

Opening Notice of the Call to Award PhD Studentships

The Institute of Public Health of the University of Porto (ISPUP) opens a call to award **4 (four)** research grants, hereinafter referred to as PhD Studentships, in the Public Health Sciences area, complying with the provisions of FCT's Regulation for Studentships and Fellowships (RBI), and the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (EBI).

The studentships will be financed by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) within the collaboration Protocol for Financing the Multiannual Plan for Scholarships for Doctoral Students, signed between FCT and the R&D *Unidade de Investigação em Epidemiologia - Instituto de Saúde Pública da Universidade do Porto (EPIUnit)* (UIDB/04750/2020).

1. APPLICATION

The call is open from April 26th to June 30th at 17h00 (BST/Lisbon time).

Applications, and all of the supporting documents described in the present Opening Notice of the Call, must be submitted by email to candidaturas@ispup.up.pt.

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

Providing false statements or committing acts of plagiarism by the applicants is grounds for the exclusion of the application without prejudice of taking other measures of sanctioning nature.

2. TYPE AND DURATION OF STUDENTSHIPS

PhD studentship grants are intended to fund the research activities carried out by the studentship holder leading to obtaining the doctoral academic degree in Portuguese Universities.

Research activities leading to obtaining the doctoral degree will take place at the Research Unit, under the supervision of one of its integrated members. EPIUnit will be the host institution for the studentship holders, without prejudice that the work may be carried out in collaboration with other institutions.

The research activities leading to obtaining the doctoral academic degree of the selected studentship holders must be part of the activity plan and strategy of the EPIUnit, and must be carried out within the scope of the Doctoral Program in Public Health of the University of Porto.

The work plan may be developed entirely or partially in a national institution (studentship in the country or a mixed studentship, respectively).

As a rule, the duration of the PhD studentships is annual, renewable up to a maximum of four years (48 months), and a studentship cannot be granted for a period of less than 3 consecutive months.

In the case of a mixed studentship, the work plan period that takes place in a foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months.

3. STUDENTSHIP RECIPIENTS

- The PhD studentships are intended for enrolled applicants or for applicants who satisfy the necessary requirements to be admitted to the doctoral program of Public Health at the University of Porto and who intend to carry out research activities leading to obtaining a doctoral degree at the *Unidade de Investigação em Epidemiologia - Instituto de Saúde Pública da Universidade do Porto (EPIUnit)*, or in associated host institutions.

4. ADMISSIBILITY

4.1 Applicant's Admissibility Requirements

The following individuals may apply to this call:

- National citizens or citizens of other member states of the European Union;
- Citizens of third-party states;
- Stateless individuals;
- Citizens holding a political refugee status.

To apply for the PhD studentship, it is necessary:

- To have a licentiate's or master's degree in Health Sciences and/or areas considered to be related to Public Health Sciences (mathematics, sociology, economics, geography, ...).
- To normally and permanently reside in Portugal, if the work plan associated with the studentship is partially carried out in foreign institutions (mixed studentships), this requirement is applicable to both national and foreign citizens.
- To not have benefited from a PhD studentship or business PhD studentship directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration.

4.2 Application's Admissibility Requirements

It is essential, under penalty of not being admitted to the call, to attach the following documents to the application:

- Identity card/citizenship card/passport;
- Applicant's Curriculum Vitae;
- Certificates of qualification of academic degrees held, specifying the final grade(s) and, if possible, the grades obtained in all subjects taken; In the case of "post-Bologna" training, you must send the 1st and 2nd cycle of study certificates or, if it is not a bi-etapic training, you must send the integrated master's

certificate. In the case of “pre-Bologna” training, you must send the graduation and master's certificates;

- Motivation letter with detailed and justified indication of the research topic of interest of the applicant, among those developed in the various scientific areas/research groups of the Research Unit (EPIUnit);
- Name and contact details of two people who will be asked to send a confidential reference letter;
- The application and all documents associated with it, including the letter of motivation, must be written in Portuguese or English.

The following should be noted regarding the above mentioned admissibility requirements:

- In case of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and in order to guarantee the principle of equal treatment is used to applicants who hold foreign and national academic degrees, these degrees must be recognized and the conversion of the respective final grade to the Portuguese classification scale must be completed until the end of the application period. If the recognition of a degree is automatic, applicants may present proof of their request until the end of the application period.

The recognition of foreign academic degrees and diplomas as well as the conversion of the final grade to the Portuguese classification scale can be acquired from any public higher education institution, or from the Directorate-General for Higher Education (DGES, only in case of automatic recognition). Regarding this matter, please consult the DGES portal through the following website: <http://www.dges.gov.pt>.

- Only applicants who have completed the cycle of studies leading to the licentiate’s or master’s degree by the end of the application period will be admitted. If applicants do not have the certificate of completion of a degree at a national educational institution yet, a declaration of honor from applicants will be accepted stating that they will complete the necessary qualifications for the purposes of the call by the end of the application period. Granting of the studentship will always be dependent on the presentation of proof of the academic qualifications required to grant the studentship.

5. WORK PLANS AND SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION OF THE STUDENTSHIPS

Research activities include the elaboration of work leading to the doctoral dissertation in Public Health in one of the specific areas of interest identified by the applicant from among those available at the Research Unit (EPIUnit).

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Evaluation Criteria

The assessment takes into account the applicant's merit, and the adequacy of the applicant's training and motivation for the research objectives of EPIUnit.

The evaluation process will have two mandatory distinctive and successive steps, according to the following evaluation criteria:

- The first stage (E1) (scored from 0 to 20 values and presented in tenths) will focus on a Curricular Evaluation (CE) and Motivation (M) for the accomplishment of this PhD. The Curricular Evaluation and Motivation will each have a weight of 50% and 50%, respectively, in the final classification of the first stage of the call, which is expressed by the following formula:

$$E1 = (0.5 \times CE) + (0.5 \times M)$$

The Curricular Evaluation (CE) - scored from 0 to 20 values and presented in tenths - has a weight of 60% in the final classification of the first stage of the call and will focus on:

- Sub-criterion CE1 - Quality of the academic degree (classification of academic degrees), weighting 60%;
- Sub-criterion CE2 - Scientific production and participation in research projects, weighting 20%;
- Sub-criterion CE3 - Professional experience, weighting 20%.

The score for the sub-criterion CE1 is calculated based on the final classifications contained in the academic degrees presented by the candidate in the application form: i) simple arithmetic average of the Degree + Master's degree or classification of the Integrated Master's degree; ii) classification of the Degree only; or iii) Master's classification only. In case of no valid degree certificates are submitted, the classification to be attributed to sub-criterion CE1 will be zero (CE1 = 0).

For the purpose of calculating sub-criterion CE1, the certificates specifying only a qualitative classification (for example, pre-Bologna master's degrees), it will be converted in the terms expressed in the following table:

Qualitative Classification	Correspondent quantitative Classification
Excellent, Very good with distinction, <i>Distinction and Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude / Summa Cum Laude</i>	18
Very good, approved with distinction, good with distinction, <i>Cum Laude</i>	16
Good / Approved by unanimity	14
Sufficient	12

Motivation (M) for the accomplishment of the PhD and justification for interest in research of a specific topic

with relevance in Public Health, among those developed in the various scientific areas/research groups of the Research Unit (EPIUnit), expressed in the "Motivation Letter" - scored from 0 to 20 values and presented in tenths - has a weight of 50% in the final classification of the first stage of the call.

The first 10 applicants with the highest final classification in the first stage of the call (E1) and a final classification equal to or greater than 10 points in the first stage of the call (E1), in descending order, will be admitted to the second stage of the call (E2) - "Admitted to the Interview". In the event of a tie in the attribution of the final classification in the first stage of the call (E1) of the last applicant admitted to the interview, all applicants with the same final classification in the first stage of the call (E1) as the last applicant admitted to the interview will be admitted to the second stage of the call - "Admitted to the Interview".

All applicants with a score less than 10 in the first stage of the call (E1) or with a score equal to or greater than 10 in the first stage of the call (E1) but classified after the 40th position will be excluded from the call - "Excluded".

The second stage (E2) (scored from 0 to 20 values and presented in tenths) consists of an Individual Interview (II) of the applicant and has a weight of 100% in the final classification of the second stage of the call.

The final classification of the second stage of the call (E2) is the final classification of the Individual Interview (II) that aims to evaluate the potential scientific production of each applicant in the area of the call, which will result from the arithmetic average of the scores of all of the evaluated criteria in the Individual Interview (II) by the members present in the Jury: $E2 = \text{Final Classification II}$.

The Individual Interview (II) will focus on the following criteria: motivation and availability, knowledge and professional attitude; interpersonal skills, and communication skills (including knowledge of English). Each of these Individual Interview criteria will be evaluated (from 0 to 20 points), by the members of the Jury present in the Individual Interview (at least 3 elements of the jury will be present in each II).

Applicants with a final E2 (II) score of less than 16 will be automatically excluded - "Excluded". For tie-breaking purposes in the final classification of E2 (II), applicants will be ranked based on the ratings assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order of precedence: (i) motivation and availability, (ii) knowledge and attitude professional, (iii) communication skills, and (iv) interpersonal relationships.

For the deciding purposes of awarding studentships, applicants will be ranked according to the weighted average of the classification obtained in each of the two criteria, expressed by the following formula:

$$\text{Final Classification} = (0.5 \times E1) + (0.5 \times E2)$$

For tie-breaking purposes, the ranking of candidates will be based on the ratings assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order of precedence: E1 – Curriculum vitae + Motivation letter; E2 – Individual Interview.

Important notice for applicants with degrees issued by foreign higher education institutions:

- Applicants with degrees issued by foreign higher education institutions can apply and will be assessed using the same criteria as applicants with diplomas issued by Portuguese institutions, provided they present, in their application, proof of recognition of academic degrees or request for automatic grade recognition and the conversion of the final grade to the Portuguese classification scale under the terms of the applicable legislation.
- Applicants with foreign degrees who do not show proof of conversion of the final grade to the Portuguese classification scale will be awarded the minimum classification (10 points) for sub-criterion A1.
- In any case, studentship contracts with applicants with degrees issued by foreign institutions will only be concluded upon presentation of proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion of the final grade, as indicated above.

Applicants whose application is evaluated with a final classification below (10) points are not eligible for the studentship.

7. EVALUATION

The evaluation panel consists of the following members, belonging to the research groups of the Research Unit:

- Henrique Barros (Panel Coordinator)
- Carla Lopes
- Raquel Lucas
- Sílvia Fraga

Alternate Members

- Ana Cristina Santos
- João Paulo Teixeira
- Milton Severo
- Raquel Duarte

The evaluation panel will assess applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in this call for studentship grants, considering the elements of evaluation.

All members of the panel, including the coordinator, will make a commitment to respect a set of responsibilities essential to the evaluation process, such as duties of impartiality, the declaration of any potential conflict of interest situations and confidentiality. At all times during the evaluation process, confidentiality is fully protected and insured in order to guarantee the independence of all opinions.

Members of the panel, including the coordinator, will be unable to participate in the discussion or know the classification of an applicant until the final ranking of the list if they are supervisors or co-supervisors of applicants with applications submitted to the call.

For each application, a final evaluation form will be produced by the panel, in which the arguments that led to the grades attributed to each of the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria will be presented in a clear, coherent and consistent manner.

Minutes of the meetings of the evaluation panel will be the responsibility of all its members.

The minutes and their attachments must include the following information:

- Name and affiliation of all members of the evaluation panel;
- Identification of all excluded applications and the respective reasons [if applicable];
- Methodology adopted by the panel for specific cases considered [if applicable];
- Final Evaluation Forms for each applicant;
- Provisional classification list and ranking of applicants, in descending order of the final classification, of all applications evaluated by the panel;
- Declarations of conflicts of interest by all members of the panel;
- Possible vote delegations and powers due to justified absence [if applicable].

8. DISCLOSURE OF RESULTS

The results of the evaluation are communicated via e-mail to the e-mail address used by the applicant to send the application or expressly indicated in the application (when different).

9. DEADLINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY HEARINGS, CLAIMS AND APPEALS

After communicating the provisional list of results of the evaluation, the applicants have a period of 10 business days, if they wish, to give their opinion in the preliminary hearing of the interested parties, according to Articles no. 121 and following the Administrative Procedures Code.

The final decision will be disclosed after the analysis of the arguments presented in the preliminary hearing of the interested parties. The final decision may be claimed within 15 business days, or, alternatively, an appeal may be filed within 30 business days, both counted from the respective notification of the results. Applicants who choose to submit a claim must address their arguments to the member of the FCT Board of Directors with delegated competence. Applicants who prefer to submit an appeal must address their arguments to the FCT Board of Directors.

10. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTSHIP GRANTING

Research studentship contracts are signed directly with FCT.

The following documents must be sent, when the studentship is awarded, for the purposes of contracting:

- a) Copy of the personal identification, tax and social security, when applicable, document(s)¹;
- b) Copy of the academic degree certificates;
- c) Plan of activities
- d) Presentation of the registration record for the recognition of foreign academic degrees and conversion of the respective final grade to the Portuguese classification scale, if applicable;
- e) Document proving enrolment in one of the Doctoral Programs identified as Health Sciences and/or related areas;
- f) Statement by the supervisor(s) assuming responsibility for supervising the work plan, pursuant to Article 5-A of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (template will be made available by FCT);
- g) Document proving the applicant's acceptance issued by the institution(s) where the research activities will take place, guaranteeing the conditions necessary for its successful development, as well as the fulfillment of the duties provided in Article 13 of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (template will be made available by FCT);
- h) Updated document proving the exclusivity dedication regime (template will be made available by FCT).

The granting of the studentship is dependent on:

- Compliance with the requirements listed in this Opening Notice of the Call;
- The result of the scientific evaluation;
- The absence of unjustified non-compliance with fellowship holder duties under a previous scholarship contract financed, directly or indirectly, by FCT;
- FCT's available budget.

Failure to deliver any of the documents necessary to complete the contracting procedure for the studentship, within 6 months of the date of communication of the decision to award the conditional grant, implies the expiration of the referred grant and the termination of the process.

11. FUNDING

Studentship payment will begin after the applicants return the signed studentship contract, which should occur within a maximum period of 15 business days from the date received.

The studentships granted under this call will be financed by FCT with funds from the State Budget and, whenever eligible, with funds from the European Social Fund, to be made available under the *PORTUGAL 2020* program,

¹ The presentation of these documents may optionally be substituted by in-person presentation at the funding entity, which will keep all the elements contained therein that are relevant to the validity and execution of the contract, including the personal identification, tax and security numbers as well as the respective expiry dates of the documents.

through the *Programa Operacional Regional do Norte (NORTE 2020)*, *Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (Centro 2020)* and *Programa Operacional Regional do Alentejo (Alentejo 2020)*, according to the respective regulatory provisions established for this purpose.

12. STUDENTSHIP ALLOWANCE

Studentship recipients receive a monthly maintenance allowance, in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI.

The studentship may also include additional allowances, according to Article 18 of the RBI and the values indicated in Annex II of the RBI.

All studentship holders will benefit from personal accident insurance for research activities, supported by FCT.

All studentship holders who are not beneficiaries of any social protection regime can use the right to social security through adherence to the voluntary social insurance regime, under the terms of the Contributory Schemes of the Social Security System. FCT will ensure the charges resulting from contributions under the terms and with the limits provided in Article 10 of the EBI.

13. PAYMENTS OF STUDENTSHIP COMPONENTS

Payments due to the studentship holder are made through bank transfer to the respective account identified by the studentship holder. The monthly maintenance allowance is paid on the first business day of each month.

Registration, enrolment, or tuition fees are paid by FCT directly to the national institution where the studentship holder is enrolled in the PhD.

14. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PHD STUDENTSHIP RENEWAL

The renewal of the studentship always depends on the application submitted by the holder, within 60 business days prior to the renewal start date, accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Declaration(s) issued by the supervisor(s) and by the host organization(s) attesting the progress of the studentship holder's work plan and the evaluation of his/her activities;
- b) Updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime;
- c) Document proving renewal of enrolment in the cycle of studies leading to the doctoral degree.

15. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY OF THE GRANTED FUNDING

All R&D activities carried out by the studentship holder, directly or indirectly financed by the studentship grant, namely, all communications, publications and scientific creations, as well as thesis, must mention the financial support from FCT and the European Social Fund, namely, the *Programa Operacional Regional do Norte (Norte 2020)*, *Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (Centro 2020)*, *Programa Operacional Regional do Alentejo*

(*Alentejo 2020*). For this purpose, the FCT, MCTES, ESF and EU logos must be included in the documents referring to these actions, following the rules of each operational program.

The disclosure of research results funded under the RBI must comply with the open access guidelines, publications and other research results in accordance with FCT rules.

For all studentships, and in particular, in the case of actions supported by European funding, namely from ESF, monitoring and control actions may be carried out by the national and European entities in accordance with the applicable legislation in this matter. Studentship holders must therefore collaborate and provide all of the requested information, which includes answering surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the studentship grant may have already ceased.

16. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

FCT promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, thus no applicant may be privileged, benefited, harmed or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty, namely, due to ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, economic status, education, origin or social status, genetic heritage, reduced work capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnic or race, land of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs or trade union affiliation.

17. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The present call is governed by this Opening Notice of the Call, the FCT Regulation of Research Fellowships, approved by Regulation No. 950/2019, published in the Series II of the DR of December 16th, 2019, the Research Fellowship Holder Statute, approved by Law no. 40/2004, of August 18th, in its current version, and other applicable national and European legislation.