Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

ACSS ADMINISTRAÇÃO CENTRAL DO SISTEMA DE SAÚDE, IP

APPLICATION GUIDE

SAÚDE + CIÊNCIA
Call for Exploratory Research Projects 2025

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V2	Updated	3.1.4. Work Plan	15
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This Application Guide is intended to support the PI throughout the application process and successful submission for the 2025 Call for Exploratory Research Projects. This Guide draws on information available on the call's page, namely to the respective legal documents setting the rules and conditions: the Announcement for Proposals Submissions and the FCT Projects Regulations in its current version.

On the 2025 call for Exploratory Research Projects under the "Saúde + Ciência " Program webpage, the PI also finds the Guide for Peer Reviewers, the Ethics Self-Assessment Guide, the *CIÊNCIAVITAE guide* and a section of FAQs.

The period of applications submission is from **May 20, 2025 to 5p.m (Lisbon time) of July 22, 2025**

1. 2024 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the Saúde + Ciência

The consolidation and reinforcement of the National System of Science and Technology (NSST) constitute priorities of national policy for science and technology that aims to increase the national and international competitiveness of science and technology, and its contribution to innovation and transfer of knowledge. In this context, the promotion and strengthening of the scientific and technological institutions is particularly relevant through the participation of research teams in Projects.

This Call is designed to assist teams of researchers from the NSST entities and health partners from non-academic entities supervised by the government member responsible for health, bootstrapping high-impact potential research activities of strategic relevance for the national health system.

Considering these goals, FCT and the ACSS (*Admnistração Central do Sistema de Saúde*) launch the Exploratory Research Projects (ERPs) Call for funding projects that aim to stimulate and promote Portugal's international competitiveness and innovation capacity in **3 thematic health areas**, namely:

- Healthcare Access
- Active Aging
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

The call seeks to promote innovative ideas and address relevant scientific questions through exploratory research projects. These projects aim to enhance technological and organizational innovation, improve the efficiency of healthcare systems, and place the patient at the centre of care, fostering a more sustainable and humanized health care model.

The call is open from **May 22, 2025 to 5p.m (Lisbon time) of July 22, 2025**

2. Prior to Submission

2.1. Who may Apply

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

- Physical allocation to the project.
- Hold a doctoral degree at 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 Projects Regulation, in which all the institutions must be localized in Portugal.

For eligibility purposes, the following rules are also applied:

- A researcher may submit only one application as PI in this call.
- The PI can only participate as a team member in one more application in this call.

- Each researcher (who is not PI of an application) can only participate as team member in a maximum of 2 applications in the present call.
- The PI of the application cannot be:
  - PI of projects with rejected final scientific reports due to reasons attributable to the applicant, within the two years prior to the opening date of this call.
  - 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 acted as PI.
- 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 proposals that fully or partially share the work plan.

2.2. Beneficiaries

a) Non-business Portuguese entities from the Research and Innovation system (R&I Partners)

i. Higher education institutions, their institutes, and R&D units;
ii. State laboratories, Associated Laboratories, or international laboratories headquartered in Portugal;
iii. Private non-profit institutions whose primary objective is R&D activities, including Collaborative Laboratories (CoLab) and Centers for Technology and Innovation (CTI);
iv. Other public and private non-profit institutions that engage or participate in scientific research activities.

b) Non-academic entities under the authority of the Government member responsible for health (Health Partners)

All entities under the authority of the Government member responsible for health that are not part of the academic environment, as described in a). This includes entities that are part of Clinical Academic Centers (CAC), local health units, whether in primary care, hospital care, and/or public health, as well as Portuguese Oncology Institutes (IPO).

Each project consortium must include, as a requirement, a minimum of two beneficiaries: one R&I Partner and one Health Partner.

2.3. Registration

The application must be submitted using the myFCT platform, and candidates should use the CIÊNCIA ID login credentials to enter on it. If the candidate is not registered on the CIÊNCIA ID platform, the first step will be to generate a CIÊNCIA ID identifier at: www.ciencia-id.pt.

Then, the candidate's CIÊNCIAVITAE CV, which will also be included in the application, must be completed. Please note that the CIÊNCIAVITAE CV must be **written entirely in English**, otherwise the International Evaluation Panel will not be able to consult it.

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

Before starting your application, ensure you are well-informed about the rules governing this call by thoroughly reviewing the supporting documents.

The eligibility criteria, along with the rules and requirements for the various phases of the application process, are outlined in the following documents:

- **FCT Projects Regulation** in its current version, which establishes the general terms under which funding may be granted.
- **Announcement for Proposals Submission** for the 2025 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the Saúde + Ciência Program, which specifies the conditions of this call.
- **Guide for Peer Reviewers** for the 2025 Call for Exploratory Research Projects under the Program, which establishes the terms for evaluation under which funding may be granted.
- **Methodology for Applying Simplified Costs – Lump Sums**, for budget definition purposes.

FCT also provides the following guides, which must be carefully reviewed:

- The **Ethics Self-Assessment Guide**.
- The **CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide**.
- The **Personal Data Protection** document (also available in Annex I).

2.5. General Recommendations to the candidates

- Prepare the application carefully and in a timely manner.
- Read the instructions provided in this Guide and the Application form thoroughly.
- Familiarize yourself with the structure of the Application form before you begin filling it out. Review all sections in advance to understand what is required and to allow sufficient time to gather all the necessary information for submission.
- Ensure that all the institutions to be included in the application are available on the Application form. If an institution is not listed, it must be added via the Registration of Institutions form on the Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia (available only in Portuguese). Please note, **it may take up to two working days for a new institution to appear on the list** after the form is submitted.
- Contact the researchers to be included in the application team well in advance and ask them to register on the CIÊNCIA ID platform. Request that they provide you with the email address they used for CIÊNCIA ID registration.
- Ensure that an **up-to-date version of CIÊNCIAVITAE is available** for you and **all members** of the research team.
- Verify that **each institution** selected in the application form has an **associated team**

member.

- Prepare the ***Lump Sum* funding** section of the application **carefully and accurately**.
- Certify that the URL addresses of bibliographic references or other relevant materials remain active throughout the decision-making process.
- Do not assume that the application form and submission rules are the same as those used in other FCT calls or by other funding agencies.
- Avoid waiting until the **last minute to validate and correct the application**. There is a **myFCT validation process designed to detect possible errors** in your application, which may require corrections and additional time. **Be sure to repeat this validation process regularly**.
- Plan and complete the application as early as possible. This will ensure that FCT can provide the best possible assistance.
- Visit the FCT website regularly for updates and information regarding the Call.

2.6. Additional recommendations for writing a successful application

- Write the application in a way that convinces the panel of experts that the proposed ideas are worthy of funding.
- It is important to clearly describe the institutions involved in the project, highlighting their relevant expertise and contributions to the project's development.
- Remember that the application reflects a commitment not only from the Principal Investigator, but also from the entire research team.
- Be realistic in your expectations, and ensure that, if the proposal is approved, the research team can execute the project as outlined in the application.
- Carefully read the Guide for Peer Reviewers to understand how the application will be evaluated, ensuring that your application addresses those key evaluation points.
- Avoid repeating the same text or full paragraphs in different sections of the application.

2.7. How to direct questions to FCT

Any clarifications from FCT can be requested via email exclusively through concursoprojetos@fct.pt, including questions about the application form and technical issues on the myFCT website. Please note that FCT cannot guarantee a response to emails received during the final two working days of the Call's submission period.

3. Submission of the Application

The Application form is organized in the following eight sections:

- General Data
- Institutions
- Research Team
- Work Plan
- Indicators

- Budget
- Statement of Commitment
- Validate and Submit

The detailed structure of the Application form, including all fields and their respective character limits, can be found in Appendix II. The following subsections of this guide offer a detailed description of each of the eight sections of the Application form, along with key information on how to complete each field. Please note that many fields have character limits.

We recommend that the Principal Investigator regularly click on "Validate and Submit" while completing the application. This will help identifying any errors, marked with the symbol ⚠, so they can be corrected in a timely manner.

3.1. Guidelines for filling in the application form

The following chapters of this Guide provide a detailed description of the information required in each section of the Application form. Many fields have character limits, and only plain text or attachments are allowed. Any other means 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.SAU+). This will be FCT's unique identification code for the application throughout the call.

You can access the various sections of the Application form via the menu bar on the left-hand side.

3.1.1. General Data

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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

- **Project title:** the title of the research project should be concise and clear, understandable to a reader with a general scientific background, and appropriate for public dissemination.
- **Project acronym:** assign an acronym for the identification of the project.
- **Keywords**: list up to **4 keywords**.
  These keywords are likely to be used in the peer-review process and should accurately reflect the scientific content of the application, especially for interdisciplinary applications. Avoid repeating words from the title.
- **Thematic area:** the thematic area must be chosen from the **three available options** in this field: Access to Healthcare; Active Aging; and Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.
- **Justification of the thematic area:** In this field, you should justify the selection of the chosen thematic area for the application.

- **Main scientific area (Scientific Domain / Scientific Area / Scientific Sub-Area):** the scientific area and subarea should be selected sequentially selected, starting with the main scientific area.
- **Timetable (Start Date and Duration)**: Indicate the expected start date of the project in day-month-year format. The project may have a maximum duration of **18 months**, extendable for a maximum period of 6 months, in duly justified cases.
  This indicative start date can be adjusted for projects recommended for funding during the acceptance term signing phase, but it cannot be later than 90 consecutive days from the date of the decision notification.

3.1.2. Institutions

This section identifies the institutions involved in the project from both administrative and financial management perspectives, as well as in terms of scientific execution. It is divided into the following sections:

- Principal Contractor
- Collaborative Institutions

Ensure that each institution selected in the application form has an associated team member.

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR

The **Principal Contractor** is the **lead beneficiary entity** responsible for the project and serves as the primary liaison with the FCT on behalf of all partners. For approved projects, the Principal Contractor will receive all payments and subsequently distribute the corresponding amounts to partner institutions.

The Principal Contractor must be based in national territory and have a Tax Identification Number (NIPC). The designation used in the application must match the designation associated with that NIPC.

The Principal Contractor must be one of the beneficiary institutions listed in Section 2.2 a).

The **Research Unit** field, associated with the Principal Contractor, is mandatory and enables the PI to identify which research units are involved in the project's execution. A maximum of three research units can be added to the Principal Contractor.

This section may also include a description of the Principal Contractor and its competencies relevant to project development. The Evaluation Panel will consider this information when assessing the

adequacy of the host institution's conditions, including technical/scientific capabilities and organizational management).

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. If the Principal Contractor is not associated with any Research Unit, re-enter the principal contractor in this field.

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONS

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

If a **beneficiary institution** or **research unit** is **not listed**, it must be added using the Institutions Pre-Registration form on the Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia. It may take up to two business days to update the list.

- **Each project consortium must include, as a requirement, a minimum of two beneficiaries: one R&I Partner and one Health Partner.**
- In the present call, **companies are not beneficiaries** but may participate in the projects as collaborating institutions.

3.1.3. Research Team

The research team comprises the Principal Investigator (PI) and other team members who are directly involved in the tasks and activities of the proposed project.

The PI is responsible for overseeing the acceptance process for team members and consultants by monitoring their status and providing their CVs as needed. The following statuses should be checked:

- ✔ Invitation accepted
- ? Awaiting confirmation
- ✖ Invitation declined

Any team member or consultant, who does not agree to participate in the project, should be removed from the form by the PI to enable the application's submission.

Each researcher can import only one CIÊNCIAVITAE profile into myFCT per call. Therefore, if a researcher is participating in multiple applications within the same call, once one application is submitted, the "Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV" button will not be able to select.

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 information (name, role, and Ciência ID) is auto filled. The following details must be completed manually:

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

The PI's CV on the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform must be created or updated before it is linked to the application for the Call and should be **entirely in English**.

Permission for FCT to access the PI's CIÊNCIAVITAE profile must be granted before associating it with the application. By providing this permission, **FCT will access the Public and Semi-public sections of the PI's CV**. Private sections will not be available for evaluation. For further details, please refer to the **CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide**.

The **'Give FCT Permission**' button appears in the CIÊNCIAVITAE menu. When clicked, this button opens the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform. Upon returning to the Application form, the button will appear inactive.

Ensure you provide FCT the access to each section's contents by setting the privacy level to Public or Semi-public.

By selecting **'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV,'** the CV will be immediately linked to the Application form in PDF format. Once the import process is complete, a link to the associated CV PDF file, along with the date and time of import, will appear on the Application form.

The PI should review their **CIÊNCIAVITAE CV PDF file** to ensure that all information is accurate.

Any updates to the PI's CV require re-selecting 'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV'. **Updates must be made on the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform itself**; to link the updated CV to the application, it is necessary to: (i) **remove the previously uploaded** document and (ii) select **'Get CIÊNCIAVITAE CV'** again.

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

The CIÊNCIAVITAE CV will be used by reviewers **only to verify the information** provided in the PI's Narrative CV, described in the following section.

PI NARRATIVE CV

The **PI Narrative CV** is designed to support a comprehensive evaluation of a diverse range of research achievements, emphasizing the quality and impact of individual research outputs and contributions, rather than relying on metrics as a proxy for quality. The narrative CV includes the following sections:

- **Career Profile**: a summary of the PI's educational background (including PhD completion year), key qualifications, and employment history. If applicable, include details on any career interruptions, such as parental leave, long-term illness, industry work, volunteer work, or other non-research activities. Describe how these interruptions, unconventional career paths, or gaps have influenced your research activity.
- **Contributions to Science and Society**: the PI can provide relevant examples of contributions in relation to the career stage and specific scientific area. This section is structured to accommodate various researcher profiles and career stages across different scientific fields. The PI may refer to the guidelines below and select contribution types that most effectively and comprehensively represent the researcher profile and achievements.

    i. **Contributions to the Generation of New Ideas, Tools, Methodologies, or Knowledge**: This section should describe how the PI has contributed to generating new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge, highlighting the relevance and impact of these contributions. Examples can include publications, key data sets, software, intellectual property (e.g., patents, licenses, trademarks, copyrights), conference presentations and proceedings, and research or policy publications, as well as other scientific, technological, cultural, or artistic achievements. Any awards received in recognition of contributions to knowledge generation may also be included. To better inform the Evaluation Panel about the significance of these contributions, the PI should not only specify what these contributions are but also explain how and why they are important, the role they played, and who benefited

from these outputs or achievements. Avoid citing publication metrics, such as impact factors, or research performance metrics[1].

ii. **Contributions to the Development of Individuals and/or Research Teams:** Highlight the expertise the PI has provided that has been instrumental in developing individuals and/or teams. This can include participation in projects, leadership or management roles, collaborative contributions, and team support. Relevant activities may involve teaching (for undergraduates, graduates, and postgraduates), workshops, or summer schools, as well as supervision, mentoring, and contributions to the success of teams or advancement of colleagues. The PI role in past and ongoing funded projects, in science and technology management and in innovation programs should also be detailed. Additionally, this section can showcase the PI's involvement in collaborations and networks at both organizational and international levels.

iii. **Contributions to the Research Community and Broader Society:** activities that demonstrate PI's commitment to advancing the research community and engaging with broader society should be mentioned. This includes contributions to outreach and engagement efforts within the research community, such as editing, reviewing, refereeing, evaluating funding applications, and organizing events that have positively impacted the research community or improved research culture. Societal engagement, knowledge transfer, dissemination of knowledge, outreach activities, and other forms of engagement with the public, private, or non-profit sectors should also be highlighted.

iv. **Selected outputs and/or activities:** Provide additional, detailed information on a **maximum of five scientific outputs and/or activities that best represent** the PI's research career and experience. For each one, it must be specified PI's role and its impact on advancing knowledge in the relevant scientific area. Contributions from the previous sections can also be included. If available, please include the DOI for each output.

The **PI must avoid repetitive information** in the different fields of the **PI narrative CV section** and focus on the relevant information for the development of the presented application, considering mainly the last **5 effective years of scientific activity**.

[1] 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.

MEMBERS

Team members must be linked to the application by providing their email addresses. For each team member, the PI must include the following information:

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

Up to three additional core CVs may be included in the application. The PI is automatically designated as core CV.

Each team member is required to confirm their participation in the application and associate their CIÊNCIAVITAE within their myFCT area.

HIRINGS

In this section, please indicate any additional human resources (contracts and scholarships) required to carry out the project. New hirings should be detailed in the application by completing the following fields:

- Type;
- Institution: The institution associated with the hiring in the context of the research project.

CONSULTANTS

Internationally renowned experts in the project's scientific areas who will provide consulting services should be identified. Please complete the following fields in the application:

- Email
- Framework of consultant´s participation

Consultants should confirm their participation in the application and associate their CIÊNCIAVITAE or a **2-page CV** (PDF file maximum 1 MB).

Whenever a team member or consultant is associated with the application, an email will be sent to confirm the person's association with the application.

TEAM CV SYNOPSIS

In this field, the PI must **justify the framework and competencies of the research team and its alignment with the proposed work plan.** The PI should highlight the team's scientific activities **over the past five active years**, noting key scientific achievements that demonstrate the team's expertise in the project's focus area. This information will be considered by the panel when evaluating the team's merit and the suitability of each member's profile to the project's work plan. The **CIÊNCIAVITAE CV** of each team member will be used by reviewers **only to verify** the details provided in this team CV synopsis.

3.1.4. Work Plan

The following suggestions provide guidance on structuring the description of the research plan. The PI is responsible for organizing the structure, which should be tailored to suit the project's scientific subject or interdisciplinary nature. The research plan should be designed to cover a 18-month period, 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, a summary of the proposal should be provided in both **Portuguese** and **English**, covering an analysis of the state of the art, key objectives, the knowledge and skills available within the team, the strategy and methodologies to be used, and an outline of the project's novelty and expected results.

ABSTRACT FOR PUBLICATION

The PI must specify whether the abstract used by FCT for **public dissemination** will be the same as the one provided earlier. If, for **confidentiality reasons**, the abstract for publication differs, the PI should select the option "**Abstract for publication different**." The content of this field remains the responsibility of the PI.

STATE OF ART AND OBJECTIVES

In this section, an overview of PI's research field must be presented, outlining the current state of the art within the area and detailing how the proposed research is both groundbreaking and potentially impactful. Relevant references to the PI's previous work should also be included. The PI should address the following key questions:

- To what extent does the proposed research **address significant and relevant challenges**?

- How **ambitious are the objectives, and to what degree do they go beyond the current state** of the art (e.g., introducing novel concepts, approaches, or fostering advancements 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 proposal?
- How suitable are the **proposed research methodology and working arrangements** for achieving the project's goals?
- How well are the timelines, resources, and PI's commitment aligned with and justified for the successful execution of the project?

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

References cited in the state of art and in the research plan and methods should be listed in this section, with a cross-referencing style chosen by the PI, namely: APA, MLA or Chicago.

Each reference should include the following information: 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

Include five key publications (articles, books or monographs published or accepted for publication) authored or co-authored by the PI and the team members that significant for demonstrating the project's scientific quality. Select a preferred bibliographic citation style as APA, MLA, or Chicago.

To reorder a publication in the list, simply click ⋮ and drag it to the desired position.

Ensure that evaluators can easily access these five publications by providing complete URLs. The PI is responsible for keeping these links active throughout the decision-making process.

TASKS

For each project task, please provide the following details:

- **Task Denomination:** A concise and self-explanatory title for the task.
- **Task Description and Expected Results:** Clearly outline the objectives within the context of the project. Describe the proposed methodologies and approaches for implementation, the expected outcomes of the task, and how these outcomes serve as prerequisites for subsequent tasks. Detail the connections with other tasks, the roles of each partner and institution involved, and justify the human and material resources required to achieve the expected results.
- **Assigned Team Member(s):** Identify the team member or members associated with each task. **All hired or to-be-hired team members**, even those without associated costs, **must be allocated to at least one task**.
- **Person*Month:** Calculate this by multiplying the percentage of each person's 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 indicated. To **change** the order of a task in the table, click on ⋮ and drag it to the desired position.

The application must include tasks planned for the entire duration of the project, **ensuring that there are no gaps without designated activities**.

- **Deliverables and delivery dates**

In this section, you should list the deliverables for each task along with their corresponding deadlines. Deliverables can take various forms, such as reports on specific activities or results, data management plans, compliance with ethics or security requirements, and websites. Only include deliverables that are essential for effective project monitoring.

Please note that FCT's contributions will be disbursed in *Lump Sums* based on evidence and results demonstrating that the approved project has been executed in accordance with the specified deliverables and budget for each task (refer to details below).

Payments will be made upon the completion of activities in each task. However, it is important to understand that these payments do not depend on the success of the outcomes, which are never guaranteed in research. Additionally, FCT does not require the retention of records detailing the actual costs incurred in these exploratory projects.

Projects funded through this call will receive an advance payment of 75% of the total approved funding. The final reimbursement, which represents the difference between the total eligible

funding and the cumulative payments made, will be processed after a thorough verification and assessment of the project's implementation.

BUDGETS

In this section, you should provide a detailed justification for the budget requested to complete the task.

- **Overall cost justification of the task**

As previously mentioned, projects that receive funding approval will be granted an advance payment of 75% of the total approved funding. The final reimbursement will depend on the assessment of the completed tasks and the budget allocated for each task, in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this section.

To accurately estimate and justify the *Lump Sum* associated with each task, the PI must detail how this amount was determined. This includes breaking down the cost estimates for each budget item or referencing other relevant criteria based on the proposed objectives and research plan. The estimates should be as approximate as possible to the actual costs and must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in no. 4 of the Public Announcement for the call.

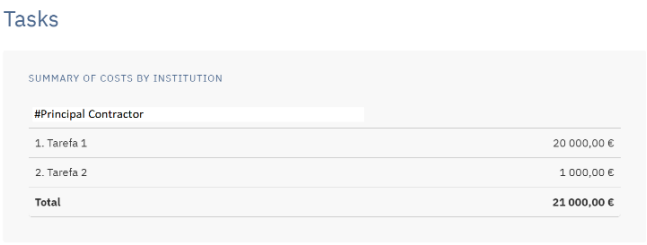
The evaluation panel will consider these cost estimates when assessing the proposed activities under the implementation criterion. Experts will evaluate whether the estimated costs are reasonable and not excessive. Any adjustments to the *Lump Sum* amount may be reflected in the acceptance document.

- **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 funding requested by the institution aligns with the total costs of the tasks it participates in. To verify this, click on "Overview" in the top right corner of the screen to access the **Application Global View,** section **Tasks section**, to review the information, as illustrated in the image below:



PROJECT TIMELINE AND MANAGEMENT

In this section, present the list of milestones, the timeline and the description of the management structure of the proposal.

- **Milestones List:** A milestone represents a specific date by which an objective is expected to be achieved, a phase completed, or a result obtained. Each milestone description should detail what can be demonstrated or reported on that date. The number of milestones is limited to 6, and you should select the associated task(s) for each milestone.

- **Timeline:** Create a timeline description of your project. We recommend using the spreadsheet available in both MS Excel and ODF formats. Once completed, convert the final version to PDF format and upload it as **Timeline.pdf**.

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

  - **Participant(s) involved in the task**, PI and/or team members;
  - **Institution responsible for the task**, the acronym of the institution responsible for the task;
  - **Additional Institution(s) involved in the task (if applicable)** mentioning the acronyms of the other institutions involved in the task.

  The PI should add a mark in the timeline for each milestone (M) and deliverable (D), when applicable, as shown in the Timeline template.

  Please ensure that a legend is added to the timeline indicating the meaning of the acronyms used.

- **Management:** In this section, the PI should outlinethe project management structure that will be implemented. This should include details on the coordination among participants, the planned meetings, and the reporting structure. The proposed management structure should be tailored to the project's size and consider the involvement 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 your 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 nearly all countries under the United Nations framework, outline global priorities and aspirations for sustainable development by 2030. These goals aim to mobilize worldwide efforts toward a set of common objectives that enhance the quality of life for all current and future citizens.

In this section, the PI should identify **one to three** of the 17 SDGs from the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

OTHER PROJECTS

Please list all projects approved through peer review that are **led by the PI** and **have started within the last five years**, whether they are completed or in progress. Additionally, provide details of all projects led by the PI that have been submitted and are currently undergoing peer review.

For **FCT-funded projects**, once the PI selects the project, all fields will be automatically populated, except for the field titled “Please list the main objectives of the project that you consider relevant for this application.”

For **projects not funded by FCT, or those submitted and currently under evaluation**, the following elements must be completed:

- Add Project
  - *Project reference*: reference as specified in the funding contract;
  - *PI in the present application*
  - *Project status:* indicate whether the project is still just an “Applications” 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 submitted projects)
  - Duration (months)

- Relation to the current proposal:
  For funded projects, please provide a detailed list of results achieved, including any systems or prototypes developed, patents obtained, and academic degrees earned by students who participated in the project, among other relevant outcomes.
  For submitted projects under evaluation, outline how these projects relate to the current proposal.

In both cases, the PI should indicate how the project connects to the research team and the research goals associated with the present application.

ATTACHMENTS

When submitting the application, it must be included the following mandatory attachment:

- **Consortium List**: A document listing all **participating (beneficiaries)** and **collaborating (non-beneficiaries) institutions**, clearly **identifying** the **Health Partner(s)** and the **R&I Partner(s)**.

If necessary, you may attach additional documents such as formulas, schemes, diagrams, graphics, images, and support letters.

No other document types will be accepted in this section.

Please note that this field is limited to **20 MB** per application, and the authorized formats are **PDF, JPEG** and **PNG**.

COMPUTING AND DATA

Funded projects can have access to advanced computer resources and research data repositories provided by FCT without further scientific evaluation. This includes computing time in FCT's two supercomputers, Deucalion and MareNostrum 5. To this end, FCT requests applicants to answer some additional questions:

- **Advanced computing**

In this section, the PI should answer the following question(s):

The work plan requires advanced computer resources to be provided by FCT? **If yes, two additional questions must be answered:**

- Do you have previous experience with High Performance Computing? **If yes,** the PI should **describe the previous experience with Performance Computing**, indicating the computational platforms used.
- Which of the following amounts of resources (per year) is suitable for your project? The PI should **choose one of the three available options** and justify the request in the respective box.

- **Research data**

In this section, the PI should answer the following question(s):

You will be generating or collecting research data in the context of your project? **If yes, an additional question must be answered:**

- The work plan requires access to a research data repository provided by FCT? **If yes and if the project will be selected for funding**, the beneficiary will have to **submit a Research Data Management Plan to FCT within six months of the funding's start date**, according to the model provided by FCT. Access to the service will be assessed based on the shared information.

3.1.5. Indicators

EXPECTED OUTPUT INDICATORS

The expected outputs provide visibility into the research conducted during the project. These outputs should be realistic and achievable and may include publications, communications, reports, organization of seminars, advanced training, and other relevant activities. These indicators will be used to evaluate how well the final results align with those anticipated in the application.

DISSEMINATION

In the "Dissemination" field, provide a description of the plan for disseminating results and promoting both knowledge and scientific dissemination, as well as the approach for knowledge transfer. Dissemination outputs should be included in the expected indicators and may encompass actions aimed at fostering scientific culture, promoting and sharing knowledge, technical and scientific publications, conferences, seminars, forums, and initiatives targeting specific sectors or audiences.

3.1.6. Budget

The Budget section should be completed item by item, detailing the total amounts and providing justification for budgetary needs for each task. This should consider the funding limits and the basic eligibility criteria outlined in point no. 4 of the Public Announcement for the call.

The *Lump Sum* budget information will be used solely for evaluating the reasonableness and feasibility of the proposed project.

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR

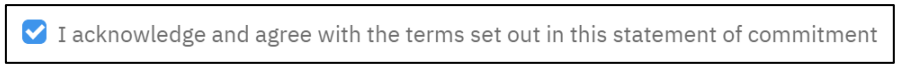
In this section, the PI should specify the requested funding for each budget category, along with the corresponding justification.

FUNDING PLAN

This section presents the project's Global Budget and Funding Plan tables, which will be automatically filled out.

3.1.7. Statement of Commitment

The Declaration of Commitment by the PI must include the mandatory agreement of the principal researcher, which can be indicated by marking the following check box:



3.1.8. Validate and Submit

After completing the application, the PI should click on "Validate and Submit". If any errors are detected in the application form, a list of the issues will be automatically generated, including a brief description of the problem and the section of the form that requires correction.

The presence of errors will prevent the submission of the application.

Once the call closes, the PI will no longer have access to the form; however, the global view of the submitted application will still be able to access 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 approval by the **highest authority of the institution or the designated representative** after the deadline for submitting applications and until **5:00 PM, Lisbon time, of August,5, 2025**, as stipulated in the Announcement for Proposal Submissions.

The agreement with the Statement of Commitment must be submitted in myFCT by using the CIÊNCIA ID credentials of the person(s) to whom the authority has been delegated. The delegation of authority can be managed through the Portal de Ciência e Tecnologia (PCT).

4.2. Delegation of Access in the PCT

The creation of the user group and the delegation of authority to these users for agreeing with the Statement of Commitment of the Principal Contractor are managed in the PCT through the following steps. For more details, please refer to the Access Delegation Manual available on the PCT under the “Help, Support Documents” section.

- **1st step** – Log in using the credentials of the **Institutional Collective User[2].**
- **2nd step** – Add users to the Administrators Group using their association keys.
- **3rd step** – Create the user group responsible for confirming the Statement of Commitment for the applications and delegate the respective access. This step must be performed by one of the individual users of the Administrators Group:

  a) To create the Group, access the "User Group" menu and enter the desired name for the group.
  b) Once the group is created, access it and click on "Edit" to add users, 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 "Totals (including Locking)."

4.3. Acceptance of Applications in myFCT

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

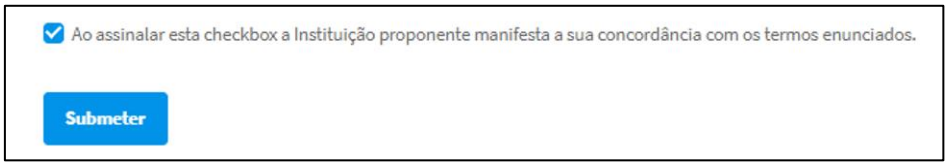
The "**Institutions**" > "**Ongoing Calls**" menu provides **access** to the **list of applications in which the institution participates** in R&D Project calls, whether as a principal contractor or as a participating institution.

[2] In case the institution does not have the credentials of the Collective User, please request it via email credenciais@fct.pt.

Only the Principal Contractor is required to express agreement with the terms outlined in the Statement of Commitment on myFCT. The Principal Contractor must also ensure that the other entities within the proposed project consortium fulfil the obligations set forth in the Statement of Commitment.
For each application listed, the Principal Contractor has access to the following:

- Overview of the application: a simplified version containing public information, accessible by clicking on the application reference.
- Summary of the application / Statement of Commitment: available only when the institution is the principal contractor, accessible by clicking on "Acceptance."

It is mandatory for the Principal Contractor to agree with the terms of the Declaration of Commitment. To do this, the Principal Contractor must check the box at the end of the Statement of Commitment of each application and click on “Submit”:



After the Principal Contractor accepts the Statement of Commitment by the, the following confirmation will appear in the global view of the application, accessible 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.*

Annex I – Personal Data Protection

In the context of the 2025 Call for Exploratory Research Projects, 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 Administração Central do Sistema de Saúde, I. P. (ACSS), 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 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 2025 call for Exploratory Research Projects under the Carnegie Mellon 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 CMU 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 fulfil 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), 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/.

Annex II – 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.

Each application comprises the following sections:

GENERAL DATA

Project description

-
- Project Title (PT/EN) (max. 255 characters)
- Project acronym (max. 15 characters)
- Keywords (PT/EN) (max. 4 keywords)
- Thematic area
- Justification of the thematic area (max.1000 charaters)
- Main scientific area (Scientific Domain / Scientific Area / Scientific sub-Area
- Timetable (start date and duration)

INSTITUTIONS

Principal contractor

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

Participating institutions

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

Collaborative Institutions

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

RESEARCH TEAM

Principal Investigator

- Institution to which you are associated in the scope of the research project
- PhD completion date
- CIENCIAVITAE permissions and upload

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)**

Members

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

Hirings (if applicable)

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

Consultants (if applicable)

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

Team CV synopsis

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

WORK PLAN

Abstract

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

State of the art and Objectives

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

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

Bibliographic references

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

Past publications

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

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

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)**

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)**

2030 Agenda

- Framework of the application for the United Nations SDG 2030 Agenda **(max. 3 SDG)**
- Framework justification **(max. 3000 characters)**

Other projects

- Add project
  - Project reference
  - PI in actual application
  - 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)**

Attachments

- Consortium constitution – mandatory submission
- If needed, the PI may attach the following documents to the proposal: support letters, formulas, schemes, diagrams, graphs or images. No other documents than the ones previously mentioned should be considered in this section.)

Computing and data

- Advanced computing
  - The work plan requires advanced computer resources to be provided by FCT?
  - Do you have previous experience with High Performance Computing? (if applicable)
  - Refer previously used computational platforms (if applicable, max. 400 characters)
  - Which of the following amounts of resources (per year) is suitable for your project? (if applicable)
  - Brief justification for the requested computational resources (if applicable, max. 400 characters)
- Research data
  - You will be generating or collecting research data in the context of your project?
  - The work plan requires access to a research data repository provided by FCT? (if applicable)

INDICATORS

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

BUDGET

Principal contractor

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

Funding plan

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

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

VALIDATE AND SUBMIT

fct
Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia
ACSS
ADMINISTRAÇÃO CENTRAL
DO SISTEMA DE SAÚDE, IP