

Call for Applications - PhD Research Grants

INESC TEC - Institute for Systems and Computer Engineering, Technology and Science is now accepting applications to award 3 (three) research grants, hereinafter referred to as PhD Research Grants, in the field of Engineering and Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE), under the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships of the FCT and the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (EBI).

The grants will be funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), under the Collaboration Protocol for Financing the Multiannual Plan for Research Scholarships for PhD Students, signed between FCT and INESC TEC (R&D Unit No. 50014).

1. APPLICATION

The call is open from February 18 to March 3, 2021.

The applicants must submit their application and supporting documents, provided for in this call, together with the form available on the [Work With Us](#) section of INESC TEC's [website](#).

Each applicant may submit only one application, under penalty of cancellation of all applications submitted.

False statements or plagiarism by the applicants will lead to the cancellation of his/her application, without prejudice to the adoption of other measures of a sanctioning nature.

2. TYPE OF GRANT AND DURATION

Research grants for PhD students focus on supporting the grant holders' research activities, towards obtaining a PhD degree in Portuguese higher education institutions.

The research activities leading to the aforementioned academic degree will take place at INESC TEC, the host institution, without prejudice to the work that may be carried out in partnership with other institutions.

The research work leading to the PhD degree of the selected grant holders must be part of the activities plan and strategy of INESC TEC, and will be developed within the scope of accredited Doctoral Programmes, namely those with INESC TEC's stronger involvement.

One or more integrated members belonging to INESC TEC's Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) cluster will supervise the research project/work plan.

The work plan may take place entirely or partially at another institution (national or mixed grants).

The duration of the grant is, as a rule, of 12 months, with the possibility of being renewable up to a maximum of four years (48 months). The grant may not be awarded for periods less than three consecutive months. In the case of mixed grants, the period of the work plan taking place at a foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months.

3. GRANT RECIPIENTS

The PhD Research Grants aim to support applicants who meet the required conditions to enrol in one of the accredited Doctoral Programmes, namely those with INESC TEC's stronger involvement, as mentioned in Article 2 of this call, and who intend to carry out research activities towards obtaining a PhD degree, at INESC TEC or any other associated host institutions.

4. ADMISSIBILITY

4.1 Applicant's Admission Requirements

In order to apply, the applicants must meet the following criteria:

- National citizens or citizens of other European Union Member-States;
- Third state citizens;
- Stateless persons;
- Citizens benefiting from political refugee status.

In order to be eligible, applicants must:

- Hold a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Industrial Management and Engineering, Informatics Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Bioengineering, Physics, Mathematics or other similar scientific field. The applicants should also hold an academic and professional CV that demonstrates the adequacy of their profile to the planned activities.
- Have permanent or regular residence in Portugal, in case the work plan is carried out partially at foreign institutions (mixed grants) - a requirement applicable to both national and foreign citizens;
- Not having benefited from a PhD grant awarded by any organisation directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration.

Preference factors:

- The applicants must have experience in one of the following lines of research: Operations Management, Operational Research/Management Science, Autonomous Systems, Technology and Innovation Management and Industrial Information Systems.

4.2 Application's Admission Requirements

The applicants must include the following documents in the application, under penalty of exclusion from the selection process:

- Motivation letter (in which the applicant clarifies the reasons for his/her application, presenting his/her academic and/or professional experience, and the suitability of his/her work plan, when applicable);
- Two separate letters of recommendation, signed by the respective issuers. These letters should include the context of the applicant's academic and/or professional relationship with the person who recommends him/her, indicating a reference to this call;
- Curriculum Vitae (must include the list of previous fellowships/grants, their type, beginning and end dates, funding entities and host institutions);
- Work plan (presenting, in detail, the research activities and work plan to be developed during the PhD; this document should contain the following sections: summary, state of the art, objectives, detailed description, schedule, and bibliographic references). The work plan should explain the main line of research of the PhD project: Operations Management, Operational Research/Management Science, Autonomous Systems, Technology and Innovation Management and Industrial Information Systems.
- Degree certificate or diploma, duly recognised in Portugal;

Documents proving the obtainment of academic degrees and diplomas, or the according recognition - in cases of academic degrees or diplomas awarded by a foreign higher education institution - can be dismissed in the application process, and replaced by the applicant's declaration of honour, with the verification of said condition taking place during the grant's hiring stage.

- Proof of enrolment in the study cycle required for the awarding of the PhD degree.

This proof of enrolment can only be presented during the grant's hiring stage.

- Declaration of compliance with the grant holder's duties;
- Other supporting documents relevant to the evaluation process.

The application and all associated documents, including the motivation letter and letters of recommendation, should be written in Portuguese or in English.

Concerning the aforementioned admission requirements, the following should be taken into account:

- In order to ensure the principle of equal access of applicants holding degrees obtained at national or foreign institutions, those awarded by foreign higher education institutions ought to be recognised, and the respective final mark must be converted to the Portuguese scale (0 to 20).

The applicants may request the recognition of higher education degrees and diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions, as well as the conversion of the final mark to the Portuguese scale. This procedure may be carried out by any public higher education institution, or by the Directorate General for Higher Education (DGES, for automatic recognition purposes only). Please check the DGES website for more information on this matter: <http://www.dges.gov.pt>.

- Only applicants who have completed the study cycle corresponding to a Bachelor or Master's degree will be admitted, until the end of the application period. The applicants may present a declaration of honour stating that they have the required qualifications to apply to the call, namely if they do not yet hold the certificate of completion of the degree. The award of the grant relies on the submission of documents proving the required academic qualifications.

5. WORK PLANS AND SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION

One or more integrated members belonging to INESC TEC's Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) cluster will supervise the research project/work plan.

The grants aim to support researchers who aim to carry out research activities in the fields described in this document, towards obtaining a PhD degree. The research activities must be carried out at INESC TEC.

6. SELECTION CRITERIA

The evaluation focuses on the merit and suitability of the applicants, in line with Article 12 of the Regulations for Studentships and Grants of INESC TEC. This process takes into account two evaluation criteria: Applicant Merit (MC) and Work Plan Merit (MPT). The Final Grade (CF) is calculated as follows: MC (60%) + MPT (40%).

The Applicant Merit (MC) criterion is evaluated according to four sub-criteria: Academic Qualifications (FA, with a weight of 50%), Scientific Publications (PC, 20%), Research Experience (EI, 20%) and Motivation Letter (CM, 10%).

The Work Plan Merit criterion (MPT) is evaluated according to three sub-criteria: Relevance of the Study Object (ROE, with a weight of 20%), Scientific Approach - including state of the art and methodology (AbC, 40%) and Feasibility of the Work Plan (EPT, 40%).

All factors are evaluated on a scale of 0 to 100, taking into account the applicants' merit, suitability and conformity with the preference factors. Candidates who score less than 50 points in the CF average will be considered excluded on absolute merit.

For deciding on the awarding of the grants, the applicants will be ranked according to the average of the two following criteria, and the proposed formula:

$$CF = (60\% \times MC) + (40\% \times MPT)$$

In case the FA corresponds to a Bachelor's degree, the score in the sub-criterion cannot exceed 70 points

For tie-breaking purposes, candidates will be ranked according to the scores assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order of precedence: criterion MC, criterion MPT.

Important warning for candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions:

- Candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions can apply and will be evaluated

under the same criteria as candidates with diplomas issued by Portuguese institutions, if they include, in their application, proof of recognition of the academic degree and the final mark converted to the Portuguese scale, under the terms of the applicable legislation.

- Candidates with degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions who fail to show proof of conversion of the final mark to the Portuguese scale will be awarded the lowest score (50 points) in sub-criterion FA.
- In any case, grant contracts with applicants with diplomas issued by foreign institutions will only be concluded upon submission of proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion of the final mark, as mentioned before.

Applicants who score less than 50 points are not eligible for a grant.

7. ASSESSMENT

The Selection Jury is composed of the following members:

President of the Jury: Bernardo Almada-Lobo (Full Professor at UP-FEUP)
Full Member: António Lucas Soares (Associate Professor at UP-FEUP)
Full Member: António Paulo Moreira (Associate Professor at UP-FEUP)
Full Member: Pedro Sanches Amorim (Assistant Professor at UP-FEUP)
Full Member: João Claro (Associate Professor at UP-FEUP)
Full Member: Ana Viana (Coordinator Professor at IPP-ISEP)

The Selection Jury will assess the applications according to the evaluation criteria established in this call, considering the preference factors.

All Jury members, including the President, agree to comply with a set of duties crucial to the evaluation process, such as impartiality, declaring any potential Conflict of Interest (CDI), and confidentiality – with the latter fully preserved and ensured throughout the entire assessment process, in order to guarantee its fairness.

Moreover, the members of the Jury, including the President, shall not take the role of supervisors or co-supervisors of any of the applicants.

For each application, the Jury will prepare a final evaluation form, presenting the arguments that led to the rating attributed to each of the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria, in a clear, coherent and consistent manner.

- The minutes of the meetings of the evaluation panel shall be drawn up under the responsibility of all its members. The minutes and their annexes shall obligatorily include the following information: Name and affiliation of all members;
- Identification of all excluded applications and corresponding reasons [if applicable];
- Methodology adopted by the Jury to address particular cases [if applicable];
- Final Evaluation Sheets for each candidate;
- Preliminary list of all applications assessed, with the corresponding rating and order of candidates, from the top to the lowest scores;
- Conflict of Interest statements from all members;

- Possible entrustment of vote and decision-making power, in cases of justified absence.

8. RELEASE OF RESULTS

The results of the selection process, as well as the terms and procedures for prior hearing, will be released to the applicants by email, under the terms referred to in Article 13 of the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships of INESC TEC.

9. DEADLINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRIOR HEARING, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

After the release of the preliminary list of results, the applicants have a period of 10 working days to submit their comments by means of a prior hearing process, under the terms established in the Articles 121 and following of the Administrative Procedure Code.

The final decision will follow the analysis of the statements issued at the prior hearing. Applicants can submit a complaint or an appeal within 15 or 30 working days of the final decision, respectively. Individuals who choose to submit a complaint must address their statement to the relevant member of FCT's Board of Directors. Candidates who choose to submit an appeal must address it to FCT's Board of Directors.

10. GRANT AWARDING REQUIREMENTS

The research grants' contracts are signed directly with FCT.

Upon awarding the grant, the following documents must be submitted to formalise the contract:

- Copies of the identification, tax and, if applicable, social security documents ¹;
- Copy of the academic certificates of the applicant's degree(s);
- Submission of documents validating the recognition of degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and the conversion of the corresponding final mark to the Portuguese classification scale, if applicable;
- Document proving registration and enrolment in one of the Doctoral Programmes identified in this call;
- Statement by the supervisor(s), claiming the compliance with the duties of overseeing the work plan, pursuant to Article 5-A of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (the FCT is responsible for providing a draft version of said declaration);
- Document proving the applicant's acceptance by the institution where the research activities will take place, ensuring the necessary conditions for its due development, as well as the fulfilment of the duties referred to in Article 13 of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (the FCT is responsible for providing a draft version of said declaration);
- Updated document stating the applicant's compliance with the exclusive dedication scheme (the FCT is responsible for providing a draft version of said declaration).

¹ Rather than submitting these documents, the applicant may choose to present them personally at the funding entity facilities; the funding entity will collect all information relevant to the grant contract, including the ID, tax and social security numbers, and validate the applicant's documentation.

Furthermore, the awarding of the grant depends on:

- the compliance with the requirements presented in this call;
- the result of the scientific assessment;
- the absence of unjustified non-compliance with the grant holder's duties within the scope of previous grant contract funded, directly or indirectly, by FCT;
- FCT's budget availability.

Failure to submit any of the documents required to complete the grant contract, within 6 months after the date of the notice of the conditional awarding of the grant, implies the expiration of said grant and termination of the process.

11. FINANCING

The payment of the grant components will begin after the applicant's submission of the grant contract, duly signed, which should occur within a maximum period of 15 working days after the date of the notice.

The grants awarded under this call will be financed by the FCT, with funds from the State Budget and, when eligible, with funds from the European Social Fund, to be made available under PORTUGAL2020, namely through the Norte Regional Operational Program (NORTE 2020), Centro Regional Operational Program (Centro 2020) and Alentejo Regional Operational Program (Alentejo 2020), in accordance with the regulatory provisions established for this purpose.

12. RESEARCH GRANT COMPONENTS

Grant holders will receive a monthly maintenance stipend, in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI.

The grant may also include other components, under the terms provided for in Article 18 of the RBI, and according to the amount set out in Annex II of the same document. The grant holders are entitled to a personal accident insurance covering research activities, paid by FCT. The grant holders shall ensure their right to social security by joining the voluntary social insurance scheme, according to the Social Security Contributory Scheme Code; FCT takes on the additional costs resulting from contributions under these terms, and within the limits referred to in Article 10 of the EBI. The grant holders shall also benefit from health insurance, supported by INESC TEC.

13. PAYMENT OF FELLOWSHIP COMPONENTS

Payments due to the grant holder are made via bank transfer, to the account indicated by the grant holder in the admission file. The payment of the monthly maintenance stipend is made on the first business day of each month.

The payment of registration, enrolment or tuition fees is made directly by FCT to the national institution in which the grant holder is carrying out his/her PhD.

14. RENEWAL OF GRANTS – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The renewal of the grant depends on an application submitted by the grant holder, within 60 working days prior to the renewal start date, accompanied by the following documents:

- a) evaluation reports by the supervisor(s) and by the host entity/entities on the mentoring of the grant holder's work, and on the evaluation of his/her activities;
- b) updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication scheme;
- c) document proving the applicant's renewed acceptance in the study cycle required for the awarding of the PhD degree.

15. MENTION OF SUPPORT AND DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

Mention of the financial support provided by FCT and the European Social Fund (ESF) (through the Norte's Regional Operational Programme - NORTE 2020, the Centro Regional Operational Programme - CENTRO 2020, and the Alentejo Regional Operational Programme - Alentejo 2020) shall be included in all R&D activities - directly or indirectly funded by the grant - as well as in communications, publications, scientific creations and theses carried out. Moreover, all documents should include the logos of the FCT, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, the European Social Fund and the UE, according to the published style guide of each operational programme.

The dissemination of research results funded under the RBI must comply with the rules for open access to data, publications and other research results in effect at FCT.

All grants - particularly actions supported by European funding, namely the ESF – enable monitoring and control actions carried out by national and European authorities, in accordance with the applicable legislation in this matter. Grant holders supported by the aforementioned bodies are thereby bound to collaborate and provide information when requested, which includes participating in surveys and studies in this field, even if the grant contract has already ceased.

16. POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS

FCT actively promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, so that applicants do not benefit from any privilege or benefit, or are deprived of any right, based on ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family and/or economic situation, education, social origin or condition, genetic background, degree of disability, chronic illness, nationality, ethnic origin or race, country of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs and union membership.

17. BINDING LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The hiring process complies with the terms provided for in this call, the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships of the FCT (approved by Law No. 950/2019, published in the II Series of the National Official Journal, on December 16, 2019), the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (approved by Law No. 40/2004, of August 18, in its current wording), and other applicable national and European legislation.