

PhD Studentships and Post-doctoral Fellowships

Highlights

**Call for PhD Studentships and
Post-doctoral Fellowships – 2016**

What has changed in the 2016 Call

PhD Studentships
Post-doctoral Fellowships

May 2016

This document **summarises the relevant information** about **what has changed or what is new** in the 2016 Call for PhD Studentships (BD) and Post-doctoral Fellowships (BPD). This document does not preclude **careful reading of the Application Guide** and of the **Evaluation Guide** (both available from the FCT website).

ELEGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants' Eligibility Requirements

Changes in specific requirements for BD applicants

- To have finished a masters degree, at time of submission of the application, or alternatively, to comply with the conditions for accessing the cycle of studies leading to the PhD degree, foreseen in sub-paragraph a) or c) of article no. 30 of Decree-Law no.74/2006 of 24 March, amended by Decree-Law no.115/2013 of 7 August. Thus, besides holders of a masters degree, the following candidates may also apply:
 - Holders of a bachelors (first) degree and with a particularly relevant academic or scientific curriculum, acknowledged by the legally competent scientific body of the university they wish to attend, attesting to their capacity to carry out the cycle of studies leading to a PhD degree;
 - Holders of an academic, scientific or professional curriculum that is accepted to attest to their capacity to carry out the cycle of studies leading to a PhD degree, by the legally competent scientific body of the university they wish to attend.
- Not to have been selected for any grant, independently of its typology (research fellowship, PhD studentship or PhD studentship in industry), duration, within the scope of any FCT PhD program.
- Not to have benefited from a PhD studentship or PhD studentship in industry directly financed by FCT, independently of its duration.

Changes in specific requirements for BPD applicants

- Not have benefited from a BPD directly funded by FCT, irrespective of its duration.

Application eligibility criteria

Changes to BD and BPD mandatory documents

In the 2016 Call for PhD studentships and Post-doctoral fellowships, the submission of the following documents is mandatory:

- A motivation letter;
- Two reference letters .

Changes to mandatory documents – only for BD

- Applicants that do not hold a Masters degree, will have to provide a statement attesting to their capacity to carry out the cycle of studies, issued by the legally competent scientific body of the university they wish to attend for their PhD degree. In those cases that the applicants have already been accepted in the PhD Programme for which they are applying for a studentship, proof of admission to the programme is sufficient. Proof of enrolment in ongoing or completed PhD programmes, where the institutions that award the degree/ or run the PhD programme are different to the one shown in the application for the studentship, will not be accepted.
- A document that the applicants consider to be the most representative of their scientific/professional career.

Changes to mandatory documents – only for BPD

- In the case of PhD degrees obtained at foreign institutions, although it is mandatory to submit the registry/proof of equivalence of the foreign qualification to the corresponding Portuguese qualification, this may take place at the time of the provisional granting of the studentship, at the contracting stage. If registry/proof of equivalence is provided after application, it is necessary to attach the PhD certificate to the application, in one of the following languages: Portuguese, Spanish, English, or French.
- One or two documents that the applicants consider to be the most representative of their

scientific/professional career.

Changes to optional documents to be submitted with the application form

In this Call the following documents are now optional upon submission of the application:

- The applicant's ORCID code. The ORCID registration is recommended but does not substitute submission the up-to-date CV on the FCT-SIG or DeGóis platform.
- The ORCID code of the scientific supervisor(s) (and co-supervisor(s) if relevant).
- A document providing proof of permanent or regular residence in Portugal, when applicable. This may be submitted only at the time of provisional granting of the studentship/fellowship, at the contracting stage, as long as the date of the document is equal to or prior to the application deadline, and if it remains valid at the time of contracting. The Application Guide should be consulted on this issue.

APPLICATION FORM

- The applicant can remove his/hers co-supervisor(s), if they do not associate themselves to the application, in order to allow locking of the application.
- It is suggested that applicants confirm that supervisors and co-supervisors (if any) confirm and lock their association to the application.

SCIENTIFIC AREAS

The applicant is responsible for selection of the main area, secondary area and sub-area (Frascati, FOS) under which he/she submits his/hers application and which determine the evaluation panel. For the applicants' greater security the application form in this Call includes a field that shows the evaluation panel for the application, based on the selection of the main/secondary/subarea made by the applicant.

The panel may consider the application **non-assessable** if it is considered to move substantially away from the panel's scientific area of expertise.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The mission of FCT is to assure the overall scientific quality of the peer review process, thus the evaluators will give precedence to quality and originality over quantity. This principle applies irrespectively of what is at stake, be it academic degrees, CVs, career progression or work plans. The scientific content represents the core of peer review, thus requiring an integrated view of all the components of a scientific career, or of a research work plan. Counts of scientific papers and the cumulative impact factor, for example, do not in themselves or on their own, allow the identification of the characteristics that define the quality of scientific accomplishments and career paths, namely, “originality”, “consistency and coherence”, and “contribution to the advancement of knowledge”.

Changes to the evaluation criteria – BD and BPD

- Applications will be scored from 1,000 (minimum) to 5,000 (maximum) in the three evaluation criteria, which are:
 - Merit of the applicant.
 - Merit of the Work plan
 - Merit of the Host institution
- The three evaluation criteria will have a relative weight of respectively 40%, 30%, 30%, for BD, and of 40%, 40%, 20%, respectively, for BPD. In case of a tie, the score awarded to the merit of the applicant will be considered, and if the tie persists, the score awarded to the work plan. The score awarded to the merit of the host institution will be the third criterion used in case of a tie.

Changes to evaluation criteria - only applicable to BD

- The merit of applicants to a PhD studentship is evaluated according to two sub-criteria:
 - The academic path (from a baseline score), with 60% weight towards the merit of the applicant.
 - The personal curriculum (which reflects the scientific and professional path), with 40% weight towards the merit of the applicant.
- The applicant’s classification for the sub-criteria “Academic Path” is the result of the final grades of the first and second cycle of studies (or just the first cycle, when applicable), according to the following reference table for the definition of the baseline score:

Final Average Bachelors + Masters or Integrated Masters	Final Classification Pre or Post-Bologna First Degree (Bachelors)	Baseline Score
≥ 17	-	5,000
16	-	4,000
-	≥ 17	3,500
15	-	3,500
-	16	3,000
14	-	2,500
-	15	2,500
<14	-	1,500
-	14	1,500
-	<14	1,000

- Cases which do not fall in the above-mentioned situations, namely those of Masters obtained after non-academic paths, that is, Masters that are not preceded by a post-Bologna 1st cycle of studies, or by a pre-Bologna bachelors/first degree, will be specifically analysed and decided by the evaluators.
- The certificates that do not specify the final grade (either quantitative or qualitative) will be equated to the minimum score (core score = 1), for the purpose of scoring the “merit of the applicant”, in the sub-criteria “academic path”.
- In those cases of certificates that specify only a qualitative classification (for example, pre-Bologna Masters), these will be converted as follows:

Qualitative Classification	Quantitative Conversion
Very Good with Distinction / with Distinction and Honor	18
Very Good /Approved with Distinction	16
Good/Approved/Approved by Unanimity	14

- Applicants that show duly proven incapacity equal to or higher than 90% will have a bonus equivalent to 10% of the baseline score. Applicants that show a duly proven incapacity equal to or higher than 60% will have a bonus equivalent to 5% of the baseline score.

Changes to the evaluation criteria – only applicable to BPD

- The merit of applicants to a post-doctoral fellowship is evaluated based on a single criterium: the

personal curriculum (which reflects the scientific and professional path).

- A bonus equivalent to 20% of the score awarded to the “personal curriculum” will be given to applicants that obtained their PhD at a Portuguese university, and that mean to do their post-doctoral research:
 - at a different host institution to the one that awarded their degreeor,
 - in a different region of Portugal to the one where the PhD host institution is located, even if the host institution belongs to the same university as the one that awarded the degree;or,
 - at the same institution where they obtained the PhD degree, after a 2-year (at least) professional or scientific path away from the institution.
- Applicants that have obtained the PhD degree more than 72 months prior to application will have a penalty applied, equivalent to 20% of the score awarded to the “personal curriculum” criterium. This procedure values applicants who have finished their PhD more recently and looks to allow academic/professional paths to be more comparable, since these usually improve with elapsed time.

To assess time elapsed after the PhD degree, the number of months between the PhD degree award and the application deadline will be counted. This period of time will be reduced by 12 months for each duly proven maternity/paternity leave taken after the PhD degree. After this assessment, applicants having obtained a PhD degree over 72 months previously will be penalised.
- Applicants that show duly proven incapacity equal to or higher than 90% will have a bonus equivalent to 10% of the score awarded to the criteria “personal curriculum”. Applicants that show duly proven incapacity equal to or higher than 60% and lower than 90% will have a bonus of 5%.