

## Announcement for the 2017 Call for Exploratory Proposals under the MIT Portugal Program

Under the Article number 10 of Regulations for Projects Exclusively Funded by National Funds, hereinafter designated by FCT Projects Regulation, published by Regulation No. 999/2016, of October 31st, the Scientific Research and Technological Development Projects are submitted under a tender procedure, with terms disseminated at the website of the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. – FCT ([www.fct.pt](http://www.fct.pt)).

This Announcement for the Call for Projects, hereinafter referred to as ACP, has been developed in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of the FCT Project Regulation and reads as follows:

### 1. AIMS AND PRIORITIES

A call for Proposals for Exploratory Research is opened within the MIT Portugal Program framework. This call is aimed guided towards research projects with the potential to contribute towards the long-term objective of developing innovative products and services, demonstrating international competitiveness and innovative capacity in science and technology amongst public and private sectors and the entities of the National Scientific and Technology System (NSTS) under the following themes:

- 1.1. Integrative research based in the context of the Atlantic International Research Center (AIR Center)
- 1.2. Sustainable and data driven urban systems
- 1.3. New industrial concepts and smart factories
- 1.4. Bio & Medical Devices
- 1.5. Sustainable Transportation Systems

The projects should take an “exploratory approach,” i.e. address an [emergent research topic](#) that can be identified as a disruptive future research domain, that can have a high impact for Portugal as a scalable living laboratory and innovation ecosystem for the development of new products and services with a global reach and for fostering an increase of competitiveness of the Portuguese economy in the knowledge-based industry and services.

Exploratory research projects should aim to address research topics through integrated, multidisciplinary research design with a view towards piloting and scalability involving entities of the NSTS, other public and private partners and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

These projects will be also used to assess emergent scientific domains that could be considered in the design of a potential 3rd phase of the MIT Portugal Program.

The projects developed should, preferably, contribute to the Atlantic International Research Center (AIR Center) scientific developments and objectives, as stated 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 at [FCT website](#).

All the applications have to fulfill the terms mentioned in the document [Terms of Reference for the MIT Portugal Program - 2017 Call for Proposals](#).

## **2. SUPPORTED ENTITIES**

Only the following entities are eligible to receive funding from FCT through the present call for proposals:

- 2.1. Higher Education Institutions, their institutes and R&D units;
- 2.2. State or international Laboratories with head office in Portugal;
- 2.3. Non-profit private institutions whose main objective is R&D activities;
- 2.4. Other non-profit private and public institutions developing or participating in scientific research activities;

## **3. CRITERIA FOR SUPPORTING PROJECTS**

This call is intended to fund research and development projects applied to Exploratory Research proposals by entities of the NSTS, public and private partners.

The funding to be granted under this ACP shall be non-reimbursable in accordance with Article 7 of FCT Projects Regulation.

The proposals submitted should include:

- "projects in co-operation" carried out in a consortium, with the participation of two research teams from different entities as identified in section 2 of this ACP. One of them must be an entity referenced on Point 2.1 – “Higher Education Institutions, their institutes and R&D units”. The consortium may also include any other public or private entities, profit or not for profit, that may also invest in the exploratory research project and that may bring relevant competencies to the project;
- A MIT researcher, who can be any person from the MIT research staff (faculty or research scientist). This participation should be confirmed by a “letter of collaboration”, to be submitted with the proposal.

The call will exclusively fund the participation of Portuguese research teams from entities of the NSTS or private non-profit institutions whose main objective is to carry out S&T activities. The present Call will not fund companies or other independent partners, public or private, which do not have as their primary goal the development Science and Technology activities.

The scientific progress achieved by the team will be assessed by FCT in association with the MIT Portugal Program. A typical proposal should cover efforts for a period of up to 12 months, subject to mid-term report after the first semester. At the end of each exploratory project, a final report must be submitted, according to article 24 of the FCT Projects Regulation.

#### **4. INDICATIVE FUNDING**

Under this call, a maximum of 18 (eighteen) exploratory projects are expected to receive funding. The actual number of exploratory projects funded will depend on the scale and scope of the proposed Initiatives and the quality of the proposals submitted.

At most, it will be funded 5 (five) projects per research area 1.2. to 1.5 of those areas previously identified at section number 1.

The total funding available for Portuguese research institutions, as part of this research call, will be up to €1,800,000 (one million, eight hundred thousand euros). Projects will be funded in total by national funds through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

Each of the 18 (eighteen) exploratory projects should have a maximum budget of € 100,000 (one hundred thousand euros) for the entire funding period of up to 1 (one) year by project.

## 5. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Considering the provisions of Article 8 of the FCT Projects Regulation, the following expenses are eligible:

a) Direct Costs:

- Human resources dedicated or associated with the development of R&D activities related to the implementation of the project;
- Missions in Portugal and abroad;
- Acquisition of scientific and technical tools and equipment, indispensable to the project if used within the project during their useful life time;
- Amortization of scientific and technical tools and equipment indispensable to the project and of which the useful life time falls within the execution period, but does not end within that;
- Expenses related to the national and foreign record of patents;
- Expenses with the demonstration, promotion and disclosure of project's outputs;
- Acquisition of other goods and services directly related to the project execution, including costs with consultants that do not establish subcontracts.

b) Indirect Costs, with a flat rate of 25% of eligible costs, excluding subcontracting and resources provided by third parties.

Non Eligible expenses under the Exploratory Research call are indicated in Article 9 of the FCT Projects Regulation.

## 6. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted online, in English,, from January 18, 2017 until March 8th, 2017 at 17:00 Lisbon time, through the [FCT website](#) following the Announcement of the Call for Proposals.

Applicants should fill in the on-line FCT form according to the guidelines provided in the [Terms of Reference for the MIT Portugal Program - 2017 Call for Proposals](#):

- Completion of the on-line FCT form, available through the [FCT platform](#), according to the [MIT Portugal Program - 2017 Call for Proposals - Proposals Submission Guide](#);

- Attachment of the “letter of collaboration” by at least an MIT researcher or a research scientist, describing their scientific responsibility in the project;
- Attachment of the document that certifies the PhD degree of the PI;
- Attachment (if applicable) of the written agreement between the Principal Investigator and the proposing institution.

Applicants should read carefully the documents identified in section 9 of this ACP.

## **7. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **7.1. Principal Investigator**

The Principal Investigator, responsible for the candidacy:

- Should hold a PhD. The degree certificate for the PhD should be enclosed as an annex to the application;
- Be a Professor or have a research position in the proposing Institution. In the absence of such a link, a written agreement between the parties must be submitted in the annex to the application, according to point c) of point 1 of article 6 of the FCT Project Regulations;
- Can only submit one proposal as a Principal Investigator;
- The formal commitment of the Lead Principal Investigator in Portugal to the project shall be no less than 35%;
- Will not be eligible to serve as Principal Investigators if they are in a situation of unjustified fault with FCT requirements regarding the delivery of the scientific and/or financial execution reports from previous financed projects.
- Applications to projects of which the Principal Investigator has been Principal Investigator of projects of whose final scientific report was rejected for reasons attributable to them within the two previous years before the tender opening are not accepted.

### **7.2. Research Team Members**

All other Research team members have to participate at no less than 15% of their time.

### **7.3. Proposing Institution**

Applications to projects of which the PIs are in unjustified default related to the refund of loans transferred to the said PI related to previous projects with the same Principal Investigator are not accepted.

## **8. SELECTION METHODOLOGY**

The selection and ranking of the applications will be as described at the [MIT Portugal Program - 2017 Call for Proposals - Proposals Submission Guide](#) and at the [MIT Portugal 2017 Call for Proposals – Guide for Peer Reviewers](#), namely:

- A. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the project, preferably within the scope of the priorities developed by the [Atlantic International Research Center](#) (AIR Center) initiative
- B. Scientific merit of the research team;
- C. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the budget;
- D. Contribution to the body of knowledge and competence of the National Science and Technology System;
- E. Potential economic value of the technology.

## **9. PUBLICATION AND COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

This Announcement and other relevant materials and information, in particular the Regulations for Projects Exclusively Funded by National Funds, are available at [FCT website](#).

Information on the scientific matters of the application form can be obtained from: [info@mitportugal.org](mailto:info@mitportugal.org).

Information on the contents of the application form can be obtained from: [projetosMIT@fct.pt](mailto:projetosMIT@fct.pt).

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