Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

# STIMULUS OF SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYMENT, INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT CALL (CEECIND)

## 6th EDITION

# EVALUATION GUIDE

April 2023

This **Evaluation Guide** sets out the details of the evaluation process and the procedures adopted for the 6th Edition of the Call for the Stimulus of Scientific Employment, Individual Support (CEEC) announced by FCT on March 7, 2023. It complements the other documents establishing the rules of this Call, available here, namely the Call for applications ("*Aviso de Abertura*"), the Regulation for Scientific Employment (REC, available only in Portuguese), the Application Guide, and the Ethical Issues Guide.

An English summary of the information contained in the Call for applications is available here.

The present Call will be open between April 4 and May 3, 2023.

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## Contents

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (FCT), the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, is the public agency that supports Science and Technology in all areas of knowledge. FCT promotes research talent through sustainable advanced training and consolidation of scientific careers, supports Research Units, fosters international competitiveness and visibility of research and innovation carried out in Portugal, facilitates access to state-of-the-art Research Infrastructures, and encourages knowledge transfer.

FCT funds people (by awarding doctoral scholarships and scientific employment contracts), ideas (through R&D project grants), institutions (Research Units, Associate Laboratories, Collaborative Laboratories, Research Infrastructures and Clinical Academic Centres), as well as International Cooperation.

The aim of this Call is to **fund scientific employment contracts for PhD holders**, with a maximum duration of six years, based on competitive procedures with an external international peer review process of the applications submitted online. The Call for applications outlines the required features for application, the evaluation criteria and the number of contracts to be funded.

The applications will be evaluated by 29 Panels of international experts covering all the scientific areas and subareas chosen by the applicants.

# 2. STIMULUS OF SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYMENT – INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Strengthening scientific employment in Portugal is central to the Portuguese science-based strategy for growth, by which specific financial support is given to the institutions for hiring new researchers and thereby contributing to rejuvenation of scientific and academic institutions.

For this purpose, FCT issued the Regulation of Scientific Employment (REC) in 2017, updated on December 2019, which sets out the rules of two FCT funding instruments:

- An Individual Support for hiring PhD holders by R&D Portuguese institutions. Applicants submit an individual application to a yearly Call launched by FCT (CEEC IND);
- An Institutional Support for development of scientific employment by PhD holders in R&D Portuguese institutions (CEEC INST). Institutions apply with a scientific employment plan with positions to be funded. It is their responsibility to select the researchers to be hired.

The present Call is aimed at providing individual support for hiring **400 researchers** holding a PhD degree in any scientific area. The profile of the applicants should correspond to highly motivated scientists seeking to carry out research in Portuguese Institutions.

Each applicant can only submit one application.

Research contracts will be awarded for a maximum of 6 years of funding, **which is solely intended for salary and its associated costs for the employer**. No other expenses are eligible. The aim of this Call is to fund individuals, not a specific research project.

Host Institutions eligible for this Call are: R&D Units funded by the Pluriannual Programme of FCT, Associate Laboratories and State Laboratories.

For Host Institutions without legal personality, contracts will be granted to the institution with legal personality in which the Host Institution is integrated (Contracting Institution).

**Three types of contracts can be funded under this Call**, corresponding to different career stages:

a) ***Junior researcher:*** PhD holders for 5 or less years, with limited post-doctoral research experience in the scientific area of the application.

b) ***Assistant researcher*****:** PhD holders for over 5 years and less than 12 years (inclusive) with relevant *curriculum* in the scientific area of the application.

c) ***Principal researcher*****:** PhD holders for over 12 years with relevant *curriculum* in the scientific area of the application, demonstrating some scientific independence for the last 3

years. Research independence is demonstrated through scientific competence, originality, and international recognition, by experience in doctoral or post-doctoral supervision, or by the competitive research funds attracted at national and/or international level.

According to the terms of this Call, career interruptions due to parental leave or serious illness may be considered for eligibility purposes regarding the limits of time post-PhD degree for the Junior and Assistant levels.

## 3. COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION RELEVANT FOR EVALUATION

The application comprises five main sections, all relevant for evaluation, which are outlined in Appendix I. Here we describe each of those sections.

I. **Application General Information,** which includes the research contract level, Title of the Research Plan, Abstract, Keywords for the scientific content of the proposed Research Plan, Main Scientific Area, Secondary Scientific Area, Subarea, and Evaluation Panel (determined according to the Main Scientific Area, Secondary Scientific Area and Subarea).

Applicants are responsible for choosing the most suitable Scientific Area and Subarea related to their research plan. The Main and Secondary Scientific Areas and the correspondent Subareas that applicants can choose from, as well as their correspondence with the Evaluation Panels, are listed in Appendix II.

II. **The Applicant's curriculum,** to be assessed under the Merit of the Applicant (Criterion A), comprises three sections: a) the Scientific and curricular path, b) Activities and contributions in the last five years, and c) Further details on up to five scientific activities and contributions. The applicants are instructed to focus on the content and impact of

individual research outputs and researcher's contributions as the assessment will not be based on a quantitative approach.

i) In the section **Scientific and curricular path**, the applicants should present a full overview their profile and describe their trajectory as researchers. They should provide their scientific and curricular path in respect to education and training, namely: the PhD degree; details on professional experience, including international experience; abilities and skills to adequately execute the proposed research plan (in this context, they may include relevant research experience, scientific production and activity beyond the last five years); indicators of research independence, in the case of Principal level applicants; if they had specific periods of leave from research, such as parental leaves, long-term absence due to illness, periods of work in industry, secondments, volunteering or other non-research activities, explaining how long each interruption lasted, and how those interruption(s) or unconventional path and/or gap(s) in their research career has/have impacted their activity.

ii) In the section **Activities and contributions in the last five years**, applicants should describe their activities and contributions to science, to the scientific community and to the broader society during the last five years. For each one, they should inform about the relevance of their contributions by including 'what' those are, 'how' or 'why' they are relevant or important, the roles they played in them, who has benefitted from their outputs/achievements and how.

The activities and contributions may include:

- Publications, key data sets, software, intellectual property (patents, licences, trademarks, copyrights, novel assays and reagents), conference presentations and proceedings, research and policy publications, or other scientific, technological, cultural or artistic achievements. Applicants can also mention any awards they have received in recognition of contributions to the generation of knowledge.
- Activities and contributions to the development of individuals or teams, such as project participations, leadership or management, collaborative contributions, team support, teaching activities, workshops or summer schools, the supervision and mentoring of students, their role in past and ongoing funded projects, as well as the

management of science, technology and innovation programmes or projects, involvement in collaborations/networks from an organisational to international level; and activities and contributions to the research community and the broader society, such as editing, reviewing, refereeing, evaluation of funding applications, organisation of events that have benefited the research community, or improved research culture, societal engagement, transfer and dissemination of knowledge, outreach activities, and other types of engagement with the broader society.

Exceptions to this five years period apply in case of researchers who have interrupted their scientific activity due to parental leave and/or serious illness during the last five years. In these cases, the five-year period should be extended according to the career break(s) explained by the applicant.

Please note that, in case of Junior researcher's applications, the scientific activity may be shorter and not extend over the last five years.

iii) In the section **Further details on up to five scientific activities and contributions**, applicants may present further details on up to five scientific activities or contributions mentioned in the previous section that best illustrate their research work during the last five years (the same exceptions for the reference time frame apply).

Although being part of the Applicant information section, the **CIÊNCIA**VITAE[1], which contains the applicant's full research track record, **should <u>only</u> be used to confirm the information provided in the Applicant's curriculum section**.

III. **The Research Plan**, to be assessed under the Merit of the Research Plan (Criterion B), comprises the following sections:

[1] The CIÊNCIA VITAE platform for researchers' *curricula* was designed by FCT, and implemented in 2018, as a new platform that replaced the former FCT web platforms for CV information of researchers working in Portugal.

- **Background**, providing an overview of the research field, including the state of the art, references to applicant's previous work, and explain the innovative nature of their research plan.
- **Research plan and methods**, revealing which areas of knowledge the applicant wants to explore, in a time frame of around six years (maximum lifespan of the work contract) and identification of the major scientific questions they wish to address. This should focus on the main lines of research to explore, including hypotheses and the specific objectives that will be used to address the hypotheses. It should also include a description of how the applicant plan to test and explore their scientific questions, namely the methodologies and techniques intended to be use, and if they plan to engage in scientific collaborations. A reference to the relevance of the research plan in the context of national and/or international scientific community considering the current state of the art should also be present.
- **Expected outcomes** referring the expected outcomes and impact of applicant's research plan, including societal impact (economic, social, cultural or other), as well as planned scientific dissemination activities.
- **References** cited in the application.
- **Ethical issues**, when existing, related to the research activities and expected results, together with an explanation of how they will be addressed.

The proposed research plan should focus on the main lines of research that applicants envisage to explore and how they plan to explore them, within the timeframe of the research work contracts funded in the context of this Call (maximum of six years). They are advised to take into account their scientific mid/long term goals that will be explained in their career development plan. This is the reason why applicants are not requested to detail a project team, a chronogram or timeline, a risk mitigation plan, and other elements that characterise a regular R&D project.

IV. **The career development plan**, to be assessed under the Merit of the Research Plan (Criterion B), comprises the clarification of the drivers for the application. It should include the applicant's expected career goals, and a description of how the research plan relates

to their future career, including the impact of expected outcomes of the research plan on their career development and how will those amount to (further) consolidate them as an independent researcher. Applicants should also describe their plans to maintain and/or establish national and international collaborations, as well as mentoring of students and researchers, and how they relate to the career goals.

V. **Host Institution,** to be assessed under the Merit of the Research Plan (Criterion B), comprises the following information:

i) in the section **Hosting conditions**, a description by the applicant of the available conditions (expertise and resources) to support the development of the proposed research plan.

ii) in the section **Integration of the Research Plan into the Host Institution's strategy**, a description by the applicant of how the research plan, the expected results and the applicant's career perspectives fit into the overall research strategy and mission of the Host Institution.

iii) in the section **Support statement of the Host Institution**, information about the conditions to be made available, beyond the minimal requirements, for the applicant's research plan and career development.

The above-mentioned sections have limited numbers of characters (detailed in Appendix I). Only plain text is allowed, except for DOI references. Any other link or form of presenting information should be disregarded.

# 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of the application is based on the following criteria:

**A.** Merit of the Applicant (60%)

**B.** Merit of the Research Plan (40%)

## 4.1. CRITERION A

The assessment of the **Merit of the Applicant**, which will account for **60%** of the Final Score, should be based on the information contained in the three components of the **Applicant's curriculum**:

(i) Scientific and curricular path.

(ii) *Activities and contributions in the last five years* – these may include a diversity of activities and contributions to Science, the research community and the broader society, as detailed in Section 3 (p. 7-8), during the last five years[2].

(iii) Further details on up to five scientific activities and contributions.

When assessing this criterion, you should consider the information provided by the applicant **in terms of their quality, relevance, and impact**, rather than in a quantitative way. The different types of activities and contributions should be assessed in an integrated manner, avoiding an additive perspective of the various curricular elements, as if corresponding in their entirety to a single ideal profile.

[2] In the case of researchers who have interrupted their scientific activity due to parental leave and/or serious illness during the last five years, the five-year period should be extended according to the career break(s) explained by the applicant.

You should also consider under this evaluation criterion the **adequacy of the researcher's profile** to the proposed research plan.

Additionally, according to Decree Law 57/2016,[3] and as part of the FCT's commitment to *The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment,* as set out by the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), Evaluation Panels are advised **not to use metrics as a surrogate measure** of the quality of individual outputs and applicant's contributions.

In your assessment of the Merit of the Applicant, you also need to consider:

- the research career level the applicant is applying for, particularly in what concerns the evaluation of scientific independence, which is only mandatory to Principal researchers;
- that applicants must not be penalized for aspects that should only be expected in more mature career levels. Instead, you can value more highly contributions that go further than the applicant's career level;
- the specificities of the scientific area(s) and subarea(s) of each application;
- regarding publications, only published work should be considered. Any work in progress or submitted manuscripts should be ignored.

## 4.2. CRITERION B

The assessment of the **Merit of the Research Plan,** which will account for **40%** of the Final Score, should be based on the information provided in the:

- Research plan;
- Career development plan;
- Host Institution section filled in by the applicant;
- Host institution's support statement.

[3] Article 5, point 4, paragraph b, states that evaluation criteria should ["not adopt merely quantitative procedures, based on indicators, in counting publications, or in calculating their cumulative impact factors"].

For this evaluation criterion, take into consideration the following aspects:

i. Relevance and innovative nature of the proposed research plan, and the expected progress beyond the current state of the art, and also the applicant's previous work;

ii. Adequacy of the methodology adopted to the research plan's hypotheses, objectives and excepted outcomes;

iii. How the proposed research plan and its expected outcomes fit into the overall research strategy and mission of the Host Institution;

iv. Impact of the expected outcomes to the advancement of science and society;

v. The Applicant's career development plan, specifically the expected career goals, how the research plan relates and will impact on the applicant's career development, how the applicant plans to consolidate an independent career, and to maintain and/or establish national and international collaborations in the context of their career goals;

vi. The additional favourable conditions provided by the Host Institution for the applicant's research plan and career development;

vii. If ethical issues are identified and properly addressed (when existing), according to the Ethics Self-Assessment Guide;

Keep in mind, when doing your assessment, that the current funding is exclusively meant for the researcher's salary and associated costs, and no additional funding for the execution of the research plan is included.

## 5. SCORING SYSTEM

The assessment of each criterion uses a **10-point scale,** from 1 to 10**,** with 0.1 increments. as presented in Table I.

**Table I** – Reference Qualitative descriptors associated to the 10-point scale

| Quality | Score | Strengths and Weaknesses (guidance for evaluators) |
|---|---|---|
| **Outstanding** | **10** | Exceptionally strong with no weaknesses |
| **Extremely high** | **9** | Extremely strong with some negligible weakness(es) |
| **Very high** | **8** | Very strong with some minor weakness(es) |
| | **7** | Very strong with several minor or one moderate weakness |
| **High** | **6** | Strong with several moderate weaknesses |
| **Medium** | **5** | Some strengths with significant moderate weaknesses |
| | **4** | Some strengths with several major weaknesses |
| **Low** | **3** | Few strengths and major weaknesses |
| | **2** | Very few strengths and serious weaknesses |
| **Very low** | **1** | No strengths and serious weaknesses |

An application can be considered **non-assessable** when it:

a) strays considerably outside the scope of the panel (not applicable to multi/interdisciplinary applications) or

b) is submitted in a language different from English**.**

**Each criterion is scored individually with one decimal place**. The Final Score (FS) is presented with **two decimal places**, and is given by the following formula:

**FS = 0.6A + 0.4B**

In cases of ties in the Final Score, the score awarded to criterion B is considered for tie-breaking purposes.

The minimum Final Score for an application to be considered for funding **is 7.**

Applicants whose application is scored with a FS **lower than 5** will be inhibited from applying in the next edition of the Stimulus of Scientific Employment, Individual Support Call.

# 6. EVALUATION PROCESS

## 6.1 CONSTITUTION OF THE EVALUATION PANELS

Evaluation Panels are formed by international reviewers appointed by the Board of Directors of FCT and will be announced on the FCT website when the provisional evaluation results (before the phase of applicants' rebuttals/preliminary hearings) are communicated to the applicants. All reviewers are of recognized competence in the scientific areas of the applications under evaluation and cannot be affiliated with any Portuguese R&D Institution.

The constitution of the Evaluation Panels takes into consideration the number of submitted applications and their scientific areas and subareas, as well as balances of gender and geographical and institutional distribution of the reviewers' affiliations.

**No direct contact between applicants and members of the Evaluation Panels is allowed under penalty of exclusion from the Call.**

The evaluators are bound by confidentiality obligations regarding the applications and all stages of the evaluation process.

**Each Panel has a Chairperson responsible for**:

1) Assisting FCT with the Panel constitution by suggesting possible reviewers (Panel members and external reviewers);
2) Assigning the applications to Panel members;
3) Keeping the evaluation process within the defined timeframe and contacting Panel members in case of any delays;
4) Supporting the FCT team in solving Conflicts of Interest identified during the evaluation process;
5) Identifying applications that may require an additional assessment due to the absence of a particular expertise in the Panel;
6) Assuring the quality of the reports. Comments should be consistent with the scores, respect the scoring system (section 5), provide substantive arguments and identifying the strengths and weaknesses for each evaluation criterion;
7) Leading the Panel meeting;
8) Revising the Panel's responses to the submitted preliminary hearings from the applicants (rebuttals).

The Chair may assess up to 10 applications, whenever appropriate.

## 6.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### 6.2.1. CONFIDENTIALITY

The confidentiality of the applications must be protected. All reviewers involved in the evaluation are asked not to copy, quote, or otherwise use material from the applications. All reviewers are also requested to agree with a statement of confidentiality relative to the contents of the applications, the evaluation process and the evaluation results.

### 6.2.2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Researchers who applied to the present Call cannot participate in the evaluation process. Those with first-degree relationships, domestic partnership or married to an applicant are also hindered from being a member of the Panel to which the application was submitted**. Any CoI must be declared prior to the evaluation process.**

**Disqualifying Conflicts of Interest**

If a Panel member identifies a disqualifying CoI with a particular application, the Panel Chair and FCT must be informed, and the application will be reassigned by the Chair to a different reviewer.

If the Panel Chair identifies a disqualifying CoI with one or more applications, they will be replaced by the Co-Chair in all their responsibilities towards that/those application(s).

Circumstances that constitute a disqualifying CoI are the following:

1. Personal or financial interest in the application's success;
2. Current or planned close scientific cooperation;
3. Research cooperation (e.g., joint publications) within the last 3 years before the opening date of the Call;
4. Dependent employment relationship or supervisory relationship (e.g., teacher-student relationship up to and including the post-doctoral phase), within the last 3 years before the opening date of the Call;
5. Affiliation, or pending transfer, to any Department, Institution or Research Centre involved in the application;
6. Be an active member in a Council or similar Supervisory Board of the Department, Institution or Research Centre to which the applicant has been affiliated to within the last 3 years or will be connected to in the scope of the application.

**Potential Conflicts of Interest**

In the case of a **potential CoI,** the Panel member must notify FCT, which will analyse and decide if the reviewer is able to perform an unbiased evaluation, removing the declared CoI, or if the conflict should rather be maintained and the Panel member excluded from the assessment of the application. A potential CoI exists in the following circumstances:

7. Relationships other than first-degree, marriage or domestic partnership; other personal ties or conflicts;
8. Professional relationships, other than those listed under no. 4;
9. Participation in University Bodies other than those listed under no. 6, *e.g.*, Scientific Advisory Committees in research environment;
10. Involvement in a Project with a closely related research topic (competition issues);
11. Participating in an on-going scientific or inter-personal conflict with the applicant(s);
12. Any other circumstances the reviewer feels that may not be impartial.

**In case of a declared CoI, the reviewer will not be involved in the evaluation nor participate in the discussion of the application during the Panel meeting**. The Panel meeting report must mention the declared CoIs for all the Panel.

## 6.3 EVALUATION STAGES AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation of the CEECIND applications will take place entirely via the myFCT website (https://myfct.fct.pt/), which is also the platform where the applications are submitted. All meetings will take place via videoconference.

### 6.3.1. APPLICATIONS ELIGIBILITY AND ASSIGNMENT

FCT is responsible for eligibility verification of submitted applications according to binding criteria described in the Call for applications. However, an application can be declared

ineligible at any stage of the evaluation.

Each application will be remotely and **individually assessed by two Panel members**, one lead reviewer (1st reader/rapporteur) of the application and a second (2nd) reader. A third assessment by another Panel member will be required whenever the difference between the scores of the first and second readers' individual assessments is too far apart.

The Panel Chair is responsible for assigning the readers of each application. An external reviewer may be assigned by the Chair whenever a particular expertise is not covered by the Panel or an additional opinion is needed. External reviewers can be chosen among the members of other Evaluation Panels of the Call, or be someone not involved before in this Evaluation process.

The distribution of the applications to Panel members and external reviewers (if applicable) will necessarily take into consideration any Conflicts of Interest (CoI) and the matching of scientific expertise and experience of the reviewers within the topic of the application.

### 6.3.2. EVALUATION STAGES

After the assignment of applications to Panel members, the evaluation of the applications comprises the following stages:

1. Individual stage;
2. Consensus stage;
3. Final Panel meeting.

Prior to the start of the individual evaluation, FCT will meet with each Evaluation Panel for a briefing via videoconference, for Panel members to (i) get acquainted with the Panel's FCT Scientific Officer, and (ii) clarify this Guide's orientations and the evaluation methodology.

**Individual Stage**

Before starting their assessments, reviewers will have to declare whether or not a CoI is identified for each application.

Panel members must submit an individual report with their assessment for each application assigned to them. This report includes:

- Evaluation comments for each criterion, **including strengths and weaknesses**;
- Scores for each criterion;
- When applicable, comments concerning ethical issues;
- Confidential comments to the Evaluation Panel and/or FCT, if necessary.

The quality of the comments to be transmitted to the applicants is of paramount importance. You can find instructions on this matter in section 7 of this Guide.

The reviewers should perform their assessments **considering different standards for each research level** (from Junior to Principal researcher) and **only based on the information included in the application**.

Reviewers must submit their individual evaluations within the established deadline (prior to the beginning of the consensus stage).

*Non-assessable applications*

An application can be considered non-assessable when written in a language different from English or when it strays considerably outside the scope of the Panel**.** In the latter case, the decision to consider the application as non-assessable must be confirmed by the Panel Chair.

Multi/interdisciplinary applications should not be considered non-assessable without strong scientific evidence that they do not fit into the Panel's scope.

If an application is considered out of the scope of the Evaluation Panel, **it cannot be moved to a different Panel.**

The following procedure should be taken for all non-assessable applications when filling in the individual stage report:

- ✓ Mark the application as non-assessable;

- ✓ State in the report the reason why the Panel could not assess the application.

The Evaluation Panel must jointly validate this decision to consider an application as non-assessable during the Panel meeting.

**Consensus Stage**

The Panel member appointed as **1st reader prepares the consensus report** for each application based on the two (or three, when applicable) submitted individual reviews, as well the external expert's assessment, when existing.

If the 1st reader is unable to reach a consensus report based on the two (or more) individual reviews, the Chair should be informed and settle these differences, or request an additional assessment from either a Panel member or an external reviewer.

Whenever the difference between the scores of the first and second readers' individual assessments is too far apart, the Panel Chair will request a third assessment from a different Panel member.

The consensus report, similar in structure to the individual reports, is the starting point for the discussion during the Panel meeting. Comments **must include strengths and weaknesses for each evaluation criterion**, agree with the given scores (see Table I in section 5) and reflect, as much as possible, the perspectives of all the application's readers.

Reviewers will need to comply with the established deadlines, according to each role (1st or 2nd reader).

**Final Panel Meeting**

Each Evaluation Panel meeting will be remotely coordinated by the Chair, and Co-chair when existing, to proceed with the following activities:

- **Ensure a fair judgment and an appropriate discussion** of each application;

- Settle the final scores for each criterion, as well as the evaluation comments to be conveyed to the applicants, and **ensure that the scores agree with the comments**. Final comments should be included in the Panel evaluation report by the 1st reader (according to the Guidelines specified in Section 7);
- **Guarantee that the adopted criteria are coherent** within and across each researcher contract level (Junior, Assistant, Principal);
- **Prepare a provisional ranked list of all applications** under evaluation for each of the three research contract levels;
- Prepare a Panel meeting report, to be signed by the Chair, addressing the following issues:
    - Composition of the Evaluation Panel;
    - Identification of Conflict of Interest;
    - Relevant details of the working methodology adopted by the Panel;
    - The provisional ranked list of all applications for each of the three levels.
- Agree on recommendations to FCT on the different aspects of the evaluation process that may help improving procedures in future Calls.

## 6.4 SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING

Only the applications with final scores equal to or above 7 are eligible for funding, up to the number of available contracts (400 for the entire Call).

The distribution of available positions by Evaluation Panel and by contract level will be set by the Board of Directors of FCT, following the ranked list for each contract level decided by each Panel, and respecting a proportional distribution of the number of positions per Evaluation Panel and per research contract level in relation to the total number of eligible applications.

### 6.5 PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

Once the evaluation results and the provisional ranked lists agreed at the final Panel meetings are communicated, applicants may use their right to dispute the proposed decision in the **preliminary hearing phase**, during the following 10 working days. The applicants must submit their comments in English and address their peers using polite, dispassionate, and analytical language.

After the reception of the applicants' claims, Panel members will be asked to analyse and answer to the preliminary hearings containing comments of scientific nature regarding the evaluation criteria. The Evaluation Panels are responsible for correcting any possible errors or clarifying alleged inaccuracies. The FCT Officers will assist the Panel Chairs in the quality control of each Panel's responses to the submitted preliminary hearings.

**The analysis of the preliminary hearings is neither a second assessment of the application nor an additional opportunity for the applicant to present new information**. It should only serve to identify any error by the Evaluation Panel that may have occurred during the evaluation and that is addressed by the applicant in their claim. Any identified error should be corrected and, depending on its nature, the score of the respective evaluation criterion may be changed accordingly or remain the same.

The evaluation process will only be completed upon the final decision that follows the preliminary hearings period.

## 7. FEEDBACK TO THE APPLICANTS

**The quality of the comments to be transmitted to the applicants is of paramount importance.**

All the reviewers should comply with the following additional guidelines in the elaboration of the Panel evaluation reports (final report which will be communicated to the applicant).

**Comments must:**

- **Include strengths and weaknesses** of the application for each criterion.
- Be coherent with the scoring descriptors (see Table I in section 5).
- Be clear and consistent (please check for any contradicting statements).
- Take into account the research level of the application (Junior, Assistant and Principal).
- Use dispassionate and analytical language.
- Be polite.
- Avoid dismissive statements about the applicant, the proposed science, or the concerned scientific field.
- Address the submitted work plan and not the work reviewers may consider that should have been proposed.

**What should be avoided:**

- Metrics in your assessments. Similarly, applicants are discouraged to use Journal or publication metrics, such as impact factors and research performance metrics, in the application Curriculum.
- A description or a summary of the application.
- The use of the first person or equivalent (e.g., “I think…”, “This reviewer finds…”). Instead, use expressions such as “The Panel…”.
- Recommendations or advice for improving the application.
- Comments not related to the criterion under evaluation.
- Comments that are too short or too long or the use of inappropriate or vague language.
- Categorical statements that have not been properly verified.
- Scores that do not match the comments.
- Marking down a proposal for the same critical aspect under two different criteria.

# APPENDIX I – APPLICATION SECTIONS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEWERS

## A. INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Applicant**

Name

Gender

Nationality

ORCID

**CIÊNCIA VITAE**

CIÊNCIA VITAE (pdf file)

**PhD Degree**

Completion Date

PhD graduation country

PhD graduation institution

### APPLICATION GENERAL INFORMATION

**General Description**

Research contract level

Title of the research plan (max. 255 characters)

Abstract (max. 3000 characters)

Keywords (max. 5)

Main Scientific Area

Secondary Scientific Area

Subarea

Evaluation Panel

### APPLICANT'S CURRICULUM

Scientific and curricular path (max. 4000 characters)

Activities and contributions in the last five years (max. 7000 characters)

Further details on up to five scientific activities and contributions (max. 1000 characters each)

**RESEARCH PLAN**

Background (max. 3000 characters)
Research plan and methods (max. 7000 characters)
Expected outcomes (max. 2000 characters)
References (max. 3000 characters)
Ethical issues (If applicable, max. 2000 characters)

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Career development plan (max. 4000 characters)

**HOST INSTITUTION**

Selection of the host institution
Description of the host conditions (max. 800 characters)
Integration of the research plan into the host institution´s strategy (max. 800 characters)

## B. INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE HOST INSTITUTION

Support statement from the Host Institution

# APPENDIX II – MAIN AND SECONDARY SCIENTIFIC AREAS, CORRESPONDING SUBAREAS AND EVALUATION PANELS

This Appendix lists the main and secondary scientific areas, and the corresponding subareas, adapted from the OECD´s revised Field of Science and Technology Classification - FOS, as well as the respective Evaluation Panels.

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| Exact Sciences | Mathematics | Pure Mathematics | Mathematics and Computer and Information Sciences |
| | | Applied Mathematics | |
| | | Statistics and Probability | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | Computer and Information Sciences | Computer Sciences | |
| | | Information Sciences | |
| | | Bioinformatics | |
| | | Informatics | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | Physical Sciences | Atomic, Molecular and Chemical Physics | Physical Sciences |
| | | Condensed Matter Physics | |
| | | Particles Physics | |
| | | Nuclear Physics | |
| | | Fluids and Plasma Physics | |
| | | Optics | |
| | | Acoustics | |
| | | Astronomy | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | Chemical Sciences | Organic Chemistry | Chemical Sciences |
| | | Inorganic Chemistry | |
| | | Physical Chemistry | |
| | | Polymer Science | |
| | | Electrochemistry | |
| | | Colloid Chemistry | |
| | | Analytical Chemistry | |
| | | Nuclear Chemistry | |
| | | Medicinal Chemistry | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Natural Sciences** | **Earth and Environmental Sciences** | Geosciences, Multidisciplinary | Earth Sciences |
| | | Mineralogy | |
| | | Palaeontology | |
| | | Geochemistry | |
| | | Geophysics | |
| | | Geology | |
| | | Physical Geography | |
| | | Volcanology | |
| | | Meteorology and Atmospheric Sciences | |
| | | Oceanography | |
| | | Hydrology and Water Resources | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Earth and Environmental Sciences** | Climatic Research | Environmental Sciences |
| | | Climate Change | |
| | | Environmental Management | |
| | | Ecotoxicology | |
| | | Environmental Monitoring and Impact | |
| | | Natural Resources and Sustainability | |
| | | Waste Management and Valorisation | |
| | | Water and pollution | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Natural Sciences** | **Biological Sciences** | Cell Biology | Experimental Biology and Biochemistry |
| | | Biochemistry | |
| | | Biochemical Research Methods | |
| | | Microbiology | |
| | | Molecular Biology | |
| | | Biophysics | |
| | | Genetics and Heredity | |
| | | Reproductive Biology | |
| | | Virology | |
| | | Developmental Biology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Biological Sciences** | Plant Sciences and Botany | Biological Sciences |
| | | Zoology, Ornithology, Entomology | |
| | | Marine Biology, Freshwater Biology and Limnology | |
| | | Ecology | |
| | | Biodiversity Conservation | |
| | | Biology (Theoretical, Mathematical) | |
| | | Evolutionary Biology | |
| | | Behavioural Sciences Biology | |
| | | Mycology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Engineering and Technology** | **Civil Engineering** | Civil Engineering | Civil and Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Systems |
| | | Architecture Engineering | |
| | | Construction Engineering | |
| | | Transport Engineering | |
| | | Municipal and Structural Engineering | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Information Engineering** | Electrical and Electronic Engineering | Electrical, Electronic and Information Engineering |
| | | Robotics | |
| | | Automation and Control Systems | |
| | | Communication Engineering and Systems | |
| | | Telecommunications | |
| | | Computer Hardware and Architecture | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Mechanical Engineering** | Mechanical Engineering | Civil and Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Systems |
| | | Applied Mechanics | |
| | | Thermodynamics | |
| | | Aerospace Engineering | |
| | | Nuclear Engineering | |
| | | Audio Engineering and Reliability Analysis | |
| | | Engineering Systems | |
| | | Renewable Energies | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Chemical Engineering** | Chemical Engineering | Chemical Engineering |
| | | Chemical Process Engineering | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Materials Engineering** | Materials Engineering | Materials Engineering and Nanotechnology |
| | | Ceramics | |
| | | Coating and Films | |
| | | Composites | |
| | | Paper and Wood | |
| | | Textiles | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Engineering and Technology** | **Medical Engineering** | Medical Engineering and Biomedical Engineering | Medical Engineering and Biotechnology |
| | | Laboratory Technology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Environmental Engineering** | Environmental Engineering | Environmental Biotechnology and Engineering and Industrial Biotechnology |
| | | Geotechnics | |
| | | Petroleum Engineering, Energy and Fuels | |
| | | Remote Sensing | |
| | | Mining and Mineral Processing | |
| | | Geological Engineering | |
| | | Marine Engineering, Sea Vessels | |
| | | Ocean Engineering | |
| | | Other, please specify: | |
| | **Environmental Biotechnology** | Environmental Biotechnology | |
| | | Bioremediation, Diagnostic Biotechnologies (DNA Chips and Biosensing Devices) in Environmental Management | |
| | | Environmental Biotechnology related Ethics | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Industrial Biotechnology** | Industrial Biotechnology | |
| | | Bioprocessing Technologies, Biocatalysis and Fermentation | |
| | | Bioproducts, Biomaterials, Bioplastics, Biofuels, Bio-derived Bulk and Fine Chemicals and Bio-derived Novel Materials | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Nanotechnology** | Nanomaterials | Materials Engineering and Nanotechnology |
| | | Nanoprocesses | |
| | | Nano-Optics and Nanophotonics | |
| | | Modelling at Nanoscale | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Medical and Health Sciences** | **Basic Medicine** | Anatomy and Morphology | Basic and Clinical Medicine |
| | | Human Genetics | |
| | | Immunology | |
| | | Neurosciences | |
| | | Pharmacology | |
| | | Toxicology | |
| | | Physiology | |
| | | Pathology | |
| | | Oncobiology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Clinical Medicine** | Andrology | |
| | | Obstetrics and Gynecology | |
| | | Paediatrics | |
| | | Cardiac and Cardiovascular System | |
| | | Peripheral Vascular Disease | |
| | | Haematology | |
| | | Respiratory Systems | |
| | | Critical Care Medicine and Emergency Medicine | |
| | | Anaesthesiology | |
| | | Orthopaedics | |
| | | Surgery | |
| | | Radiology, Nuclear Medicine and Medical Imaging | |
| | | Transplantation | |
| | | Dentistry, Oral Surgery and Medicine | |
| | | Dermatology | |
| | | Infectious Diseases | |
| | | Allergology | |
| | | Rheumatology | |
| | | Endocrinology and Metabolism | |
| | | Gastroenterology and Hepatology | |
| | | Urology and Nephrology | |
| | | Oncology | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Medical and Health Sciences** | **Clinical Medicine** | Ophthalmology | Basic and Clinical Medicine |
| | | Otorhinolaryngology | |
| | | Psychiatry | |
| | | Clinical Neurology | |
| | | Geriatrics and Gerontology | |
| | | General and Family Medicine | |
| | | Internal Medicine | |
| | | Integrative and Complementary Medicine | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Health Sciences** | Tropical Medicine | |
| | | Parasitology | |
| | **Health Sciences** | Health Care and Services | Health Sciences |
| | | Health Services and Policies | |
| | | Nursing | |
| | | Nutrition, Dietetics | |
| | | Public Health and Environmental Health | |
| | | Epidemiology | |
| | | Occupational Health | |
| | | Sport and Fitness Sciences | |
| | | Social Biomedical Sciences | |
| | | Medical Ethics | |
| | | Addiction | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Medical Biotechnology** | Health-related Biotechnology | Medical Engineering and Biotechnology |
| | | Technologies involving the Manipulation of Cells, Tissues, Organs or the Whole Organism | |
| | | Gene-based Diagnose and Therapies | |
| | | Biomaterials | |
| | | Medical Biotechnology related Ethics | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agricultural Sciences** | **Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries** | Agriculture | Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries |
| | | Forestry | |
| | | Fishery | |
| | | Soil Science | |
| | | Horticulture and Viticulture | |
| | | Agronomy, Plant Breeding and Plant Protection | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Animal and Dairy Science** | Animal and Dairy Science | Animal and Veterinary Sciences and Agro-Food Biotechnology |
| | | Husbandry | |
| | | Pets | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Veterinary Science** | Veterinary Science | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Agricultural Biotechnology** | Agricultural Biotechnology and Food Biotechnology | |
| | | GM Technology (crops and livestock) and Livestock Cloning | |
| | | Marker Assisted Selection | |
| | | Diagnostics | |
| | | Biomass Feedstock Production Technologies, Biopharming | |
| | | Agricultural Biotechnology related Ethics | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social Sciences** | **Psychology** | Criminal Psychology | Psychology |
| | | Social and Organizational Psychology | |
| | | Cognitive Psychology and Neuropsychology | |
| | | Clinical Psychology | |
| | | Psychology of Development and Learning | |
| | | Educational Psychology | |
| | | Community and Health Psychology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Economics and Business** | Economics | Economics and Business |
| | | Business and Management | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Educational Sciences** | General Education (including Training, Pedagogy, Didactics) | Educational Sciences |
| | | Special Education (to gifted persons, those with learning disabilities) | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Sociology** | Sociology | Sociology |
| | | Demography | |
| | | Anthropology | |
| | | Ethnology | |
| | | Social Topics (women´s and gender studies, social issues, family studies, social work) | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Law** | Public Law | Media and Communications, Law and Political Science |
| | | Criminal Law | |
| | | Private Law | |
| | | European and International Law | |
| | | Human Rights | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social Sciences** | **Political Sciences** | Political Science | Media and Communications, Law and Political Science |
| | | Military Sciences | |
| | | Compared Politics | |
| | | Political Theory | |
| | | International Relations | |
| | | Public Policy | |
| | | European Studies | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Social and Economic Geography** | Environmental Sciences (social aspects) | Social and Economic Geography |
| | | Cultural and Economic Geography | |
| | | Urban Studies (planning and development) | |
| | | Transport Planning and Social Aspects of Transport | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Media and Communications** | Journalism and Media | Media and Communications, Law and Political Science |
| | | Documental and Information Sciences | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Humanities** | **History and Archaeology** | Ancient History | History |
| | | Medieval History | |
| | | Modern History | |
| | | Contemporary History | |
| | | History of Science and Technology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | | Prehistory and Archaeology | Prehistory and Archaeology |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Languages and Literature** | Literature | Languages and Literature |
| | | Portuguese Studies | |
| | | Romanic Studies | |
| | | Anglophone Studies | |
| | | Classical Studies | |
| | | Asian and African Studies | |
| | | Germanic Studies | |
| | | Linguistics | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Philosophy, Ethics and Religion** | Epistemology in Philosophy of Science | Philosophy, Ethics and Religion |
| | | Methaphysics and Philosophical Anthropology | |
| | | Philosophy of Art | |
| | | Logic | |
| | | History of Philosophy | |
| | | Ethics and Political Philosophy | |
| | | Theology and Religion Philosophy | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |
| | **Arts** | Fine Arts | Arts |
| | | Musicology | |
| | | Visual Performative Arts (Cinema, Television, Drama, Dance, etc.) | |
| | | Art History | |
| | | Conservation and Restauration | |
| | | Museology | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |

| Main Scientific Area | Secondary Scientific Area | Subarea | Evaluation Panel |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Humanities** | **Arts** | Architecture | Architecture, Urbanism, Design and Cultural Heritage |
| | | Urbanism | |
| | | Design | |
| | | Cultural Heritage | |
| | | *Other, please specify:* | |