni/english> If in doubt, please ask in advance. Please do not present the M1 form at the last minute (your mission might not be approved) and in any case no less than ten days in advance; besides, the M2 form should be finalized as soon as possible after the mission is completed. Note, we typically do not allow first year students to go on a mission.

**SISSA FACILITIES** – Please use all SISSA resources with intelligence and honesty. A complete list of all of them can be found in the School web site <http://www.sissa.it/about/facilities>

**CAFETERIA** – There is a cafeteria and a bar in SISSA (level 0), providing a range of food, from full lunches to sandwiches and salads. PhD Students have the right to obtain the ERDISU card to obtain coupons to eat with a discount. The card can be obtained by just paying the ERDISU tax and by claiming it at the ERDISU offices in town. To get some further discounts you will have to submit the following documents: a) a certification of the family composition; b) income and property declaration of her/himself and his/her family (ISEE); c) fill out and print the form you can get at <http://www.erdisu.trieste.it/>. The first two documents must be in Italian (or translated into Italian at the Tribunal, Foro Ulpiano 1). Please ask the student

representatives for further details.

**HOUSING** – SISSA provides a free housing service, which can help you in finding accommodation. All information on how to get assistance can be found on the SISSA web page (Contacts > Housing, <http://www.sissa.it/housing>).

**COMPUTING** – For computing needs, there is a Helpdesk provided by the SISSA Computing Centre (<http://sis.sissa.it>). When necessary, write to them at [helpdesk@sis.sissa.it](mailto:helpdesk@sis.sissa.it) with detailed, constructive, and polite requests for help. Keep in mind that usually there are students in the group who are hired for support with computing needs. For matters regarding computing-related problems within the group, contact Giulio Barni. You might also take advantage of a financial contribution from SISSA to buy a personal laptop – check the student’s Wiki page or please ask the Student Secretaries about details.

**LIBRARY** – You will soon have a meeting with someone from the Library Staff who will explain the available resources and the formalities for accessing them. See also the SISSA Library website.

**PHONE, MAIL and FAX** – If you need to call outside Trieste for work, you will need to ask first for authorization from the Group/PhD coordinator (and then call through the reception). You can send (ordinary) mail related to work through the SISSA mail office, marking any envelope with your name. Personal pigeon’s holes as well as out-mail holes are located at level -1. A fax machine is available at the main building reception. A plotter, which can be used to print posters for conferences, is located in the post office area on the -1 Floor. See <http://sis.sissa.it/services/internal/plotter> for information on requesting a printout.

**STATIONERY** – SISSA provides basic (and limited) amounts of stationery items (pens, pencils, notepads, etc.); to see a list of available items go to <http://www.adm.sissa.it/store/>. If you need something, you should send an e-mail request to [store@sis.sissa.it](mailto:store@sis.sissa.it). You will then be able to collect the items directly from the store, which is located on level -1.

**GYM** – The gym is situated in the middle of the park and is available to SISSA students and staff. It is located in a bright and welcoming building, where users can avail themselves of a wide range of fitness equipment and machines, and a broad schedule of gym courses. The timetable has been arranged in order to not interfere with the activity in the School. All the details can be found here <http://www.sissa.it/gym> ([currently closed due to Covid](#))

**SISSA CLUB** – You may ask your colleagues about the SISSA Club, which provides sporting facilities, a piano, a table tennis (ping pong) table, cultural events, etc. There is also a SISSA choir and a Cineclub in English or with English subtitles. There is a music room in Building B4. Check this and much more at <https://club.sissa.it>.

**SISSA FORUM** – This is the right place to share ideas, opinions news or events with your colleagues from all the areas and where the student's representatives will post most of the official communications. The forum contains a place for official discussions but there is an off-Topic area where you can post whatever you may think could be enjoyed by the SISSA

student's community.

You can find the forum at the address <https://www.sissa.it/forum>.

**KINDERGARDEN** – On the SISSA campus you can also find a kindergarten, "La SISSA dei Piccoli", providing nursery care for up to 21 children aged between 12 and 36 months.

<http://www.sissa.it/about/facilities/kindergarten>. This nursery school is situated in the park, in a welcoming and completely renewed building where children can also play outdoors in a wide area.

**150 HOUR FELLOWSHIPS** – These are small supplementary bursaries paid to some students in return for them doing jobs which are important for the smooth running of SISSA (e.g. webmaster, library assistance, computing software support, etc.). Every year there are official announcements of the available posts and the most suitable candidate is selected for each job from among the applicants. You can ask the Student Secretariat or members of the group for more details.

**LANGUAGE LESSONS** – SISSA offers free Italian and English language courses. If interested ask for details about the Italian ones. The English courses are taught at two levels. As mentioned, you are advised to follow the English classes if you are not fluent in English, before the end of the second academic year. For both courses ask information to Riccardo Iancer ([iancer@sissa.it](mailto:iancer@sissa.it))

**MIRAMARE CAMPUS** – SISSA is one of the several Scientific Institutions in Trieste. In particular there is a daily shuttle service to/from the ICTP (ask the reception for the timetable). ICTP has scientific connections with SISSA (e.g. joint seminars, congresses,..) and provides various facilities (library, cafeteria etc.). You might be interested in looking at their web pages (<http://www.ictp.it/pages/info/visiting.html>) as well as in subscribing to their mailing list "ICTPLINK" which informs on Weekend activities, Concerts, Sale Announcements, ...).

**\*\* STARTING UP in EU/ITALY/TRIESTE \*\***

**HOUSING** – Accommodation cost around 200-500 euro/month, depending mostly on the accommodation you choose (room vs apartment). Each year students have also to pay the "Tassa per il diritto allo studio" to the Regional Authority for the University Study (ERDISU). It costs about 100 euro and allows you to access several ERDISU services, e.g. use the university cafeterias and obtain discounts for sport activities through the Sport University Center (CUS). Most of all PhD students can apply for a University Apartment at ERDISU. For that you need the same documents as to apply for an ERDISU card plus a certificate issued by SISSA that confirms your student condition. The houses are a few and priority is given to those with lower income. Moreover students can ask for partial refund of their rent, by providing the rental contract plus the SISSA certificate when applying for the ERDISU card. Please note that without a formal rental contract, this partial refund cannot be granted. Most importantly SISSA has a Housing office among its facilities, see below the Facilities section of this document.

**TAXES FOR RETIREMENT** – Taxes for pension are paid in part by SISSA and in part by the

student. According to the Italian law, you cannot get them back at the end of your PhD studies, even if you are not Italian. If you come from a country having a convention with Italy, you will have to reclaim them in future.

**ITALIAN RESIDENCE AND IDENTITY CARD** – Foreign students can ask for an Italian domicile (residenza) and an Identity Card (Carta d'Identità). The Card is a valid identification document in Italy. You have to submit an official translation of your birth certificate to obtain them. Note that without a certificate of “residenza” you cannot buy a car, convert your driving license and apply for residential rates for your electricity bills. It is also required in order to invite a spouse (if married).

**MEDICAL ISSUES** – First aid is available within SISSA: contact any of the secretaries for information. For more serious (urgent) medical problems, there is a medical room in Building B4. Details to be provided. It is possible to obtain sanitary assistance for foreigner students. It is sufficient to request it in the ASL (Sanitary Local Authority, via Stock 2, Trieste). It costs about 150-200 euro/year and includes family doctor and hospital service.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING** – The PhD years can be stressful ones in the life of a young researcher. If you feel under strain, do not hesitate to discuss this with your supervisor or PhD coordinator and fellow students, or resort to the psychological assistance offered by SISSA. You can find a contact in this sense at the following link: [http://wiki.sissa.it/students/index.php/Psychological\\_support](http://wiki.sissa.it/students/index.php/Psychological_support). This counseling service is free of charge, confidential and fully professional. It can be contacted privately by each student who feels the need of it.

**UNIVERSITY SPORT CENTER** – Besides using the internal Gym, students can subscribe to the University Sport Center (CUS) in order to obtain discounts for various sport activities. The cost is about 15 euro/year.

**DISCOUNTS IN CINEMAS** – Students can obtain a discount at all cinemas in Trieste. It is necessary to show either an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) or the SISSA student card. The first can be obtained at the CTS (Piazza Dalmazia 3/b) and costs about 15 euro/year; the SISSA card can be obtained for free, by bringing a photo to the Student Secretary. It is also possible to show the “Trieste Universitaria” card, obtained free of charge from ERDISU together with the card for the meal discounts. This card also allows to get many other discounts in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, for example for purchasing ski passes.

**CULTURAL ACTIVITIES** – Information on cultural activities in Trieste can be found in: ICTP newsletter, NTWK monthly journal (freely distributed in many bars), Il Mercatino (first issue of each month), and on the websites of: Teatro Miela, Rossetti, Teatro Lirico Verdi and on Trieste.com.

**\*\* Being a SISSA member \*\***

**PUBLICATIONS** – It is considered a rule of common sense that if you write a paper, which is not in collaboration with a SISSA staff member, you must receive formal “approval” from your

supervisor/tutor (or any staff member if you do not have yet a formal supervisor) before submitting it for publication or uploading it to the physics arXiv.

**PRESENCE IN SISSA** - As a SISSA student, you are required to be present in SISSA and to take part actively in the life of the School and of the Group. Apart from authorized situations (such as for missions or illness) you are expected to work in SISSA or to inform your tutor/supervisor of your absence. For your own safety, you are warmly encouraged to give to the student's secretary the name and phone number of a reference person we could contact in case of emergency or your (unjustified) absence.

**YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** – All of the above is about practicalities, “regulations” and what we can provide to help you to work (hopefully well) in the coming years. Please do not forget that we are here for you, but also that you are a full member of the Group and we will be relying on your contribution to its life, scientifically and socially. We will always welcome any constructive suggestion from you for new initiatives or for improvements to any aspect of our life and work here. Students have to comply with the SISSA Codice di Condotta (Ethical Code) and Safety Regulations. I hope that you will learn a lot, have a successful start to your PhD and above all will have fun doing science at SISSA.

Francesco Benini

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