

APPLICATION GUIDE

# 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program

DECEMBER 2024



This **Application Guide** is intended to support the PI throughout the application process to the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects Under the UT Austin Portugal Program, and to help him/her preparing and submitting a successful application. This Guide draws on information available on the Call page, namely the legal documents setting the rules and conditions for this Call: the Public Announcement for the Call (“[Aviso para Apresentação de Candidaturas](#) ”), the Terms of Reference for the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program and the [FCT Projects Regulations](#) in its current version. On the FCT 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program webpage, the PI also finds the Guide for Peer Reviewers, the Ethics Self-Assessment Guide and the *Guião CIÊNCIAVITAE*. The period of applications submission for the current Call is from December 2, 2024 to January 22, 2025, 5 p.m., Lisbon time.

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## 1. Call for Exploratory Projects Under the UT Austin Portugal Program

The consolidation and reinforcement of the National System of Science and Technology (NSST) constitute a priority of the national policy for science and technology. It aims at increasing the national and international competitiveness of science and technology and its contribution to innovation and transfer of knowledge and at complying to the global aspirations defined in *Agenda 2030: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*. In this context, it is particularly relevant the promotion and strengthening of the scientific and technological institutions through the participation of research teams in Projects.

The **2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects Under the UT Austin Portugal Program** has been designed to help teams of researchers from non-corporate entities of the National Scientific and Technology System (NSTS) and The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) come together to conduct joint exploratory research activities in the leading scientific areas of the UT Austin Portugal Program.

Proposed projects must aim to stimulate and promote Portugal's international competitiveness through Science and Technology (S&T), focusing on the opportunities provided by the data economy as a driver of growth and change.

Submitted proposals must configure groundbreaking, high-risk/high-reward projects with a potential for further expansion. Although exploratory research projects (ERPs) are not expected to achieve, during their standard time frame, the sort of results typical of longer projects, submitted proposals must be able to clearly frame the outcomes they should deliver in 12 months and link them to long-term goals for full value realization.

The ERPs should value impact, i.e., propose potential solutions to real-world problems, thereby going beyond the production of scientific papers.

Considering the above-mentioned goals, FCT is launching the **2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects Under the UT Austin Portugal Program** to fund applications in the following areas:

- a) **Advanced Computing;**
- b) **Nano Materials for New Markets;**
- c) **Space-Earth Interactions.**

A detailed description of the challenges and subtopics related to each scientific area is provided in the [Terms of Reference for the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program](#).

Project proposals addressing **Advanced Computing-related topics** are encouraged to foster synergies with the Minho Advanced Computing Center (MACC). Additionally, proposals addressing the **Space-Earth Interactions** area should, desirably, demonstrate their contribution to the Atlantic International Research Center's scientific agenda (AIR Center), as laid down in the document "[Towards a Science and Technology agenda for an integrative approach to the Atlantic: Climate Change and Energy Systems, Space and Ocean Sciences, through North-South cooperation](#)", available on FCT's website.

Project proposals under the areas of Advanced Computing, Nanotechnologies and Space-Earth Interactions addressing Clean Energy-related topics will be deemed of strategic interest to this Call.

All applications must fully comply with the terms of reference set out in the [Terms of Reference for the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program](#).

The **beneficiary entities** can apply **individually** (by one eligible beneficiary only) or in “co-promotion” (by two or more eligible beneficiaries) and must be a legal entity belonging to the non-business entities of the R&I System. The maximum duration of the grant is 12 months (renewable for 3 months, if justified) and the maximum funding for project is 50.000,00 euros, from the € 400,000 (four hundred thousand euros) of national state budget available for this Call.

The support to be granted are non-refundable, applying the simplified cost option in the Lump Sum mode. The contribution is paid on presentation of evidence and results demonstrating the effective implementation of the approved project under the contractual terms.

The submitted proposals must include:

- One or more Portuguese research institutions as identified in the section 2.2 Beneficiary Institution.
- At least one partner at UT Austin. Also, under this Call, proposals in the area of Advanced Computing may be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated with the Texas Advanced Computing Center (TACC), provided that they meet the eligibility status set forth in no 6.4 of this Announcement.

The project consortium may include, on the Portuguese side, collaborative institutions, i.e., companies and other similar entities, that may wish to invest in the exploratory research project and whose participation is likely to bring relevant expertise to the project. However, such entities will not be funded under this call.

All proposals, written in English, are submitted online via <https://myfct.fct.pt/> web platform (detailed information in Appendix I).

The call is open from December 2, 2024 to January 22, 2025, 5 p.m., Lisbon time.

## 2. Prior to Submission

### 2.1 Who may submit an application

The Principal Investigator (PI) may be national, foreign, and stateless researchers who meet the following requirements by the deadline for submission of applications:

- Time committed to the project.
- Hold a doctoral degree by the closing date of the call. The document certifying the doctoral degree must be presented at the time of the Acceptance Document.

- Have an employment contract or grant contract with the Principal Contractor. In the absence of such a link, at the time of the Acceptance Document a written agreement between the parties must be submitted, according to point c) of item 1 of Article 6 of FCT's Project Regulations.

For eligibility purposes, the following restrictions are also applied:

- **A researcher may submit only one application as PI** in this call.
- The PI of the application cannot be:
  - PI with a final scientific report rejected within two years before the opening of the call, for reasons attributable to him/her.
  - In a situation of unjustified non-fulfilment of the regulatory requirements regarding the presentation of reports on scientific execution of projects concluded and financed through FCT and in which he/she acted as PI.
- Applications that have been selected for funding by FCT or other funding agencies will not be accepted.
- Multiple applications for the same project will not be accepted:
  - In the present call.
  - In different calls for proposals that overlap in the period for receiving applications.
  - In the case of applications to calls with different thematic scopes and which take place during different application periods, the recommendation for funding in one of them implies the exclusion from the decision process for the others.
- Related applications, from the same team, submitted to FCT or other funding agencies must be declared in the application.
- Applications must be submitted in English.
- Applicants providing false declarations or committing plagiarism in the application will be excluded from the Call.

Multiple applications are considered to be applications that fully or partially share the work plan.

The members of the UT Austin Portugal Program governance structure (Governing Board, External Review Committee, Board of Directors and Executive Team) are not allowed to participate as PI, team members or consultants.

## 2.2 Beneficiary Institution

The following non-entrepreneurial Portuguese entities of the R&I are individual beneficiaries:

- Higher education institutions, their institutes and R&D units.
- State, international or associated Laboratories with head office in Portugal.
- Non-profit private institutions whose main objective is R&D activities, including Collaborative Laboratories (CoLab) and Centres for Technology and Innovation (CTI).

- Other non-profit private and public institutions developing or participating in scientific research activities.

## 2.3 Registration

The application must be submitted using the [myFCT platform](#). Should the candidate not be registered on the CIÊNCIA ID platform, he/she needs to generate a CIÊNCIA ID identifier at: [www.ciencia-id.pt](http://www.ciencia-id.pt)

The candidate should then use the CIÊNCIA ID login credentials to enter the [myFCT platform](#). The CIÊNCIA ID platform also allows the candidate to complete his/her CIÊNCIAVITAE, which will also be included in the application. Please note that for Evaluation Panel to be able to consult the candidate's CIÊNCIAVITAE CV, it should be written entirely in English.

## 2.4 What should the candidate know before applying to this call

Before starting an application, make sure to be well informed on the rules governing this Call, by reading the [supporting documents](#).

The terms of eligibility, as well as the rules and requirements of the different phases of the application process, are set forth in the following documents:

- **FCT Projects Regulations** in its current version, which establishes the general terms under which funding may be granted.
- **Announcement for the 2024 Call** for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program (“*Aviso de Abertura do Concurso*”), which specifies the conditions of this Call.
- **Terms of Reference for the 2024 Call** for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program, which include a detailed description of the challenges and subtopics related to each scientific area of this Call.
- **Guide for Peer Reviewers** for the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program, which establishes the terms for evaluation under which funding may be granted.

FCT also makes available the following Guides that must also be carefully analysed:

- The Ethics Self-Assessment Guide.
- The CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide.

## 2.5 General Recommendations to the candidates

- Prepare the application carefully and timely.
- Read carefully the instructions provided in this Guide and in the Application form.
- Learn about the structure of the Application form before beginning filling it in. Read all the

sections of the Application form in advance, in order to have an idea of what is being asked and to have the necessary time to gather all the information required for submission.

- Make sure that all the institutions to be included in the application are available on the Application form. If they are not on the list, they have to be added through the Registration of Institutions form via the [Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia](#) (available only in Portuguese). **It can take up to two working days for a new institution to become available** once the form is filled.
- Contact the researchers to be included in the application team in advance and ask them to register on the CIÊNCIA ID platform and to provide the applicant with the CIÊNCIA ID registration email address.
- Make sure an **updated version of CIÊNCIAVITAE is available** and ensure that the same goes for **all members** associated to the research team of the project.
- Make sure that **each Institution selected** in the application form **has a team member associated**.
- Prepare the **Lump Sum funding** of the **application carefully and adequately**.
- Ensure that the URL addresses of bibliographical references or other relevant material remain active throughout the decision-making process.
- Do not assume that the form and rules for submission of this application are the same as those used in other FCT programs or by other funding Agencies.
- Do not wait until the **last minute to validate and make any corrections to the application**. There is a **myFCT validation process, to detect possible errors in your application**, which can implicate corrections and the need for extra time. **Please repeat this validation process regularly**.
- Plan and complete the application process as early as possible. Only in this way FCT will be able to provide the best possible assistance.
- Visit the FCT website regularly for updated information regarding the Call.

## 2.6 Additional recommendations for writing a successful application

- Write the application in such a way as to convince the panel of experts that the ideas presented deserve to be funded.
- It is important to describe the institutions involved in the project and their respective skills and contribution to the development of the project.
- Remember that the application represents a commitment, not only from the Principal Investigator, but also from the entire research team.
- Be realistic in terms of expectations and, if the proposal is approved, make sure that the research team is able to carry it out as planned in the application.
- Read the Guide for Peer Reviewers carefully to understand how the application will be evaluated and make sure that the application addresses those crucial points.
- Avoid repeating the same text or entire paragraphs in different sections.



## 2.7 How to direct questions to FCT

Any clarifications from FCT can be requested via email. Use exclusively the email [concursosprojetos@fct.pt](mailto:concursosprojetos@fct.pt) for any queries concerning this Call, namely questions regarding the contents of the Application form and technical aspects of myFCT website.


Please note that FCT cannot guarantee that emails received during the last two working days of this Call's submission period will be answered.

## 3. Submission of the Application

The Application form is organized in eight sections. The sections are:

- General Data
- Institutions
- Research Team
- Work Plan
- Indicators
- Budget
- Statement of Commitment
- Validate and Submit

The detailed structure of the Application form, identifying all the fields and their respective character limits, is available in Appendix I. The following subsections of the guide provide a detailed description of each of the eight sections that comprise the application form and provide the most relevant information on how to fill in each field. Many of the fields on the form have a character limit.

We recommend the PI to click on **Validate and Submit** regularly when filling in the application so that any errors marked with the symbol  can be detected and corrected in due time.

### 3.1 Guidelines for filling in the Application form

In the following chapters of this Guide, a detailed description of the contents requested in each section of the Application form is offered. Many of the fields in the form have a limited number of characters. Only plain text or attachments are allowed. Any other form of presenting additional information (such as links for Dropbox or Google Drive) will be disregarded for evaluation purposes.

Once the application is created on the [myFCT platform](#), a reference code is automatically generated (in the format YEAR.NUMBER.CALLTYPE; e.g. 2024.0001.UTA). This will be FCT's unique identification code for the application throughout the Call.

The various sections of the Application form can be accessed from the left-hand side menu bar.

### **3.1.1 General Data**

#### *Project description*

In this section of the form, the project is identified by filling in the following fields:

- **Title:** the title of the research project should be concise and succinct, understandable to a reader with a general scientific background, and suitable for public dissemination.
- **Project acronym:** assign an acronym for the identification of the project.
- **Keywords:** list a maximum of 4 keywords.  
The keywords are likely to be used in the peer-review process of the application and should accurately reflect its scientific content. This is particularly important for interdisciplinary applications. A repetition of the words contained in the title must be avoided.
- **Main scientific area (Scientific Domain / Scientific Area / Scientific sub-Area):** the scientific domain/areas and subareas should be chosen from the available options, starting with the main scientific domain.
- **Timetable (start date and duration):** indicate the expected start date of the project in day-month-year format. The project will have a maximum duration of 12 months.  
This indicative date may be changed for projects recommended for funding during the acceptance term signing phase; however, it cannot exceed 90 consecutive days from the date of decision notification.

### **3.1.2 Institutions**

This section identifies the institutions involved in the project, both from an administrative and financial management perspective and in terms of scientific execution and it's divided in the following sections:

- Principal Contractor
- Participating Institutions
- Collaborative Institutions

**Make sure that each Institution selected in the application form has a team member associated.**

#### *Principal Contractor*

The **Principal Contractor** is the **beneficiary entity** that leads the project and serves as the intermediary with the FCT on behalf of all partners. In approved projects, the Principal Contractor will receive all payments and then transfer the corresponding amounts to partner institutions.

The Principal Contractor must be based in national territory and must have a Tax Identification Number (NIPC), and the designation used to apply for call is the exact designation associated with that NIPC.

The Principal Contractor must be one of the beneficiaries' institutions describe in [section 2.2](#).

The **Research Unit** field, associated with the Principal Contractor, are mandatory and allow the PI to identify which research units are involved in execution of the project. A maximum of 3 research units can be added to the principal contractor.

In this section a description of the Principal Contractor and its competencies for the development of the project may be provided. This information will be taken into account by the Evaluation Panel during the assessment of the adequacy of the host conditions (technical/scientific, organizational management and, when appropriate, co-funding capacity by companies) provided by the beneficiary entity.

### *Participating Institutions*

Participating institutions must have a Tax Identification Number (NIPC) and an associated budget.

The **Research Unit** field, associated with the Participating Institutions, are mandatory and allow the PI to identify which research units are involved in execution of the project. A maximum of 3 research units can be added to the participating institutions

### *Collaborative Institutions*




Collaborative Institutions are the institutions involved in the project, including foreign institutions, without an associated budget.

If any **beneficiary institution or research unit** is not **listed**, it will have to be added in the Institutions Pre-Registration form on the [Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia](#). It may take up to two business days to update the list.

## **3.1.3 Research Team**

The research team consists of the PI and other team members directly involved in the project tasks and activities of the proposed project.

The PI must monitor the acceptance process of the team members and consultants by checking the following states, as well as providing their CVs:

-  Invitation accepted
-  Awaiting confirmation
-  Invitation declined

Any team member or consultant that does not agree to participate in the project, should be removed by the PI from the form to allow the submission of the application.

Each researcher can only have one CIÊNCIAVITAE imported into myFCT in the same call. Therefore, if the researcher participates in several applications in the same call, once one of the applications is submitted, he/she will no longer be able to select the 'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV' button.

The Research Team item is divided into the following sections:

- Principal Investigator
- PI narrative CV
- Members
- Hirings
- Consultant
- Team CV synopsis

### *Principal Investigator*

The PI's data (name, role, and Ciência ID) is automatically filled in. The PI must fill in the following information regarding his/her participation in the project:

- Institution to which the PI is associated.
- CIENCIAVITAE permissions and upload.

The PI's CV in the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform must be created/updated before associating it to the Application for this Call. **It should be entirely in English.**

Permission to FCT to access the PI's CIÊNCIAVITAE should be given before associating it with the application. By granting this permission, FCT will have access to the information subsets of the PI's CV with Public and Semi-public access levels. Subsets kept at a private access level will not be available for evaluation. Please check the CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide.

The button 'Give FCT permission' is visible in the CIÊNCIAVITAE menu. When this button is pressed, the system opens the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform. When the PI returns to the Application form, this button will be inactive.

A blue button with a white plus sign icon and the text "Give FCT permission" in blue.

Remember to give FCT the access to the contents of **each section** by selecting the privacy level to Public or Semi-public.

By selecting 'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV', **the CV will be immediately associated with the Application form (in PDF format)**. When the process of importing the CV is finished, this file will be available on the Application form; a link will appear with the associated CV PDF file, indicating the date and time.

A blue button with a white plus sign icon and the text "Get CIENCIAVITAE CV" in blue.

The PI should **check his/her CIÊNCIAVITAE CV PDF file** to confirm that all the information is correct.

Any updates to the PI's CV will necessarily imply selecting 'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV' again. This means that updates to the CV content **must be made** through the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform; to have the updated CV associated to the application, it is mandatory to: i) remove the previous document and then ii) press again "Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV".

Please note that the content of the CIÊNCIAVITAE is exclusively the PI's responsibility.

The CIÊNCIAVITAE CV will be used by the reviewers **only to confirm** the information provided in the PI Narrative CV.

### *PI narrative CV*

The PI Narrative CV aims at allowing a more effective and encompassing assessment of a diverse range of research achievements, focusing on the quality and impact of individual research outputs and researcher's contributions, while avoiding the use of metrics as a surrogate measure of quality. The narrative CV has the following sections:

- **Career Profile:** a summary of the PI's education (specifying the year the PhD was completed), key qualifications, and employment history. If applicable, any period of leave from research, such as parental leaves, long-term absence due to illness, period of work in industry, secondments, volunteering, or other non-research activities may be specified. Explain how these interruption(s) or the unconventional path and/or gap(s) has/have impacted your activity.
- **Contributions to Science and Society:** in the following sections, the PI may provide relevant examples of contributions in relation to his/her career stage and specific scientific area. Please note that the diverse sets of contributions provided below are designed to include different researcher's profiles and career stages across different scientific areas. The PI may use the guidelines below selecting the types of contributions that more broadly and effectively describe his/her researcher profile and curriculum.
  - i. **Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge:** description of how the PI has contributed to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge, and the relevance and impact of your contributions. These can include publications, key data sets, software, intellectual property (patents, licenses, trademarks, copyrights, novel assays, and reagents), conference presentations and proceedings, research, and policy publications, or other scientific, technological, cultural or artistic achievements. Awards received in recognition of contributions to the generation of knowledge may also be mentioned. To better inform the Evaluation Panel on the relevance of these contributions, when including 'what' those are, the PI must also consider 'how' or 'why' they are relevant or important, the role he/she played, and who and how has benefited from these outputs/achievements.

Regarding publications, journal or publication metrics such as impact factors, and research performance metrics should be avoided<sup>1</sup>.

- ii. **Contributions to the development of individuals and/or research teams:** highlight expertise provided by the PI which was relevant to the development of individuals and/or teams, including project participation, leadership or management, collaborative contributions, and team support. It can include teaching activities, workshops, or summer schools in which the PI was involved (for undergraduates, graduates, and post-grads, as well as junior colleagues), the supervision of students, mentoring or other contributions to the success of a team or advancement of colleagues. It can also include the PI's role (as a PI, team member or other) in past and ongoing funded projects, as well as the management of science, technology and innovation programs or projects. It can also be used to highlight the PI's involvement in collaborations/networks from an organizational to international level.
- iii. **Contributions to the research community and the broader society:** the PI may include activities he/she has participated in to progress the research community and engage with the broader society. These include contributions to research community outreach/engagement; editing, reviewing, refereeing, evaluation of funding applications; and organization of events that have benefited the research community, or improved research culture. These can also include societal engagement, knowledge transfer, dissemination of knowledge, outreach activities, and other type of engagement with the public, private, or non-profit sectors, and the broader society.
- iv. **Selected outputs and/or activities:** provide additional and detailed information on a maximum of five scientific outputs and/or activities that best describes the PI's research career and experience. For each one, the PI should indicate his/her role and how it has impacted the advancement of knowledge in the respective scientific area. Any type of contribution from the three previous sections can be also included. Whenever the outputs have a DOI, please include it.
- v. **Why would this grant be timely for me, at this point in my career path and/or in my research?:** the PI should explain the timeliness of this project in the context of the current stage of his/her career, and/or the impact on his/her future research lines and development. Career and research development potential may include scientific production, activities and dissemination, team and project leadership, establishment of national or international collaborations/networks, and the ability to enable future research and to attract funding or other resources.

## Members

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<sup>1</sup> Research performance metrics include, but are not limited to, h-index, H-index, i10-index, G-index, HG-index, Q2- index, AR-index, M-quotient, M-index, W-index, E-index, A-index.

Team members must be associated with the application by entering their email address. For each team member, the PI must provide the following information:

- Email
- Institution to which the team member is associated in the scope of the research project

A **maximum of up to 4 Core CVs** can be presented: for the **PI** and **3 other team members** (researchers considered as more relevant for the project). The PI is automatically considered a core CV. Each team member must confirm their participation in the application and associate their CIÊNCIAVITAE, in their myFCT area.

**Please make sure that each Institution selected in the application form has a team member associated.**

### *Hirings*

In this section, additional human resources (contracts and scholarships) needed to carry out the project should be indicated. New hirings are provided in the application by filling in the following fields:

- Type
- Institution to which the hiring is associated in the scope of the research project

### *Consultants*

Internationally reputed experts in project's scientific areas who provide consulting services for the project should be identified. The following fields should be completed in the application:

- Email
- Framework of consultant's participation

Consultants should confirm their participation in the application and associate their CIÊNCIAVITAE or a PDF file with their CV (maximum 4 MB) in their myFCT area.

**Whenever a team member or consultant is associated with the application, they will receive an email to confirm their association with the application.**

### *Team CV synopsis*

In this field, the PI must **justify the framework and competencies of the research team and its coherence with the proposed work plan**. The PI should focus on the team's scientific activity over the last 5 effective years, indicating the most relevant scientific achievements of the research team and demonstrating its competence in the area of the proposed project. This field will be taken into account by the panel when assessing the merit of the team and the adequacy of the profiles of its members to the work plan of the proposed project. Once again, the CIÊNCIAVITAE CV of each team member will be used by the reviewers **only to confirm** the information provided in this team CV synopsis.

### **3.1.4 Work Plan**

The following indications are **suggestions** on how to organize the description of the research plan. The structure is The PI's responsibility and should be adjusted according to the scientific discipline or interdisciplinary nature. The research plan should be designed for a 12-month period, which is the maximum duration of the project.

The work plan is divided into the following sections:

- Abstract
- State of the art and Objectives
- Research plan and methods
- Bibliographic references
- Past publications
- Tasks
- Project timeline and management
- Ethical issues
- 2030 Agenda
- Other projects
- Attachments

#### *Abstract*

In this section, the summary of the proposal should be presented, in **Portuguese** and **English**, with an analysis of the state of the art, the main goals to be addressed, the knowledge and skills available in the group, the strategy and methodologies to be used, identifying the novelty and the expected results.

The PI must indicate whether the abstract to be used by the FCT for **public disseminating** will be the same as the abstract previously filled in. If, for confidentiality reasons, the text of the abstract for publication purposes is different, the PI should click on the button **Abstract for publication different**. The content of this field will always be the PI's responsibility.

#### *State of Art and Objectives*

In this section, the PI must provide an overview of his/her research field, present the state of the art of the research area in connection with the ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the proposed research project. References to the PI's previous work should be included. The PI should focus on the following questions:

- To what extent does the proposed research **address important challenges**?
- To what extent are the **objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art** (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?



### *Research plan and methods*

In this section, the PI should describe the proposed research plan and the methodologies to be used, focusing on the following questions:

- To what extent is the outlined **scientific approach feasible** bearing in mind the originality and/or ground-breaking potential of the proposed research?
- To what extent are the **proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate** to achieve the goals of the project?
- To what extent are the proposed timelines, resources, and PI's commitment adequate and properly justified?

Funded projects will now have access to advanced computer resources and research data repositories provided by FCT without the need for further scientific evaluation. This includes computing time in FCT's two new supercomputers, Deucalion and MareNostrum 5. To this end, FCT kindly requests that applicants answer two simple yes/no additional questions:

- Identify whether the work plan requires advanced computer resources to be provided by FCT.
- Identify whether the work plan requires space in a research data repository to be provided by the FCT.

Files

**Technical annex:** In this field the PI must add the "Technical Annex" document, according to No. 2.6 of "Terms of Reference for the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program".

### *Bibliographic references*

This section is intended to include the references cited in the state of art and in the research plan and methods, with a cross-referencing methodology chosen by the PI, namely: APA, MLA or Chicago.

The following elements are considered for each reference: title; authors' names in the order in which they appear in the publication; name of the book or journal; editorial data, where applicable; volume number; page numbers; year of publication. If the publications are available electronically, you can add their URL, although this is not mandatory.

Bibliographical references are not limited to the PI and team members' publications.

### *Past publications*

This section should include five publications (articles, books or monographs published or accepted for publication) authored or co-authored by the PI and the members of the research team and which are

considered to be of relevant importance for assessing the scientific quality demonstrated for the project. You can choose between the following bibliographic citation styles: APA, MLA or Chicago.

To **change** the order of a publication in the table, click on it  and drag it to the desired position.


**It is recommended that the evaluators have easy access to these 5 publications.** The URL addresses must be provided in full, and it is the PI's responsibility to keep these links active throughout the decision process.

## Tasks

For each of the project tasks, you must indicate:

- **Task denomination:** must be concise and self-explanatory.
- **Task description and expected results:** in this section, you should explain the objectives in the context of the project, the methodologies and approaches proposed for their implementation, the results expected in the task and how these are preconditions for subsequent tasks, the link with other tasks, the role of each partner and institution in the task and the justification of the resources, human and material, needed to achieve the expected results of the task.
- **Assigned** the team member or team members associated with the task. **All team members** hired or to be hired, even without associated costs, **must be allocated to at least one task.**
- **Person\*month:** results from multiplying the person's percentage of dedication to the task by the duration of the task in months.

Examples:

- 1 person at 50% for 6 months = 3 person\*month
  - 1 person at 30% for 6 months = 1,8 person\*month
  - 1 person at 50% for 15 days = 0,25 person\*month
- **Start date** and task **duration** (in months) must be included in the project's duration. To **change** the order of a task in the table, click on it  and drag it to the desired position.

The application must have tasks planned throughout its duration, i.e. **there must be no period of the project without tasks.**

- **Deliverables and delivery dates**

In this section, you should list the deliverables, and the corresponding ending dates, for each task. There are different types of deliverables (e.g. a report on specific activities or results, data management plans, ethics or security requirements, websites). Only include deliverables that you consider essential for effective project monitoring.

Please note that FCT's contribution will be paid out in Lump Sums based on evidence and results showing that the approved project has been completed in accordance with the deliverables and budget defined up-front for each task (see also below).

Funds are paid out upon completion of activities in each task. However, it is important to note that the payments do not depend on the achievement of successful outcomes, which are never guaranteed in research. Moreover, FCT does not mandate keeping records of the actual costs incurred in these exploratory projects.

The projects funded within this call will benefit from an advance of 75% of the total amount of funding approved. The final reimbursement, which corresponds to the difference between the final eligible funding and the sum of the payments made, is processed after verification and final assessment of the project's implementation.

- **Budgets**

In this section you should justify the budget requested to complete the task.

#### **Overall cost justification of the task**

As stated earlier, projects that receive funding approval will be granted an advance payment of 75% of the total approved funding. The final reimbursement will be based on the assessment of the completed tasks and the amount approved for each task, following what is outlined in this section.

To estimate and justify the Lump Sum associated with each task, the PI must detail how this value was obtained, breaking down the cost estimations for each budget item, or resorting to other criteria/items of relevance given the proposed objectives and research plan. The estimates should be as approximate as possible of the actual costs and meet the basic eligibility criteria of no.6 from the Public Announcement for the Call.

The costs estimations will be taken into consideration by the evaluation panel when assessing the proposed activities under the implementation criterion. Experts will ensure that the estimates costs are reasonable and non-excessive. This could be reflected in a modified Lump Sum amount in the acceptance document.

#### **Amount requested for the task**

The total amount indicated must include the 25% overheads.

Please make sure the information in this section matches the costs stated in the Principal Contractor **Budget** table in application form. For more details on the **Budget** table, please check [section 3.1.6](#).

Ensure that the total amount of funding requested by institution corresponds to the total costs of the tasks in which the institution participates. For this please select “Overview” (at the top right of the screen) to access the **Application Global View**, section **Tasks**, to check the information as showed in the image below:

#### Tasks

SUMMARY OF COSTS BY INSTITUTION	
#Principal Contractor	
1. Tarefa 1	20 000,00 €
2. Tarefa 2	1 000,00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 000,00 €</b>

### *Project timeline and management*

In this section, the list of milestones, the timeline and the description of the management structure should be presented.

- **Milestones list:** a milestone is a date by which a certain objective is expected to be achieved or a phase is expected to be completed or a result obtained. The milestone description should include what can be demonstrated or reported on that date. The number of milestones is limited to 6. You should select the task(s) associated with the milestones.

The milestone dates must be marked on the **timeline**.

- **Timeline:** create a timeline description of your project in electronic format. We suggest to use as a starting point the following spreadsheet available in two formats: (MS Excel) and (ODF). Convert the final version to PDF format and upload it with the name [timeline.pdf](#).

When filling in the timeline, the PI must indicate the following fields:

- **Partner responsible for task**, the acronym of the institution responsible for the task.
- **Acronyms of partners involved in task**, the acronyms of all the institutions involved in the task, including the institution responsible for the task.
- **Management:** in this section, the PI should include a description of the project management structure to be adopted, in particular the coordination between participants, the meetings planned and the reporting structure. The proposed structure will depend on the size of the project and, in particular, the existence of participants from different research units.

### *Ethical issues*

Please indicate whether there are any ethical issues identified in the project. If so, select the ethical statements considered to be the most appropriate and the reasons for the choice. The available options are described in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guide.

## 2030 Agenda

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda, adopted by almost all countries in the world, in the context of the United Nations, define the priorities and aspirations of global sustainable development for 2030 and seek to mobilize global efforts around a set of common goals and objectives. There are 17 SDGs, in areas that affect the quality of life of all citizens of the world and those who are yet to come.

In this section the PI should identify **one, or up to a maximum of three**, of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

## Other projects

Projects approved through peer review, **led by the PI** and **started less than 5 years ago**, completed or in progress should be listed. Additionally, please detail all projects, led by the PI, submitted and under peer-review evaluation.

In the case of an **FCT-funded project**, the PI should select the project and all the fields will be filled in automatically except for the field “Please list the main objectives of the project that you consider relevant for this application”.

In the case of projects not funded by FCT, or projects submitted and currently under evaluation, the following elements must be filled in:

- Add project
  - Project reference (project reference, as set out in the contract granting the funding)
  - Project status (indicate whether the project is still just an “Application” or if it is “In progress” or “Completed”)
  - Project title
  - Principal Contactor
- Funding
  - Funding entity
  - Total Funding (requested funding, for projects under submission)
- Timetable
  - Start date (an estimative, for projects under submission)
  - Duration (months)
- Relation with the current proposal: For funded projects, please detail a list of the results achieved, systems/prototypes, patents obtained from the results of the project and academic degrees obtained by students who participated in the project, among others. For submitted projects and under evaluation, please detail the relation to the current proposal. In both cases, the PI should also indicate how the project relates to the research team and the research goals associated with the present application.

## *Attachments*

In this field the PI must add the **Statement from the PI at UT Austin (1MB)**.

If necessary, additional documents corresponding to formulas, schemes, diagrams, graphics, images and support letters may be attached.

**No other document types will be considered in this section.**

This field is limited to **20 MB** per application, and the authorized formats are **PDF, JPEG and PNG**.

### **3.1.5 Indicators**

#### *Expected Output Indicators*

The expected outputs give visibility to the research developed during the project. The outputs should be realistic and achievable and include publications, communications, reports, organization of seminars, advanced training and others. These indicators will be used to evaluate the adequacy of the final results to the results foreseen in the application.

#### *Dissemination*

In the "Dissemination" field, a description of the plan for disseminating results and promoting knowledge and scientific dissemination, as well as the plan for disseminating knowledge transfer, should be included. Dissemination outputs should be included in the expected indicators and include actions for disseminating scientific culture, promoting and disseminating knowledge, technical/scientific publications, conferences, seminars, forums, and actions aimed at target sectors, or others.

### **3.1.6 Budget**

The Budget section should be filled in by item, with the global values and justification of budgetary needs, declared for each task, taking into account the funding limit and the basic eligibility criteria of no.6 established in the Public Announcement for the Call.

The Lump Sum budget information will serve exclusively for the evaluation of the reasonableness and feasibility of the proposed project.

#### *Principal contractor*

In this section, the PI should fill in the requested funding for each budget category along with the corresponding justification.

### *Participating Institutions*

The section on the budget of the participating institutions should be completed in a similar way to the previous section.

### *Funding plan*

This section presents the project's Global Budget and Funding Plan tables that are automatically filled out.

#### **3.1.7 Statement of Commitment**

In this section the principal researcher must agree to the terms set out in the Statement of Commitment.

Before agreeing, the PI must carefully read each point, which are:

1. Be aware with all the data and information within this application and to be fully responsible for its content and veracity.
2. Be acquainted with the provisions set out in Regulation No. 999/2016 from 31 October, in its current version, which outlines the access conditions and support rules to projects funded solely by national funds through Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. and the Announcement of the Call.
3. Not find himself/herself in a situation of unjustified non-compliance with regulatory requirements with regard to the presentation of reports on scientific execution of projects concluded in which I acted as Principal Investigator.
4. Commit himself/herself with the leadership of the project and responsibilities arising from its good execution.
5. Ensure open access to scientific publications (peer-reviewed) resulting from funding investment within the scope of the Announcement of the Call, in agreement with the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. Open Access Policy.
6. In case of present or future ethical issues related to the execution of the project, the PI commits to:
  - a) work closely with the beneficiary institutions of the project, and ensure that during the execution period they will have the necessary licenses to execute the project;
  - b) obtain all necessary documentation and turn it available to FCT;
  - c) fulfill and enforce compliance by the project's research team with the national and community legislation regarding this issue.

To agree to terms established in the Statement of Commitment, the PI must check the box as shown in the image below:

I acknowledge and agree with the terms set out in this statement of commitment

### **3.1.8 Validate and Submit**

After completing the application, the PI should click on "Validate and Submit". If any errors are detected when filling out the application form, a list of the problems will be automatically provided, with a brief description of the problem that led to the error and an indication of the section of the form where the correction must be made.

**The presence of errors prevents the submission of the application.**

After the close of the competition, the PI will no longer have access to the form, and it is only possible to access the global view of the submitted application (using Adobe Acrobat Reader).

## **4. After the Submission of the Application**

### **4.1 Statement of Commitment from the Principal Contractor**

The Statement of Commitment of the Principal Contractor will be available on myFCT for the respective agreement by the **highest authority of the institution or someone delegated** by them after the deadline for submitting applications and until 5:00 PM, **Lisbon time**, February 5, 2025, as predicted in the Public Announcement for the Call.

Agreement with the Statement of Commitment from the Principal Contractor is submitted in myFCT by using the CIÊNCIA ID credentials of the person(s) to whom the respective competence is delegated.

The delegation of authorities is carried out on the [Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia](#) (PCT).

### **4.2 Delegation of Access in the PCT**

The creation of the group of users and the delegation of competencies to these users to agree with the Statement of Commitment of the Principal Contractor are carried out in the PCT through the steps identified below. For further details, please refer to the Access Delegation Manual available on the PCT under the "Help"» "Support Documents" section.

- **1st step** – Log in with the credentials of the **Institutional Collective User**<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> In case the institution does not have the credentials of the Collective User, they should be requested via email [credenciais@fct.pt](mailto:credenciais@fct.pt).



- **2nd step** – Add users to the Administrators Group using their association keys.
- **3rd step** – Create the group of users who will confirm the Statement of Commitment of the applications and delegate the respective access. This step is carried out by one of the individual users of the Administrators Group:
  - a) To create the Group, you must access the "User Group" menu and enter the name you wish to assign to the group.
  - b) Access the created group and click on "Edit" to add users to the group, using their email or Ciência ID.
  - c) In the "Access Permissions" menu, select the option "Project Call - statement commitment".
  - d) After accepting the "Terms and Conditions" (see image below), change the permissions to the option "Totals (inc. Locking)".

**TERMS & CONDIÇÕES**

1 – A Instituição proponente, à qual foram atribuídas credenciais de acesso à plataforma “Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia”, é responsável por garantir a confidencialidade de todos os dados e informações que lhe venham a ser disponibilizados, em virtude da utilização da referida plataforma, bem como não revelar a ninguém, sem prévio consentimento por escrito da FCT, quaisquer informações que não sejam do domínio público relacionadas com as suas atividades, planos, dados, operações, resultados de investigações, bem como as metodologias usadas.

2 – A Instituição proponente é igualmente responsável por gerir os acessos à plataforma feitos pelo seu pessoal, ao qual lhe impõe as exigências referidas supra, podendo vir a ser responsabilizada por eventuais danos causados na plataforma, em consequência da conduta, dolosa ou negligente, do seu pessoal.

3 – Em caso de acesso à plataforma, em nome da instituição proponente, ou do seu pessoal, por estranhos, incumbe à referida instituição o ónus de participar tal ocorrência à equipa técnica da FCT, responsável por gerir a plataforma.

Tomei conhecimento e concordo com os termos acima enunciados.

### 4.3 Acceptance of Applications in myFCT

The agreement with the Statement of Commitment of the Principal Contractor is carried out on myFCT by the users to whom the respective competencies have been delegated, using their CIÊNCIA ID credentials.

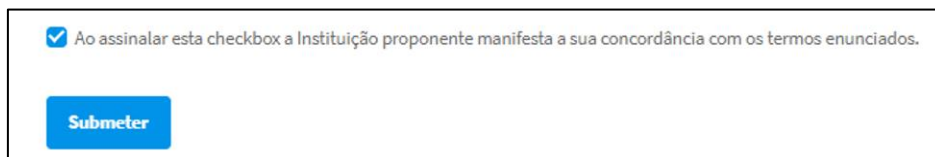
The menu "Institutions" » "Ongoing Calls" allows **access** to the **list of applications in which the institution participates** in R&D Project calls, either as a principal contractor or as a participating institution.

Only the Principal Contractor must express agreement with the terms set in the Statement of Commitment on myFCT. The Principal Contractor must ensure that the other entities that make up the consortium of the proposed project also fulfill the obligations set out in the Statement of Commitment. For each application available on the list, the Principal Contractor has access to:

- Overview of the application (simplified version with public information only) – by clicking on the application reference.

- Summary of the application / Statement of Commitment (only available when the institution participates as a principal contractor) – by clicking on "Acceptance."

It is mandatory that the Principal Contractor agrees with the terms of the Declaration of Commitment. To this end, the Principal Contractor must check the box at the end of the Statement of Commitment of each application and click on "Submit":



Ao assinalar esta checkbox a Instituição proponente manifesta a sua concordância com os termos enunciados.

Submeter

After acceptance of the Statement of Commitment by the Principal Contractor, the following confirmation appears in the global view of the application, which will be available to both the Institutions and the Principal Investigator:

#### Instituição Proponente

Aceite por **XXX** em dd.mm.AAAA – hh:mm em nome de **[Instituição]** por delegação de competências dos responsáveis da instituição.

## Appendix I – Application Form Structure and Character Limit

Applications must be written in English and are submitted online via a dedicated FCT Web Platform ([MyFCT](#)).

Multiple applications of the same project are not allowed. New applications grounded on a previous project should contain substantial modification and update.

### 1. GENERAL DATA

#### 1.1 *Project description*

- Project Title (PT/EN) (**max. 255 characters**)
- Project acronym (**max. 15 characters**)
- Keywords (PT/EN) (**max. 4 keywords**)
- Main scientific area (Scientific Domain / Scientific Area / Scientific sub-Area)
- Timetable (start date and duration)

### 2. INSTITUTIONS

#### 2.1 *Principal contractor*

- Institution
- Research unit – maximum 3
- Institution description and its competencies for the development of the project (**max. 1500 characters**)

#### 2.2 *Participating Institutions*

- Institution
- Research unit – maximum 3
- Institution description and its competencies for the development of the project (**max. 1500 characters**)

#### 2.3 *Collaborative Institutions*

- Country
- Institution
- Institution description and its competencies for the development of the project (**max. 1500 characters**)

### 3. RESEARCH TEAM

#### 3.1 *Principal Investigator*

- Ciência ID
- Name
- Institution to which the PI is associated in the scope of the research project
- CIENCIAVITAE permissions and upload

#### 3.2 *PI narrative CV*

- Career profile (**max. 2000 characters**)
- Contributions to Science and Society:
  - Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge (**max. 2000 characters**)

- Contributions to the development of individuals and/or research teams (**max. 3000 characters**)
- Contributions to the research community and the broader society (**max. 3000 characters**)
- Selected outputs and/or activities (**max. 2500 characters**)
- Why would this grant be timely for me at this point in my career path and/or in my research? (**max. 3000 characters**)

### 3.3 *Members*

- Email
- Institution to which you are associated in the scope of the research project

### 3.4 *Hirings*

- Type
- Institution to which you are associated in the scope of the research project

### 3.5 *Consultants*

- Email
- Framework of consultant's participation (**max. 1000 characters**)

### 3.6 *Team CV synopsis*

- Research team CV synopsis (**max. 6000 characters**)

## 4. WORK PLAN

### 4.1 *Abstract*

- Abstract in Portuguese (**max. 5000 characters**)
- Abstract in English (**max. 5000 characters**)
- Abstract for publication different? (**max. 5000 characters**)

### 4.2 *State of the art and Objectives*

- State of the art and objectives (**max. 6000 characters**)

### 4.3 *Research plan and methods*

- Research plan and methods (**max. 10000 characters**)
- Identify whether the work plan requires advanced computer resources to be provided by FCT
- Identify whether the work plan requires space in a research data repository to be provided by the FCT
- Files – Technical annex (1MB)

### 4.4 *Bibliographic references*

- Bibliographic references (**max. 10000 characters**)

### 4.5 *Past publications*

- Order
- Publication (**max. 600 characters**)
- URL

### 4.6 *Tasks*

- Task denomination (**max. 150 characters**)

- Task description and expected results (**max. 4000 characters**)
- Assigned to
- Person\*month
- Start date
- Duration (months)
- Deliverables and delivery dates (**max. 2500 characters**)
- Budgets:
  - Overall cost justification of the task (**max. 2500 characters**)
  - Amount requested for the task

#### 4.7 *Project timeline and management*

- Milestones List (add Milestone)
  - Denomination
  - Milestone description (**max. 300 characters**)
  - Tasks
  - Date
- Timeline
- Management
  - Description of the management structure (**max. 3000 characters**)

#### 4.8 *Ethical issues*

- Are there Ethics Issues identified in this project?
- Select the ethical declarations you consider appropriate (if applicable)
- Justification (if applicable) (**max. 3000 characters**)

#### 4.9 *2030 Agenda*

- Framework of the application for the United Nations SDG 2030 Agenda (**up to 3 SDG**)

#### 4.10 *Other projects*

- Add project
  - Project reference
  - Project status
  - Project title (in English)
  - Principal contractor
  - Funding
    - Funding entity
    - Total funding
  - Timetable
    - Start date
    - Duration (months)
  - Relation with the current proposal
    - Please list the main objectives of the project that you consider relevant for this application (**max. 2000 characters**)

#### 4.11 *Attachments*

- Documents upload (if applicable)
- Statement from the PI at UT Austin (1MB)

## 5. INDICATORS

- Expected output indicators
- Dissemination
  - Indicate the dissemination actions of the scientific activity planned in the project (**max. 3000 characters**)

## 6. BUDGET

### *6.1 Principal contractor*

- Item
- Rationale for requested funding (**max. 3000 characters**)

### *6.2 Participating institutions*

- Item
- Rationale for requested funding (**max. 3000 characters**)

### *6.3 Funding plan*

- Global budget (automatic filling)
- Funding Plan (automatic filling)

## 7. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

## 8. VALIDATE AND SUBMIT

## Appendix II – Data Protection

In the context of the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program, personal data is collected and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), approved by Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the Council of April 27, 2016, regarding the protection of individuals concerning the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data, effective as of May 25, 2018, repealing Directive 95/46/EC of October 24, 1995. Additionally, processing follows the provisions of Law No. 58/2019 of August 8, which ensures GDPR enforcement in the national legal framework.

The Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) acts as the funding body for projects, being responsible for launching, evaluating, and managing the funding process. In collaboration with the CMU Portugal, MIT Portugal, and UT Austin Portugal Programs, with which it has agreements, FCT promotes and defines the program calls' strategic lines, thus assuming responsibility for the collection and processing of personal data within this project, in compliance with the GDPR.

As the data controller, FCT has designated a Data Protection Officer, who can be contacted directly at the email address [dpo@fct.pt](mailto:dpo@fct.pt) for all matters related to personal data.

Personal data is collected exclusively for the purpose of managing funding and co-funding programs. Processing for this purpose is deemed lawful as it is necessary for fulfilling legal obligations and for the exercise of public interest functions by FCT, as per Article 6(1)(c) and (e) of the GDPR, and in accordance with applicable legislation governing public project funding.

The collection of personal data within the scope of the 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the UT Austin Portugal Program is carried out: a) Directly from the data subjects, through application forms and online platforms, such as the myFCT platform, where the application, evaluation, and approval process is submitted and managed within an integrated system. Other platforms, such as CIÊNCIA ID and CIÊNCIAVITAE, centralize relevant information on curricula and institution data, allowing for more efficient management of the process. b) Indirectly, through data provided by beneficiary entities concerning applicants and their teams.

The personal data processed in this context includes: a) Data subject categories: Representatives of higher education institutions, laboratories, non-profit research institutions, companies participating in projects, principal investigators and their teams, as well as national and international evaluators. b) Categories of personal data: General data such as civil identification, contact details, academic and professional history, access credentials, and financial information, and, when necessary, sensitive data such as health information related to the project's implementation phase.

In this context, the sharing of personal data only occurs when strictly necessary for the execution and management of funding and co-funding programs. Data may be shared with partner entities and institutional collaborators involved in the process, including the UT Austin Portugal Program, always in strict compliance with applicable legal provisions. To ensure the security and confidentiality of shared personal data, FCT implements rigorous security measures, including secure transmission protocols,

restricted access control, and data protection policies aligned with the GDPR. These practices ensure that data is treated confidentially and that its integrity is maintained throughout the entire process of handling and sharing.

Personal data may also be subject to international transfer, not only within European Union countries but also to countries outside the EU, particularly regarding the external evaluation phase. In these cases, FCT transfers data with appropriate guarantees and ensures data security by using the most suitable international data transfer tools.

FCT will retain personal data for the period necessary to fulfill the purposes of managing the funding programs, in compliance with applicable legal and regulatory obligations. Additionally, FCT may process personal data for purposes of archiving in the public interest, scientific or historical research, or statistical purposes, always in line with the data minimization principle.

Data subjects have the right to request from FCT access to their personal data, as well as its rectification or erasure, the restriction of processing, and data portability, where technically feasible. At any time, they may also withdraw consent, where applicable, or file a complaint directly with the National Data Protection Commission ([www.cnpd.pt](http://www.cnpd.pt)), using the contact details provided by this entity.

For more information on how FCT processes personal data, please consult the Privacy and Data Protection Policy in effect, available at <https://www.fct.pt/politica-de-privacidade/>.





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para a Ciência  
e a Tecnologia