

**Call for SR&TD Projects to promote
interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary R&D
activities to be carried out in the Montesinho
Natural Park**

Guide for Peer Reviewers

July 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About FCT

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (FCT), the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, is the public agency responsible for implementing the Portuguese government's science and technology policy.

FCT started in August 1997, succeeding the previous equivalent agency, JNICT, created in the 1980s.

FCT's mission is to promote the advancement of scientific and technological knowledge in Portugal, exploring opportunities to attain the highest international standards, in any scientific or technological domain, and to stimulate the diffusion of that knowledge and its contribution to improve education, health, environment, and quality of life and well-being of citizens.

FCT pursues its mission by funding fellowships, studentships and scientific employment, research projects, research centres and infrastructures, via competitive calls with international peer-review. FCT ensures Portugal's participation in international scientific organizations, fosters the participation of the scientific community in international projects and promotes knowledge transfer between R&D centres and industry. FCT also coordinates the public policy for the Information and Knowledge Society in Portugal and ensures the development of national scientific computing resources closely working with international organizations.

FCT's main roles are:

- To promote, finance, monitor and evaluate science and technology institutions, programmes, projects and training of human resources;
- To promote and support infrastructures for scientific research and technological development;
- To promote the diffusion of scientific and technological culture and knowledge, especially when relevant for educational purposes in close collaboration with the Ciência Viva agency;
- To stimulate the updating, interconnectivity, strengthening and availability of science and technology information sources.

FCT funds all areas of knowledge, including exact, natural and health sciences, engineering, social sciences and humanities.

2. THE 2020 CALL FOR SR&TD PROJECTS TO PROMOTE INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY R&D ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE MONTESINHO NATURAL PARK

The 2020 Call for Scientific Research and Technological Development (SR&TD) projects to promote interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary Research and Development (R&D) activities to be carried out in the Montesinho Natural Park, aims to support SR&TD projects that adopt a multidisciplinary perspective and international context, facilitating partnerships with experts and institutions of recognized merit in order to deepen an R&D agenda on the Montesinho Natural Park and its projection for the future.

This call was launched by FCT through a [public announcement](#) outlining the required features of the applications and the evaluation criteria to be applied. The rules under which the applications and the accepted projects are governed are specified in a public document entitled: [Regulations Governing Access to Funding for Scientific Research and Technological Development Projects](#). The submission period is open between 15th July 2020 and 30th September 2020. The content of the application **must be written in English**, and a version in Portuguese of the Title and the Summary is also required.

Funding of projects is based on peer review of applications submitted online in the referred call. FCT is responsible for the evaluation of the scientific merit of the submitted project proposals. Evaluation of the applications will be performed by an **international panel**.

The projects will be funded by national funds through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. A budget allocation of **€1,5 million of national state budget** is foreseen and, if justified, FCT may increase this budget.

2.1 Framework and Identification of Goals and Priorities of the Call for SR&TD Projects to promote interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary (R&D) activities to be carried out in the Montesinho Natural Park

The inland valorisation through knowledge in a perspective of sustainable development requires scientific research and technological development that enables to know the natural resources of each region, namely biological which includes forests and agricultural and agrosilvopastoral systems, natural and cultural heritage, socio-cultural dynamics, in a context of climatic evolution and potential biotic and abiotic risks, associating observation, experimentation and monitoring references.

The Montesinho Natural Park represents a mountain area with unique characteristics, since it constitutes the last relief in the northeast Portugal, which still belongs to the northwest Peninsular, and borders with the Iberian Meseta. It presents an unparalleled environmental richness, being integrated in the Natura 2000 Network and the United Nations Organization's Iberian Biosphere Reserve.

In areas of interface between different natural domains, as in the case of the Northwest Peninsular and the Iberian Mediterranean Plateau, the biodiversity is enormous and facilitates privileged areas to monitor and deepen climate change study, as well as to develop timely mitigation measures and actions.

In the case of the Montesinho Natural Park, the mountainous system has a relevant influence on the regional climate, as shown by studies and monitoring work carried out in recent decades, especially within the scope of the Iberian Mountain Research Network.

This program aims to attract research groups of international excellence, to work in close cooperation with teams from Portuguese institutions. Thus, candidate projects must adopt a multidisciplinary perspective and international context, facilitating partnerships with experts and institutions of recognized merit.

Having as reference the promotion of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary R&D activities to be carried out in the Montesinho Natural Park, the proposals to be presented must take into account the projection for the future and new knowledge in several thematic areas, in a perspective of scientific and cultural multidisciplinary, contributing for a new international R&D agenda on the Montesinho Natural Park, including:

1. **Earth observation and knowledge:** understand and monitor Montesinho Natural Park region; develop and apply innovative technologies, including space technologies, for systematic measurements and observation of the Montesinho Natural Park heritage; data processing and analysis, data science and modeling and forecasting systems, integrating climate change, energy, earth science and biological resources;
2. **Climate and climate change:** integrated study of atmosphere, land and space interactions in Montesinho Natural Park region, and effects on climate evolution, meteorology and respective dynamics; acquisition, analysis, processing and dissemination of data and development of integrated models, namely for mountain regions;
3. **Sustainable agricultural systems:** effect of climate change on agrarian systems and their mitigation, namely in agriculture, forests and agrosilvopastoral systems; protection against emerging biotic risks, namely pests and plant diseases with the use of biological agents and natural products; soil conservation, CO₂ fixation and preservation of water resources; valorization of products from a bioeconomy perspective;
4. **Socio-cultural dynamics:** connectivity networks and quality of life research; multiculturalism and demographic, population and socio-cultural dynamics;
5. **Biodiversity and biological resources, natural and cultural heritage, and sustainable regional development:** biological resources dynamic in Montesinho Natural Park regarding climate and pollution; territory and landscape evolution in Montesinho Natural Park, comprising socio-cultural practices and spatialization forms; immovable, moveable and non-material heritage, its mainstream and relationship with the construction of knowledge and collective memory; monitoring and modeling systems for use, safeguarding and enhancement of natural resources in Montesinho Natural Park, its ecosystems and biodiversity; heritage valorization and territory management for sustainable development.

2.2 Main Aspects of the Applications

This call is intended to fund SR&TD projects to promote interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary (R&D) activities to be carried out in the Montesinho Natural Park, carried out by a team of the Principal Contractor and, if so decided by the applicants, by teams of other Participant Institutions. These are the legal institutions that will receive the funds from FCT, and herein named as beneficiary entities.

The beneficiary entities that may apply, either individually or jointly, are:

- a) Non-entrepreneurial entities of the R&I system, namely:
 - i. Higher education institutions, their institutes and R&D units;
 - ii. State or international laboratories with a head office in Portugal;
 - iii. Non-profit private institutions whose main object is R&D activity;
 - iv. Other non-profit public and private institutions developing or participating in scientific research activities.
- b) Companies of any type and under any legal form if included in SR&TD projects led by non-entrepreneurial entities from the R&I System, within an effective collaboration;
- c) The possible involvement of companies and foreign institutions as participants in the project does not confer them the status of beneficiary.

Besides administrative requirements that are verified by FCT, projects to be funded under this call must meet the following specific requirements:

- The projects will have maximum duration of 36 months (extendable for 12 months, during its execution, if justified);
- Involve a maximum total eligible funding of €250.000,00;
- Present a dissemination plan of results and knowledge, as well as a knowledge transfer strategy;
- Identify the Principal Investigator (PI) of the project that is responsible, alongside with the Principal Contractor, for meeting the proposed objectives and rules governing the granting of funding;
- Identify a co-responsible for the project, the Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), that will replace the PI when he/she is unable to fulfil his/her duties;
- Each PI may only submit, in that quality, one application for this call. This condition is administratively verified by FCT;
- The PI must have a working contract or post-doctoral fellowship with the Principal Contractor;
- Multiple applications of the same project are not allowed:

- a) In distinct calls where there is a temporal overlap in the periods of submission of applications;
- b) In the case of applications to calls with different thematic scopes and taking place at different application periods, the recommendation for funding in one of them is a condition of exclusion from the decision-making process of the others.

2.3 Eligible Expenses

Considering the art.8º of the [FCT Projects Regulation](#), the following items in SR&TD projects are eligible for funding:

a) Direct costs:

- i. Expenses with **Human Resources** dedicated or related to the development of R&D activities related to the project execution in all mandatory components by the applicable labour legislation, including charges with grant holders directly supported by the beneficiaries.
 - With regard to **employment contracts**, human resources expenses are based on the costs incurred in carrying out the project, based on the monthly base salary declared for the social protection of the worker, which may be increased by the mandatory social food allowance and occupational accident insurance under legally defined terms. The basic salary shall be the set of all remunerations of a permanent nature subject to taxation and declared for the purpose of social protection of the worker;
 - The **research fellowships** are tendered and contracted by the beneficiary entities in the context of the supported projects, which must comply with the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (Law n.º 40/2004 of 18 August, in its present version) and FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships.
- ii. **Missions** (travel, accommodation, registration fees, etc.) in Portugal and abroad, and directly attributable to the project;
- iii. **Acquisition of scientific and technical tools and equipment**, indispensable to the project if used within the project during their useful lifetime;
- iv. **Amortization of scientific and technical tools and equipment** indispensable to the project and of which the useful lifetime falls within the execution period, but does not end within that period;
- v. **Subcontracts** directly related to the project scientific task's execution;
- vi. Expenses related to the national and foreign record of **patents, copyrights, usefulness models and drawings, national models or brands** when related to other forms of intellectual protection, namely rates, researches to the status of the technique and consulting expenses;

- vii. Expenses with the **demonstration, promotion and disclosure of the project's outputs**, namely dissemination fees within the fulfilment and pursuant to national policies of open access;
 - viii. **Acquisition of other goods and services** directly related to the project's execution, including costs with **consultants that** do not establish subcontracts;
- b) Indirect costs**, with a **flat rate of 25% of eligible costs**, excluding subcontracting. The percentage bound in this item is automatically checked by the submission tool. Applications cannot be locked if this condition is not verified.

For the present Call, the **non-eligible costs** are the ones stated in the art. 9º of the [FCT Projects Regulation](#). **Salaries of public servants are not funded under this call.**

The PI, co-PI, the remaining core elements of the applications, as well as the remaining elements of the research team, are responsible for submitting an updated version of their **CV in English**, and keep the information updated until the time of the application's submission.

2.4 Beneficiaries and Project Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria, both for beneficiary entities and projects, follow the applicable Regulations, and will be subject to an administrative review to be carried out by FCT. Eligibility is thus not part of the evaluation process.

3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Scoring of the project proposals, towards their selection and ranking, is based on the **Merit of the Project (MP)**, to be calculated according to the following formula:

$$MP = 0.50 A + 0.20 B + 0.10 C + 0.20 D$$

The evaluation of the Merit of the Project is based on the following main four criteria:

- A** - Scientific merit and innovative nature of the project from an international perspective in the scientific area and in accordance with the goals of the call;
- B** - Scientific merit of the research team;

C - Feasibility of the work plan, reasonability of the budget and contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Scientific and Technological System in the areas of the call;

D - Merit of international collaborations and the demonstration of their effective participation in the work program.

The four main criteria are scored using a 9-point scale system (1 – minimum; 9 – maximum) and each of the four criteria is rated using this scale with **whole numbers** only (decimal ratings are not allowed).

The final score of MP is presented with one-decimal place.

For a proposal to be eligible for funding, the following **minimum score** is required:

- MP = 5.0 points.

For the purpose of selection and decision-making regarding funding, projects will be ranked by score obtained in the review process (MP) in decreasing order. In case of equal ratings, the scores given to criterion A, B, D and C will be used successively and by decreasing order. If the tie remains, the locking date of the proposals in the FCT's electronic system will be taken into consideration for the ranking list.

In situations where the information provided in the application does not allow a sustained score of a given evaluation criterion, a score of 1 (one) should be given.

3.1 Criterion A

This criterion aims to assess the scientific merit and innovative nature of the project, among other considerations, the following:

- Dully substantiated relevance, originality of the objectives and of the study's object based on the state of the art of the scientific area, and innovative nature of the proposed project;
- Potential contribution of the research project to the advancement of scientific knowledge and potential innovations brought by the applications of that knowledge;
- Expected deliverables, such as algorithms or prototypes;
- Potential impacts of the project results on the societal, economic and technological dimensions, namely for the improvement of public administration services and decision-making processes.

3.2 Criterion B

The present criterion is intended to evaluate the scientific merit of the research team, through the following dimensions:

- Merit of the scientific and professional career of the proponents of the project (PI, co-PI and team members), valuing the different components that support a curriculum of scientific merit: participation in research projects; scientific publications; leadership/organization/participation in networks and conferences; participation in activities of scientific training and management; degree of internationalization of the team (when appropriate);
- Abilities and skills to adequately execute the proposed project in the specific area of this call, considering the team's configuration, the availability and commitment of its members (and other entities, when applicable) and the PI's qualifications regarding the project's challenges, both at the scientific and management level, as well as the ability to engage young researchers in training;
- Relevant outcomes of previous projects and their contribution to the advancement of knowledge and to knowledge-based applications, assessed through the qualitative appraisal of publications or other professional and scientific works and actions considered as the most representative of the scientific/professional career of the PI, co-PI and other team members.

3.3 Criterion C

This criterion is intended to evaluate the feasibility of the work plan, reasonability of the budget and contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Scientific and Technological System in the areas of the call, considering the following aspects:

- Quality (clarity, consistency and adequacy) of the proposed scientific approach, taking into consideration the theoretical framework, the adopted methodology for the development of the project, the work plan proposed, the project outcomes, and the applicability of the results in the framework of the goals of this call;
- Clear identification of the activities to be developed, their structure and their adequacy to the established methods and objectives;
- Adequacy of the human resources, budget and methodologies to perform the proposed objectives and tasks and meet the proposed deadlines;
- If applicable, analysis of the risks associated to the different stages of the project, with special focus on the identification of the critical points and the corresponding contingency plan to be adopted;
- Contribution to the body of knowledge and competence of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results).

3.4 Criterion D

This criterion is intended to evaluate the merit of international collaborations and the demonstration of their effective participation in the work program.

4 EVALUATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

4.1 General Information

- FCT is responsible for verifying the eligibility requirements of each project according to factual and legally binding criteria;
- The **Merit of the Project** will be assessed by an **international evaluation panel**;
- **Each application** will be remotely and individually evaluated by **two panel members**. One of the panel members will be appointed as the **first reader** of the application;
- All experts will be of acknowledged competence in the areas of the application to be evaluated, and cannot be affiliated with Portuguese R&D institutions or have current or scheduled collaborations with any Portuguese R&D institution;
- Before the remote evaluation process, all panel members will have to sign the Terms of Reference of the call;
- The panel is headed by a Panel Chair and its composition will be disclosed on the FCT website;
- Whenever a particular expertise is not covered by the panel members, the Panel Chair suggests external reviewers to be invited by FCT, to provide an assessment of the application in consideration. The name of the external reviewers will not be made public;
- Distribution of the applications to panel members will take into consideration any Conflict of Interest, as well as, the matching of scientific competences;
- The first time a reviewer logs in the evaluation webpage located at the FCT site he/she has to accept a Confidentiality Statement (**Section 5.1**);
- Prior to access to each application, the reviewer has to declare whether or not a Conflict of Interest is identified for that particular application;
- During the panel meeting all applications shall be discussed. A **ranked list** and a **panel evaluation report** (for each application) will be produced;
- The panel will issue a **panel meeting report** on its activities;
- The panel members are asked to give support to FCT during the period spanning the evaluation meeting and the final decision (*i.e.*, analysis of potential appeals of scientific nature presented by the applicants);
- There is an allocated FCT team for the evaluation panel, which will act as the contact point for the reviewers.

4.2 Constitution of the Evaluation Panel

- The evaluation panel is appointed by the Board of Directors of FCT and approved by the Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education;
- The constitution of the evaluation panel will take into consideration the number and the scientific areas of the applications, an adequate gender balance and a fair geographic and institutional distribution of evaluators;
- A Chair will be invited to head the evaluation panel and is responsible for the following tasks:
 - i. Assigning each application to two panel members;
 - ii. Controlling the quality of the Compilation (Pre-Consensus) and panel evaluation reports;
 - iii. Steering the panel meeting;
 - iv. Communicating the results of the panel meeting to the Board of Directors of FCT;
 - v. Keeping the evaluation process within the defined timeframe and contacting panel members in case of any delay;
 - vi. Supporting the FCT team in the resolution of any Conflict of Interest identified during the evaluation process.

4.3 Evaluation Stages

In this call, the evaluation process of the applications involves the following stages:

- Assignment of the Applications;
- Individual Remote Evaluation (Pre-Meeting Activities);
- Panel Evaluation (Meeting Activities).

4.3.1 Assignment of the Applications

- **Each application** will be remotely and individually evaluated by **two panel members**. One of the panel members will be appointed as **first reader** of the application;
- **Distribution** of the applications to panel members will take into consideration any declared **Conflict of Interest**, as well as the **matching of professional and scientific expertise** with the topic of the application;
- The panel Chair will receive coordinator credentials for the assignment of each application to the respective first and second readers (1st and 2nd readers).

4.3.2 Individual Remote Evaluation (Pre-Meeting Activities)

- After the assignment of all applications, panel members will receive **individual credentials** to start the evaluation process;

- Before accessing each application, the reviewer has to declare whether or not a **Conflict of Interest** is identified for that particular application;
- In case of a Disqualifying Conflict of Interest, the panel Chair should be informed and the application allocated to a different panel member;
- Reviewers must submit an **Individual Evaluation Report** with their assessment for each application assigned to them;
 - i. The **Individual Evaluation Report Form**, includes:
 - The score and comments for each of the three evaluation criteria;
 - An overall comment on the proposal evaluation;
 - Funding recommendation, without specifying the amount;
 - Confidential comments to the evaluation panel may be provided.
 - ii. The assessment should take into account the following **guidelines**:
 - The strengths and weaknesses for each criterion must be identified;
 - The comment for each criterion should be succinct but substantial; this comment should address the relative importance of the criterion and the extent to which the application actually meets the criterion. Suggestions that might help the project team to carry out the project activities may be provided;
 - The overall comment on the proposal should be a global appraisal of the reviewer on the application, stating conclusions regarding the research work and the organization of the project. It must be in accordance with the comments and scores given to each criterion;
 - Comments should also be impeccably polite; if so decided by the panel, the comments may be reproduced totally or partially in the feedback to applicants.
- **Both readers must submit and lock their individual evaluation** for each assigned application in the Individual Evaluation Form;
- The panel member appointed as **1st reader** will only have access to the **Compilation Report Form**, for that particular application, after the submission of the two Individual Evaluation Reports;
- Based on the two individual reviews, the **1st readers** will prepare the **Compilation (Pre-Consensus) Report** for each application. **This report, whose structure is similar to the Individual Evaluation Report, must be submitted and locked up to two weeks before the panel meeting;**
- **Both scores and comments are critically important.** The Pre-Consensus review scores and comments are the starting point for the panel discussions and final panel score during the panel meeting;

- Whenever a reviewer has all her/his reports (Individual Evaluation Reports and Compilation Reports) locked, **panel credentials** will be sent, giving him/her access to all applications, as well as to all Individual and Pre-Consensus reports. Access to all the information will allow panel members to prepare for the panel meeting.

4.3.3 Panel Evaluation (Meeting Activities)

- During the panel meeting, **all applications must be discussed**;
- The **application's final scores** for each criterion, as well as the **comments to be made available to the applicants**, will be discussed and agreed upon by the evaluation panel and included in the **Panel Evaluation Report** by the 1st reader;
 - i. The **Panel Evaluation Report Form** includes:
 - The scores and comments for each of the three evaluation criteria;
 - An overall comment on the application;
 - Comments on the proposed budget;
 - Confidential comments to FCT, if necessary.
 - ii. The final panel assessment should take into account the following **guidelines**:
 - All comments should take the form of a statement with respect to the criterion under evaluation; the overall comment should provide a global point of view on the quality of the project;
 - Panel members shall:
 - Avoid comments that provide a mere description or summary of the application;
 - Avoid the use of the first person or equivalent: "I think..." or "This reviewer finds..."; alternatively, panel members are advised to use expressions such as "The panel considers..." or "It is considered...";
 - Avoid asking questions, since the applicants will not be able to answer them;
 - Panel members must always use dispassionate and analytical language: dismissive statements about the team, the proposed science or technology, the knowledge or the field concerned must be avoided;
 - Panel members must evaluate the work that is being proposed, and not the work that they consider should have been proposed.
- The panel will have to prepare a **Panel Meeting Report** containing a summary of the meeting activities that should address (but is not limited to) the following issues:

- Work methodology adopted by the panel;
- Identification of Conflicts of Interest and their resolution at any time during the process;
- Final Panel Ranking.

This report should be signed by all panel members.

- The Panel should prepare an additional document with **Recommendations to FCT** on the various aspects of the evaluation process that may help FCT improve procedures in future calls. This document may include, among other issues considered to be important:
 - Comments and criticisms on the application form, with suggestions for possible improvements;
 - Comments on the material available to panel members, in particular the Guide for Peer Reviewers;
 - Strong and weak aspects of the FCT team;
 - Strong and weak logistical aspects (travel, hotel, meeting).

In summary:

It is the duty of the **evaluation panel** to:

- Prepare a **Panel Evaluation Report** for each application (to be conveyed to the applicants) based on the Compilation (Pre-Consensus) reports and panel discussions;
- Produce a Final **Panel Ranking** of all evaluated applications;
- Prepare a **Panel Meeting Report** with a summary of the meeting activities and comments regarding the evaluation process;
- Prepare a document with **Recommendations to FCT**.

4.4 FCT Evaluation Webpage (<https://sig.fct.pt/evaluation/>)

4.4.1 Panel Chair Credentials

Panel Chair credentials give access to the FCT evaluation webpage, and enable Panel Chairs to:

- Allocate each application to two panel members and external reviewers (if applicable);
- Check the number of applications assigned to each reviewer;
- Monitor the individual reviewers' work flow (individual evaluation report submitted by panel members);
- Extract an excel file to sort the applications according to various items, including scores, requested funding, etc.

The main menu displays the following options:

Project List – This list displays all the applications submitted to the panel. The reference/title are links to access the overview of the selected application form, the status of its evaluation and the contents of the individual reports, if locked. Each application must be assigned to two panel members.

Evaluators List - This list displays the names of the reviewers and the number of projects assigned to each. By clicking the name, the Panel Chair will access the list of applications associated with each reviewer.

Evaluators / Ratings - List of all projects, with data relative to the reviewers' workflow.

Additional Documents - Set of documents with information on the evaluation process, the particular call, logistical aspects, etc.

Extra Information - Lists that can be extracted to an excel file to monitor the work flow. This includes a list with the information regarding the conflict of interest declared by the reviewer.

Registration Form - To be filled in by the evaluator with her/his Personal Data, Scientific Field and Payment Data.

4.4.2 Individual Credentials

Individual credentials give access to the list of applications assigned to the reviewer, with the type of reader identified. After logging in and accepting the statement of confidentiality, instructions are available at the top of the menu.

For each application, the following is available:

- A statement on Conflicts of Interest;
- The content of the application;
- The Individual and Compilation (Pre-Consensus) (if 1st reader) Report Forms;
- The possibility to **SAVE** the submitted evaluation report - the uploaded information will be kept for future revision;
- The **LOCK** button to submit the evaluation report - the reviewer will no longer be able to modify the uploaded information.

4.4.3 Panel Credentials

Panel credentials give access to the list of all applications and to the respective evaluations (all individual and compilation reports). After logging in, instructions are available at the top of the menu.

For each application, the following is available:

- The content of the application (“Form Overview” tab);
- The Individual and Compilation (Pre-Consensus) Reports (“Evaluation” tab);

- The **Panel Report Form** (to be filled in by the 1st reader) (“Panel Evaluation” tab) – this form has the same structure of the Individual and Compilation reports;
- The possibility to **SAVE** the submitted evaluation report - the uploaded information will be kept for future revision;
- The **LOCK** button to submit the evaluation report - the reviewer will no longer be able to modify the uploaded information.

5 CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5.1 Confidentiality

The confidentiality of written applications must be protected. All reviewers involved in the evaluation are asked not to copy, quote, disclose or otherwise use material contained in the applications. All reviewers are requested to accept a statement of confidentiality relative to the contents of the applications and to the results of the evaluation.

The statement that needs to be accepted, which appears the first time the reviewer uses the individual credentials to access the evaluation area, is the following:

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Thank you for accepting to participate in the scientific evaluation of Research Projects submitted to the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (*Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P.*) – FCT.

The reader of this message pledges, on his/her honour, not to quote or using in any way, the contents of the project applications, nor to make available, other than to FCT or the evaluation panel, the results of the evaluation of project applications.

5.2 Conflicts of Interest (Col)

Researchers that have submitted any **application to the present Call**, as PI, co-PI, team member or consultant to the project, **have to decline** participating in the evaluation process. Those with first-degree relationships, domestic partnership or married to the PI, co-PI or any team member are also hindered from being a panel member or external reviewer.

Disqualifying Conflict of Interest

In case a disqualifying conflict of interest is identified, the panel member cannot evaluate the respective application. Panel members are also not allowed to participate in the panel meeting discussion of these

applications. Circumstances that could be interpreted as a disqualifying conflict of interest are the following:

1. Personal or financial interest in the application's success;
2. Current or planned close scientific cooperation;
3. Research cooperation within the last three years, *e.g.* joint publications;
4. Dependent employment relationship or supervisory relationship (*e.g.* teacher-student relationship up to and including the postdoctoral phase) within the last five years before the opening date of the call;
5. Affiliation or pending transfer to any of the departments, research centres or companies involved in the project;
6. Researchers who are active in a council or similar supervisory or advisory board of the applying institutions are excluded from participating in the review and decision-making process for applications originating from these institutions.

Potential Conflict of Interest

In the case of a potential conflict of interest, the panel member should notify FCT and clarify if he/she is able to perform an unbiased evaluation or if the conflict should rather be considered as disqualifying. A potential conflict of interest exists in the following circumstances:

7. Relationships other than first-degree, marriage or domestic partnership; other personal ties or conflicts;
8. Participation in university bodies other than those listed under no. 6, *e.g.* in scientific advisory committees in the research environment;
9. Preparation of an application or implementation of a project with a closely related research topic (competition);
10. Participating in an on-going scientific or inter-personal conflict with the applicant(s).

Before starting the evaluation of each application, and in order to be able to access the evaluation form, each reviewer needs to complete a CoI Declaration, as follows:

Conflict of Interest Declaration

Please state:

- No, I have no conflict
- Yes, I have a strong conflict (see **Disqualifying CoI**)
- It is possible that I have a conflict (see **Potential CoI**)

In case of a disqualifying or potential Col, the reviewer is asked to justify the situation.

The **individual reviewer** will not be able to proceed in case of a disqualifying conflict of interest. **In this case, the individual reviewer is required to inform the Panel Chair and FCT team of this situation**, so that the application may be reassigned. The panel meeting report must mention all declared Col.

6 GLOSSARY AND TRANSLATIONS

6.1 Portuguese to English translation and explanations:

Agregação = Aggregation. This is an academic title. It attests

- i.) the quality of the academic, professional, scientific and pedagogical curriculum
- ii.) the capacity to carry out research work
- iii.) the capability to coordinate and carry out independent research work,

and is issued to PhD holders after a public exam by a jury. The exam is required by the candidates and takes places during two days.

Doutoramento = PhD, doctoral degree

Mestrado – Master’s degree

Licenciatura = BA (3, 4 or 5 years graduate course)

Bolsa = Grant, fellowship

Bolseiro = Grant Holder, fellow

BII = Bolsas de Iniciação à Investigação = Research Initiation Grants

- Research Initiation Grants are intended for students enrolled in a Higher Professional Education, a 1st cycle of a Higher Education institution, an Integrated Master or Master to initiate their scientific training, within research projects to be developed in national institutions;
- These grants are also aimed at holders of a graduate degree, enrolled in courses that do not award an academic degree, integrated in an educational project of a higher education institution developed individually or jointly in their institutes or R&D units;
- These grants have a minimum duration of three months and may be renewable up to a maximum of one year.

BI = Bolsas de Investigação = Research Grants

- Research grants are intended for students enrolled in an Integrated Master, Master or Doctoral degree, for obtaining the respective scientific academic degree, through the development of scientific training integrated or not in R&D projects;

- These grants are also aimed at holders of a graduate degree or master, enrolled in courses that do not award an academic degree, integrated in an educational project of a higher education institution developed individually or jointly in their institutes or R&D units;
- These grants are, in principle, one year in length, and cannot be awarded for periods of less than three consecutive months;
- The grants may be renewable for additional periods up to:
 - a. One year, for grants awarded to graduated degree or master holders enrolled in courses that do not award an academic degree;
 - b. Two years, for grants awarded to students enrolled in master's courses;
 - c. Four years, for grants awarded to students enrolled in doctoral degrees.
- These grants may be national, mixed or abroad, depending if the work plan occurs completely, partially or not in national institutions;
- For mixed research grants, the work plan performed in a foreign institution may not exceed 2 years.

BIPD= Bolsas de Investigação Pós-Doutoral = Postdoctoral Research Grants

- Postdoctoral Research Grants are intended for doctoral degree holders for the development of R&D activities;
- BIPDs are temporally restricted in order to stimulate the scientific employment and the use of researcher contracts as a rule instrument for their hiring, as well as to promote the development, in National Scientific and Technological System entities, of careers aiming at scientific research;
- BIPDs may only be granted provided that the following requirements are cumulatively met:
 - The doctoral degree has been obtained in the last three years before the submission date of the application grant;
 - The postdoctoral research is carried out in a host entity different than the one in which the research work was done to achieve the doctoral degree;
 - The research activities does not require post-doctoral experience;
 - The research activities have a development and execution period equal or less than three years.
- These grants are, in principle, one year in length, renewable for up to a total of three years, and cannot be awarded for periods of less than three consecutive months;
- Once the contract grant is finished, a new contract grant cannot be performed between the same host entity and the same fellow.

6.2 Glossary

CoI = Conflict of Interest

Co-PI = Co-Principal Investigator

MP = Merit of the Project

NNAC = National Network for Advanced Computing

OECD = Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PI = Principal Investigator

R&D = Research and Development

R&I = Research and Innovation

SR&TD = Scientific Research and Technological Development