

## **ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE 2019 CALL FOR EXPLORATORY RESEARCH PROPOSALS UNDER THE CARNEGIE MELLON PORTUGAL PROGRAM**

Under Article number 10 of the Regulations for Projects Exclusively Funded by National Funds, hereinafter designated by FCT Projects Regulation, published by Regulation No. 999/2016, of October 31st, Scientific Research and Technological Development Projects are submitted under a call for proposals, 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 a Call for Proposals, hereinafter referred to as ACP, has been developed in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of FCT Projects Regulation, and reads as follows:

### **1. AIMS AND PRIORITIES**

Exploratory Research Projects (ERP) are designed to assist teams of researchers from Portuguese institutions, Carnegie Mellon University and industry partners, to bootstrap high-impact potential research activities of strategic relevance for the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program. The projects must aim at stimulating and promoting Portugal's international competitiveness and innovation capacity in Science and Technology (S&T), in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The proposals should be high-risk/high-reward and show promise and a strategy for significant future expansion of the project's goals. ERP will often be aimed at formulating and launching longer-term projects, i.e., they will not be required to achieve, within their own scope, the fully developed and ambitious final results that will be typical of longer-term projects. However, the proposals must be very concrete on the activities and outcomes that the consortium actually proposes to carry out and achieve in the scope of the ERP, and clearly link them to its longer-term objectives. The ERP should value impact, e.g., by building systems that address real-world problems, beyond just research papers.

For this Call, the Program is seeking proposals, namely in the area of ICT, with a focus on the opportunities provided by the data economy as a driver of growth and change.

All proposals must comply entirely with the terms of reference defined in the document Terms of Reference for the Exploratory Research Projects Call for Proposals 2019.

### **2. SUPPORTED ENTITIES**

Only the following Portuguese entities are eligible to receive funding from FCT through the present Call for Proposals:

- i. Higher Education Institutions, their institutes and R&D units;
- ii. State or international Laboratories with head office in Portugal;

- iii. Non-profit private institutions whose main objective is R&D activities;
- iv. Other non-profit private and public institutions developing or participating in scientific research activities.

The funding of the CMU team will come directly from the funding awarded by FCT to CMU through Amendment No. 8 to the Research and Education Collaboration Agreement between FCT and CMU.

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

This call is intended to fund proposals for research and development projects of exploratory nature developed by entities of the National Scientific and Technology System (NSTS), defined on section 2 of this ACP.

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

The submitted proposals must include:

- One or more Portuguese research institutions from different entities as identified in section 2
- One partner CMU faculty team.

In addition to the entities mentioned above, the consortia may include other public or private entities, profit or non-profit, that may also invest in the exploratory project and that may bring relevant competencies to the project. However, such entities will not be funded by this call.

Only resources and activities in Portuguese beneficiaries will be funded by this call.

The participating researchers from Carnegie Mellon University will be funded by the CMU counterpart of the program, through Amendment No. 8 to the Research and Education Collaboration Agreement between FCT and CMU.

A typical proposal should cover efforts for a period of up to 12 months. The projects can be, in duly justified cases, extendable for a maximum of 3 months. At the end of each exploratory project a final report must be submitted according to article 24 of FCT Projects Regulation.

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

The projects will be funded by National funds through the FCT, I.P. budget.

Depending on the quality of the proposals, up to 8 (eight) new awards are expected to be financed.

The total funding available for Portuguese research institutions, as part of this research call, will be up to €400.000, to ERPs starting in 2020.

The maximum budget for Portuguese research institutions in each ERP cannot exceed:

- 70.000,00 euros for consortia with more than one Portuguese research institution;
- 50.000,00 for projects with a single Portuguese research institution.

An advance payment of 75% of the funding approved for the financed projects will be made by FCT, I.P. after the Acceptance Documents return.

The remaining amount, until the approved funding, will be paid after the scientific and financial components of the project are closed and by means of a final refund payment.

The expenditure justification should be made via electronic submission of only one payment request, in a specific form provided through the FCT, I.P internet Portal.

The participating researchers from Carnegie Mellon University will be funded independently by the CMU Portugal Program at Carnegie Mellon University. The research activities of the participating CMU research teams will be funded by the CMU Portugal Program at Carnegie Mellon University at a level similar to the Portugal team level.

## 5. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

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

a) Direct Costs for Portuguese institutions:

- **Human resources** dedicated or related to the development of R&D activities with regard to the project's execution in all mandatory components by the applicable labour legislation, including expenses with grant holders and working contracts 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.

Only Research Fellowship for graduate's or master's holder or Visiting Scientist Fellowship up to 12 months, as defined in the [FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships](#), are eligible in the project. Furthermore, these grants are tendered and contracted by the beneficiary entities in the context of the supported projects, which must comply with the [Research Grants in the framework of R&D Projects Norms](#);

- **Missions** in Portugal and abroad, and directly attributable to the project;

- **Acquisition of scientific and technical tools and equipment**, indispensable to the project if within the project during their useful lifetime;
- **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;
- **Subcontracts** directly related to the project scientific task's execution;
- Expenses related to the national and foreign record of **patents, copyrights, usefulness models and designs, national models** or **trademarks** when related to other forms of intellectual protection, namely rates, researches to the status of the technique and consulting expenses;
- Expenses with the **demonstration, promotion and disclosure of project's outputs**, namely dissemination fees within the fulfilment and pursuant to national policies of open access;
- **Acquisition of other goods and services** directly related to the project execution, including costs with **consultants** that do not establish subcontracts.

b) Indirect Costs for Portuguese institutions, with a fixed rate of 25% of direct eligible costs with exclusion of subcontracting.

Non-eligible expenses for Portuguese institutions under the Exploratory Research Call are indicated in Article 9 of FCT Projects Regulation.

## 6. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications should be presented to FCT, in English, from 28 June to 30 July 2019, using a specific on-line form and should be submitted through the [FCT platform](#) following the Announcement of the Call for Proposals. Applications to this call must include the on-line FCT form and the following documents, also submitted electronically:

- "Annex to Application" (according to section 2.5 of the Terms of Reference for the Exploratory Research Projects Call for Proposals 2019);
- The document that certifies the PhD degree of the lead Portugal Principal Investigator;
- Written agreement between the lead Portugal Principal Investigator and the Proposing Institution (if applicable);
- A statement from the PI at CMU confirming that he/she will be the lead PI from CMU and that he/she holds a faculty appointment at CMU;
- Declaration on the regulatory framework for State Aid - non-corporate entities of the R&I System;
- Timeline file of project tasks.

Scanning of the Declaration of Commitment of each application must be submitted on the [FCT platform](#) until September 11, 2019.

Before submitting a proposal, applicants are advised to read the Regulations mentioned in section 9 of this announcement, namely: the *Guidelines for Exploratory Research Projects Proposals Writing*, the *Terms of Reference for the Exploratory Research Projects Call for Proposals 2019*, and the [FCT Projects Regulation](#).

## **7. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **7.1. Principal Investigator**

The lead Portugal Principal Investigator (PI):

- May be identified as PI in at most one proposal in this call;
- Should have a doctoral degree. The document certifying the doctoral degree should be attached to the application;
- Should also have an employment contract or grant contract with the Principal Contractor. In the absence of such a link, a written agreement between the parties must be submitted attached to the application, according to point c) of item 1 of article 6 of [FCT's Project Regulations](#);
- 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;
- Proposals will not be accepted from lead Portugal PIs affiliated with institutions on a situation of unjustified fault with FCT requirements regarding the delivery of scientific and/or financial execution reports from previous financed projects.;
- Proposals will also not be accepted from lead Portugal PIs who were PI of any project with a final scientific report rejected within two years before the opening of the Call, for reasons attributable to them.

The lead PI at CMU must hold a faculty appointment at CMU. A confirmation statement should be attached to the application.

### **7.2. Members of the Research Team**

The remaining members of the Portugal research team shall be dedicated to the project, according to their participation.

### 7.3. Principal Contractor

The Principal Contractor of the project should be one of the national entities of the R&I system mention in point 2 of this ACP.

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

## 8. SELECTION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will be carried out by an international panel of independent reviewers. The selection method and ranking of projects is based on a Project Merit Indicator using the following criteria, which are described in greater detail in the CMU Portugal 2019 Call for Proposals – Guide for Peer Reviewers and in the Terms of Reference for the Exploratory Research Projects Call for Proposals 2019:

- A. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the project from an international standpoint, and alignment with the goals of Phase III of the CMU Portugal Program;
- B. Impact of the project results in a real-world problem and potential for opening longer-term research avenues;
- C. Scientific merit of the research team;
- D. Feasibility of the plan of work and reasonableness of the resources and budget.

The **Merit of the Project (MP)**, is calculated according to the following formula:

$$\mathbf{MP = 0.45 A + 0.2 B + 0.2 C + 0.15 D}$$

Each criterion is scored using a 9-point scale system (1 – minimum; 9 – maximum) and rated using this scale with whole numbers only (decimal ratings are not allowed). The final score of MP is rounded to a single decimal place. If information made available in the application does not allow for evaluating a given criterion, then the respective criterion will receive a score of 1 (one). 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 in decreasing order. In case of equal ratings, the locking date of the proposals in the FCT's electronic system will be taken into consideration for the ranking list.

## 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.

For inquiries of a scientific nature, please contact the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program at [research@cmuportugal.org](mailto:research@cmuportugal.org).

For specific information related to application submission, please contact [concursoprojetos@fct.pt](mailto:concursoprojetos@fct.pt).

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