

Notice of the Call

Call for PhD Studentships in all Scientific Domains 2023

January 2023

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Within the scope of the pursuit of a public policy for advanced training based on research with social relevance, the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (FCT) opens a Call for granting PhD studentships complying with the provisions of the FCT Regulation for Studentships and Fellowships (RBI) and the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (EBI), according to the respective current versions. In addition to the applications in all scientific areas and with research work to be carried out in scientific and academic institutions, to be submitted in the **regular line of application**, this call opens a **specific line of application** for PhD studentships in which work plans are partially carried out in one or more **non-academic entities**. **In 2023, FCT will thus reinforce the connection between work plans developed in an academic environment and the business and social network, in a broad sense, which includes companies, public, social, health, cultural or other interface institutions.**

The number of PhD studentships to be awarded is 1450 (one thousand four hundred and fifty), of which a maximum of 400 (four hundred) will be allocated to the specific line of application for work plans in non-academic entities (NAE). The number and distribution of grants to be awarded are indicative and may be revised according to budget availability or depending on the number of applications accepted in each funding line.

1. APPLICATION

The call is open from **March 1st to 5:00 pm (Lisbon time) March 31st, 2023**.

Applications, and the respective supporting documents described in the RBI and in this Notice of the Call, must be submitted online using exclusively the available application form at: <https://myfct.fct.pt>, and selecting the application line you intend to apply for. Applications, or any additional information, submitted by other means will not be accepted.

All the application procedures, including submission, evaluation, results communication, preliminary hearings, claims, appeals, and contract establishment are exclusively performed online in the MyFCT platform.

Each applicant may **only submit one application, regardless of the line of application he/she is applying for**, under penalty of cancellation of all applications submitted.

Providing false declarations or committing acts of plagiarism by applicants leads to the exclusion of the application without prejudice of taking other corrective and punitive disciplinary measures.

2. TYPE, LOCAL AND DURATION OF STUDENTSHIPS

PhD studentships are granted to applicants that fulfil the requirements to join a study cycle that allows to obtain a PhD degree and that wish to develop research work that allows obtaining that degree. As a rule, the duration of PhD studentships is annual, renewable up to the maximum number of months requested upon application and cannot be granted for a period less than 3 consecutive months, neither more than 48 months.

In case of a studentship carried out both in Portugal and abroad, the work plan period in a foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months.

Regular line of application – The research activities of PhD studentships in an **academic environment** may be carried out in any academic entity of production and dissemination of knowledge, national or international, including public and private higher education institutions, R&D units, Associated Laboratories, as well as other private non-profit institutions mainly developing R&D activities. The work plan may be developed entirely or partially in a national institution (studentship in Portugal or both in Portugal and abroad, respectively), or fully proceed in a foreign institution (studentship abroad).

Specific line of application in a non-academic environment – In this line must be submitted applications with work plans drawn up in close articulation with non-academic entities, which should host the studentship holder during a considerable part of the work leading to the PhD degree. Are considered as non-academic host institutions all entities not included in the academic environment as characterized in the regular line of application. For instance, this line includes Companies, Collaborative Laboratories, Technology and Innovation Centres, Interface Centres, Public Administration entities, State Laboratories, Hospitals, Museums, Libraries or other third sector entities. In the various host configurations that this line entitles, it is essential to include at least one national non-academic host institution and one academic host institution (national or foreign), as well as a scientific supervisor from each of these institutions.

In the regular line of application, the work plan may include specific periods of stay in non-academic institutions. However, in order for this configuration to be valued, it is suggested that the submission be made through the specific line of application for studentships in a non-academic environment, whenever the admissibility requirements are met.

3. RECIPIENTS

PhD studentships are aimed at applicants enrolled or that comply with the requirements to enrol for PhD studies and who wish to carry out research towards this degree.

4. ADMISSIBILITY

4.1 Applicants' admissibility requirements

The following citizens may apply to this call:

- a. National citizens or citizens from other member-states of the European Union;
- b. Third-party states citizens;
- c. Stateless individuals;
- d. Citizens holding a political refugee status.

To apply for a PhD studentship it is necessary:

- e. To be a citizen permanently and usually living in Portugal, in case the work plan of the requested studentship proceeds, entirely or partially, in foreign institutions (in case of both in Portugal and abroad or exclusively abroad studentships); this requirement is applicable to both national and foreign citizens;
- f. Not to have benefited from a PhD or a PhD in industry studentship directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration;
- g. Not to hold a doctoral degree.

4.2 Application's admissibility requirements

It is mandatory, under penalty of non-admissibility:

- a. To associate the **Curriculum Vitae** (CV) from the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform;
- b. To write a **synopsis of the CV**;
- c. To submit **the research work plan** (the academic component of a doctoral programme is not considered part of the work plan);
- d. To **associate the supervisor to the application** with submission of her/his *Curriculum Vitae*; supervisors may present their CV using the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform or by uploading a **PDF file**;
- e. To indicate, at least, **one host institution** (for the specific line see point 4.3);
- f. To write a **motivation letter**, in the respective field of the application form;
- g. To submit the **most representative document of the applicant's scientific/professional path**;
- h. To present a **timeline** of the work plan;

The documents listed in the above paragraphs will be considered invalid if they present the following or similar conditions: i) submitted in a corrupted file, ii) blank. **The application will not be admitted if any of the mandatory submission documents is considered invalid.**

4.3 Additional Application's Admissibility Requirements in the specific line in a non-academic environment

To be admitted to the specific line in a non-academic environment, it is mandatory that applications also meet the following requirements:

- a. Indicate at least one non-academic host institution with activity in Portugal and a national or foreign academic host institution (studentship in Portugal or both in Portugal and abroad studentship);
- b. Ensure a length of stay of at least 12 months (consecutive or interpolated) in the same non-academic host institution with activity in Portugal;
- c. Ensure that the supervising team integrates at least one supervisor from the academic host institution and one supervisor from the non-academic host institution.¹

Provided that these admissibility requirements are met, other academic or non-academic institutions, either national or foreign, may also integrate the work plan, without restrictions on the period of collaboration, regardless of whether they constitute themselves as host entities, or of including elements that integrate the supervising team.

4.4 Requirements of Application Elements for Evaluation purposes

In order to score the application elements, they must meet the following requirements:

- a. **Academic degree certificates** must be submitted indicating the **degree obtained and the final classification awarded**. Failure to submit these documents will result in a score of "0" (zero) in sub-criterion A1 academic career;
- b. The **CV synopsis** should clearly and succinctly identify the most relevant elements of your academic and professional career, such as academic and complementary training, scientific publications and production, communications at conferences, participation and organization of events, awards and other contributions and activities considered relevant for CV assessment;
- c. The **motivation letter** must present the reasons for the application, framing the respective work plan in the career development objectives and the applicant's personal ambitions, clearly showing the interest in the studies to be carried out. If applicable, a vision of the social return of the work should be envisaged, including the expected scientific progress, the potential for wealth creation and knowledge transfer. The choice of the submitted most representative document should also be well substantiated.
- d. The **most representative document of the applicant's scientific/professional path** may be, for example, a scientific publication, a communication in a conference, a poster presentation, a scientific report or

¹ The role of scientific supervisor does not require specific qualifications and is described in article 5-A of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute.

master thesis, proof of scientific or professional achievements, a performance or artistic creation; of note, academic degree certificates, CVs or documents illustrating applicant's career path should not be submitted in this field, nor compilations of diverse documents as there are specific fields for that information in the form;

- e. The **timeline** must indicate the scheduling and location of performance of the tasks proposed in the work plan, as well as the main milestones to be achieved, including the expected period for the thesis submission (or the scientific work leading to the doctoral degree) at the university;
- f. Present the application in **Portuguese or in English**. Documents presented in a different language, rather than Portuguese or English, will not be considered for evaluation purposes.

4.5 Submission of additional information

Although the following elements do not constitute admissibility requirements, they are relevant for application's evaluation, namely:

- a. **Declaration of Institutional Support**, in case of external institutional collaborations, additional to the proposed host affiliation, confirming the planned or established cooperation between applicant, supervisor(s) and institution(s);
- b. Whenever the work plan includes **ethical questions**, these should be clearly addressed in the respective field of the application form;
- c. The **documental proof** of CV information (for example, the proof of papers in press, etc.) may be included in the section of Attachments, in the application form;
- d. **Recommendation letters** (maximum of two) must be distinct and cumulatively meet the following characteristics: clearly identify the respective issuer, be signed, include the academic and/or professional context relationship of the candidate with the referee also specifying that are related with this specific call and work plan, highlighting not only the applicant's intellectual capabilities, but also relevant personal characteristics of the applicant. Letters of recommendation must be submitted by the issuer ("closed" recommendation letter). Letters issued by members of the supervising team will not be considered for evaluation purposes.

5. EVALUATION PANELS

Evaluation of applications is performed by evaluation panels comprising experts with recognized experience and scientific merit in scientific areas corresponding to an adaptation of the FOS classification of the Frascati Manual (OECD's revised Field of Science and Technology Classification in the Frascati Manual).

The evaluation work developed by each panel is coordinated by one of its members, by FCT invitation.

Each application complying with the requirements of admissibility will be evaluated by the corresponding evaluation panel according to the combination of main scientific field, secondary scientific field and subfield selected by the applicant in the application form.

Applications submitted in the specific line in a non-academic environment will be evaluated by one or more specific evaluation panels, the constitution and organization of which will take into consideration the scientific areas selected by the applicants and the number of submitted applications.

The constitution of the evaluation panels is made public at FCT's website before the beginning of the evaluation procedure.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All admissible applications must be graded from zero (0.00, minimum) to five (5.00, maximum) in each of the three **evaluation criteria**:

Criterion A – Merit of the Applicant;

Criterion B – Merit of the Work Plan;

Criterion C – Merit of the Hosting Conditions.

Applicants will be ranked according to the weighted average of the score obtained in the three evaluation criteria, with the respective relative weighting of: **criterion A - 30%, criterion B - 40% and criterion C - 30%**.

For **tie-breaking** purposes, the final ranking list will be based on the scores assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order: (i) Regular line of application: criterion B (Merit of the Work Plan), criterion A (Merit of the Applicant) and criterion C (Merit of the Hosting Conditions); (ii) Specific line of application: criterion C, criterion B and criterion A.

The final score resulting from the application of formulas specified in this document shall be rounded to the third decimal digit using the following rule: when the fourth decimal digit is equal to or greater than 5 (five) it shall be rounded in excess; if less than 5 (five), the value of the third decimal digit shall be upheld.

Applicants whose **application is scored with a final grade lower than 3.000 are not eligible** for studentship granting.

The evaluation criteria and respective assessment elements, as well as the evaluation procedure to be followed by all panels in both application lines, are presented in the **Evaluation Guide**.

6.1 Disability Bonuses

Applicants that state a degree of disability equal to or above 90% shall have a bonus of 20% on criterion A (Merit of the Applicant).

Applicants that state a degree of disability equal to or above 60% and under 90%, shall have a bonus of 10% in this criterion.

The degree of disability **should be duly proven** by submitting, in the application form, the document ***Atestado Médico de Incapacidade Multiuso (AMIM)***, issued according to the Decree-Law no. 202/96, of 23 of October, in its current version.

7. RESULTS DISCLOSURE

Evaluation results are disclosed in applicants' personal area of MyFCT in <https://myfct.fct.pt/>; results communication will also be disclosed at FCT's website.

8. DEADLINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY HEARING, CLAIMS AND APPEALS

Once the provisional ranked list of the evaluation results has been communicated, applicants who have an unfavourable provisional decision may use their right to dispute it during the preliminary hearing phase, which takes place within 10 working days, according to Articles no. 121 and the following of the Administrative Procedure Code (CPA).

The final decision will be disclosed after the analysis of applicants' arguments presented in the preliminary hearing. Final decision can be claimed within 15 working days or, alternatively, appealed within 30 working days, both counted from the date of the respective notification of the final results.

As referred to in point 1 of this Notice, the presentation of arguments by the applicants in the preliminary hearing/claim/appeal stages of the procedure, as well as the disclosure of the results of their analysis, take place exclusively in the MyFCT platform.

9. STARTING DATE OF THE PHD STUDENTSHIP

The studentships will start at the 1st day of the month indicated by the applicant during the granting procedure, that must occur between September 1st 2023 and August 1st 2024.

10. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTSHIP GRANTING

The following documents are of mandatory submission for the studentship contract:

- a. Copy of the documents of personal identification, tax number and, if applicable, social security²;
- b. Document of proof of permanent and usual residence in Portugal, if applicable, valid at the studentship starting date. In case the work plan of the requested studentship is held, entirely or partially, in foreign institutions, applicants, independently of their nationality, will have to present, upon contracting, the document of proof of permanent and usual residence in Portugal;
- c. Copy of the academic degree certificates, if applicable;
- d. Document proving the acceptance and registration in the 3rd study cycle from the educational offer in the higher education institution that will grant the academic degree;
- e. Supervisor(s) statement declaring the responsibility for the supervision of the work plan, as established in Article no. 5-A of the Statute for Research Fellowships (template will be made available by FCT);
- f. Institutional document supporting the applicant, issued by the institution(s) where the work plan will be carried out, guaranteeing the necessary conditions to its successful development, as well as the fulfilment of the duties established in Article no. 13 of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (template will be made available by FCT);
- g. Updated document proving the exclusivity dedication regime (template will be made available by FCT).

For studentships in a non-academic environment, the following must also be submitted:

- h. Declaration from the non-academic entity(ies) confirming the number of months in which the studentship holder will develop his work plan in that/those institution(s).

The studentship granting is still dependent on:

- i. The fulfilment of all the requirements listed in this Notice of the Call;
- ii. The results of scientific evaluation;
- iii. The absence of unjustified non-compliance of the fellowship holder during previous directly or indirectly FCT funded fellowships;
- iv. FCT available budget.

The lack of any of the necessary documents to complete the contracting procedure implies the expiration of the studentship granting and conclusion of the process; applicants have up to 6 months after the disclosure of the provisional granting to present all the listed documents.

Regarding the PhD studentships in non-academic environment, the absence of at least one non-academic entity implies the cancelation of the decision to grant the studentship and closure of the process.

² The presentation of these documents may optionally be substituted by the in-person presentation in the funding agency, which will keep all the elements needed for the validation and execution of the contract, including the numbers of personal identification, taxation and social security, as well as the respective dates of expiry.

11. FUNDING

Studentships payment will start after returning the signed contract to FCT, which should happen within the 15 working days after its delivery.

The studentships granted in this call will be financed by FCT using the State Budget fund and, whenever eligible, using the European Social Fund (ESF), under the *Programa Demografia, Qualificações e Inclusão (PDQI)*, according to the respective requirements.

12. STUDENTSHIP ALLOWANCE

A monthly maintenance allowance is granted to the studentship holder, the amount of which varies according to whether the activities are carried out in the country or abroad, in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI.

The studentship may also include additional allowances, according to RBI's Article no. 18 and the values indicated in its Annex II.

All the studentship holders have a personal accident insurance related to the research activities, which FCT will support.

All studentship holders who are not beneficiaries of any social protection regime can use the right to social security through the voluntary social insurance regime, under the terms of the Contributory Scheme of the Social Security System. FCT will ensure the charges resulting from contributions under the terms and with the limits provided in Article no. 10 of the EBI.

13. PAYMENT OF STUDENTSHIP ALLOWANCE

Payments due to the studentship holder are made by bank transfer to the respective indicated account. The monthly maintenance allowance is paid on the first working day of each month.

Registration, enrolment, or tuition fees components are paid as follows:

- i. In case the studentship holder has enrolled in a national institution, FCT will directly pay to that institution;
- ii. In case the studentship holder has enrolled in a foreign institution, the grantee is the responsible for its payment to that institution.

14. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PHD STUDENTSHIP RENEWAL

The renewal of the studentship always depends on applicant's submission, within 60 working days prior to the renewal start date, of the following documents:

- a. Declaration issued by the supervisor(s) and by the host institution(s) attesting the work plan development and the evaluation of the respective activities;
- b. Updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime;
- c. Declaration demonstrating the enrolment renewal in the study cycle leading to the doctoral degree.

15. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY OF THE GRANTED FUNDING

All the R&D activities carried out by the grantee, directly or indirectly financed by the studentship, namely, communications, publications and scientific creations, as well as thesis, must include the reference to FCT and, when applicable, the European Social Fund (ESF) financing, through the *Programa Demografia, Qualificações e Inclusão (PDQI)*. Insignia of FCT, ESF and EU must therefore be included in the documents referring to these actions, according to the graphic rules of each financing community program.

The disclosure of research results funded according to the RBI provisions must comply with the open access guidelines, publications and other research results in accordance with FCT rules.

For all the studentships, in particular in case of European funded actions, namely the ESF, may be performed monitoring and controlling actions by national or European entities according to the applicable legislation. Grantees must therefore collaborate and provide all the required information, including answering to surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the studentship might have already ceased.

16. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

FCT promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, thus no applicant may be privileged, benefited, damaged, or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty. This includes ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, origin or social condition, genetic heritage, reduced work capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnicity or race, land of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs or trade union affiliation.

17. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The present call is governed by this Notice of the Call, the FCT Regulation of Research Fellowships, approved by the Regulation no. 950/2019, published in the Series II of the DR, of 16th December, by the Research Fellowship Holder Statute, approved by the Law no. 40/2004, of 18th of August, in its current version, and by other applicable national and European legislation.

FCT also recommends the careful reading of all the documentation supporting the application.

18. CONTACT POINT

Information about the call should be requested through the e-mail address: info.bolsas@fct.pt.