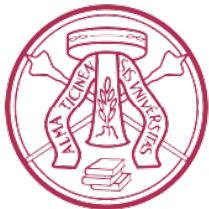


GeneraLife



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A Master's Degree to train “2.0 embryologists”: a rising need for the next 10 years

Annual Master's Degree on II level “Reproduction Biology and Biotechnology: from research to clinical practice” created by GeneraLife and University of Pavia

The new generation of assisted reproduction professionals

Rome-Pavia, October – The **declining birth rate** in Italy is a commonly known phenomenon that has finally come to the attention of Italian and European institutions that are now required to consider policies that can support prospective parents and families. **Infertility** also represents a problem of modern society, where many couples start trying to have their **first son at an advanced age** and increasingly seeking **assisted reproduction techniques**. For this reason, biologists and all professionals related to the field of assisted reproduction will be increasingly demanded in order to address the need for these services. **In the case of embryologists, there will be a demand of 2,000 in Italy and 10,000 in Europe in the next 10 years.**

GeneraLife, leader group in assisted reproduction, has created together with University of Pavia the **Annual Master's Degree on II level Reproduction Biology and Biotechnology: from research to clinical practice** in order to address the need for training linked to the latest demand of assisted reproduction professionals: **“2.0 embryologists”** who will be able to dominate the lab and deal with embryo manipulation techniques, as well as with new technologies, including artificial intelligence.

"If we take into account **biologists** and **biotechnologists** – explains Lucia De Santis, president of the **Italian Society of Embryology, Reproduction and Research** (SIEER) – there are over 800 employees in assisted reproduction laboratories of Italy, who are in charge of assisted reproduction techniques at different levels.

The increasing demand for assisted reproduction treatments, together with changes in society and therefore an increase in maternal age, entails a higher demand of professionals that are able to meet the patient's needs: **in 10 years time, the number of professionals needed will double: around 10,000 in all Europe.**

For over 20 years, the SIERR organises and promotes training of embryologists, both for clinical practice and for research, through events and training courses. This new master's degree, which the society has the great pleasure to sponsor, is aimed at a specific part of the embryologist training: figures that acquire specific skills in new fields related to embryology that can help them work not only in assisted reproduction clinics but also in activities related to them, such as research, data collection, management and artificial intelligence.

"Assisted reproduction – explains **Danilo Cimadomo, Manager of Science and Research at GeneralLife** and **coordinator of the Master's Degree** – is an extremely diverse and multidisciplinary field that we want to approach from a wide perspective. The topics of the master will be, first of all, basic notions on embryology and reproductive medicine, which represents the roots of future avant-garde projects in the field: the application of artificial intelligence, automation and genetic therapy. The subjects that different lecturers will teach will help students learn about bioinformatics, bioengineering and molecular biology. To complete this training, there will be complete sessions on psychology, assessment and scientific dissemination".

"The aim of this new Master's Degree – states **Maurizio Zuccotti, professor of Developmental biology at the Department of Biology and Biotechnology of University of Pavia** and **coordinator of the Master's Degree** – is to train assisted reproduction professionals that will be able to work not only as clinicians in specialised clinics, but also have a role in research and development in companies of the field of assisted reproduction, as well as in pharmaceutical companies that interact with it. Embryologists "2.0" will know how to connect assisted reproduction, research and innovation with clinical application of technologies and knowledge.

In order to understand the potential of who will enrol in this Master's Degree, it's enough to consider that according to the registry of ESHRE (European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology) and of *Istituto Superiore di Sanità*, in Europe there are over **1,300 operational assisted reproduction clinics, 300 of which are in Italy**. In the United States, one child out of 60 is born from assisted reproduction techniques; in Denmark, Israel and Japan the rate is of one out of 25. There are **over 70 pharmaceutical and technological companies worldwide that work in the field of assisted reproduction**.

Career opportunities will be focused on the field of human and veterinary reproductive medicine in clinical, management and production settings. In particular, students will be able to apply to the following positions:

- in assisted reproduction clinics;
- clinical consultation;
- Specialist in mediation between public and private bodies and assisted reproduction clinics;
- **Medical Science Liaison, Medical Advisor and Patient's Advocacy;**

ABOUT GENERALIFE

GeneralLife is a European group of 30 clinics specialised in reproductive medicine, present in 5 countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic and Sweden). With over 25,000 treatments performed per year, GeneralLife promotes Research and Development in this field, using a rigorous scientific method. Various members of the group hold important roles in scientific societies, both national and international, such as the Italian Society of Embryology, Research and Reproduction (SIERR), the Italian Society of Fertility and Sterility (SIFES) or the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embriology (ESHRE). They are also involved in editorial activities in different reproductive medicine journals such as Human Reproduction Update, Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics, Human Reproduction, Fertility and Sterility, Reproductive BioMedicine Online or Frontiers in Endocrinology.

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