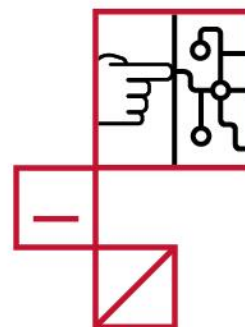
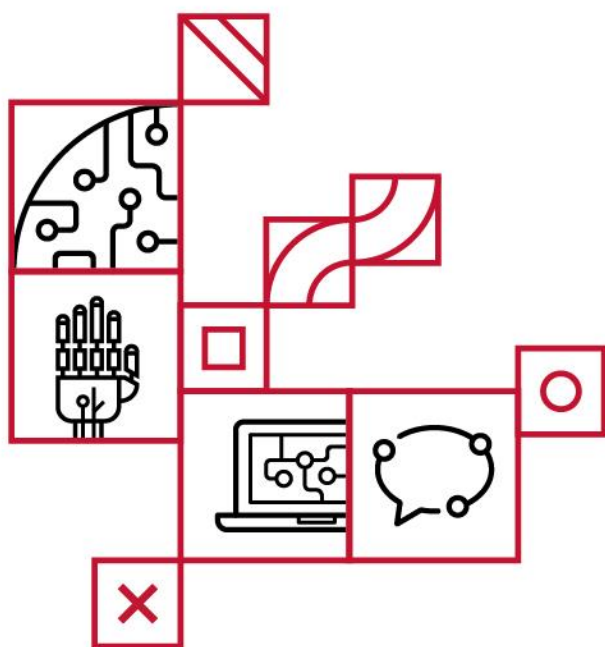


ERPs 2021



Announcement for the
2021 Call for
Exploratory Research
Proposals (ERPs)
under the Carnegie
Mellon Portugal Program



FCT Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

**Carnegie
Mellon**
Portugal



**Announcement for the 2021 Call for
Exploratory Research Proposals (ERPs) 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).

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 (ERPs) are designed to assist teams of researchers from Portuguese institutions, Carnegie Mellon University and industry partners in bootstrapping high-impact potential research activities of strategic relevance for the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program (CMU Portugal). The projects must aim to stimulate and promote 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. ERPs are aimed at formulating and launching the basis for longer-term projects, i.e., they will not be required to achieve, within their 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 proposes to carry out and achieve within the ERP scope 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.

Under this Call, the Program is seeking proposals, namely in the area of ICT, focusing 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 2021 Call for Exploratory Research Proposals \(ERPs\)](#) under the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program.

2. SUPPORTED ENTITIES

Only research teams from the following Portuguese entities may apply for funding:

- I. Higher Education Institutions, their Institutes, and R&D units;
- II. State or international Laboratories with head offices 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 CMU team's funding 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 in section 2 of this ACP.

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, bringing relevant competencies to the project. However, such entities will not be funded by this Call.

This Call will only fund resources and activities of Portuguese beneficiaries.

The participating researchers from Carnegie Mellon University will be funded by the program's CMU counterpart, 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. According to article 24 of the

[FCT Projects Regulation](#), a final report must be submitted at the end of each exploratory project.

4. FUNDING AND BUDGET ALLOCATION

The funding to be granted under this ACP shall be non-reimbursable in accordance with number 1 of Article 7 of the [FCT Projects Regulation](#).

National funds will fund the projects through the FCT, I.P. budget.

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

The budget allocation for this call is EUR 400.000, for projects starting in 2021.

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

- 70.000 euros for consortia with more than one Portuguese research institution;
- 50.000 euros 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. Until the approved funding, the remaining amount will be paid after the project's scientific and financial components are closed and through 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 CMU Portugal Program will fund the participating CMU research teams' activities at Carnegie Mellon University at a level similar to the Portuguese team.

5. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Considering the provisions of Article 8 of the [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 regarding 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.

Regarding 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 worker's social protection, 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 worker's social protection. The Research Fellowships are tendered and contracted by the beneficiary entities in the context of the supported projects, which must comply with the [FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships](#) (Law n.º 40/2004 of 18 August, in its present version);

- **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 its 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 international record of **patents, copyrights, open-access publications, utility models and designs, national models or trademarks** when associated with other forms of intellectual protection, namely fees, state-of-the-art searches and consulting expenses;
- Expenses with the **demonstration, promotion, and disclosure of project's outputs**, such as publication fees in order to meet the national policies for the 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 the 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 19 May to 30 June 2021 at 17:00 Lisbon time, using a specific on-line form, and should be submitted through the [FCT platform](#) following the Announcement of the Call for Proposals.

The PI, co-PI, the core elements, as well as the remaining elements of the research team, are responsible for submitting an updated version of their CV in English on the CIÊNCIAVITAE platform.

Applications to this Call must include the on-line FCT form and the following documents, also submitted electronically:

- The document that certifies the PhD degree of the lead Portugal Principal Investigator;
- 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;
- Timeline file of project tasks, including the ones allocated to the Portuguese and the CMU's teams.

Scanning of the Declaration of Commitment of each application (signed by the Principal Investigator and the Supported Entities) must be submitted on the [FCT platform](#) until 14 July 2021 at 17:00 Lisbon time.

Before submitting a proposal, applicants are advised to read the documents of the Call, namely: [FCT Projects Regulation](#), the [Guidelines for Exploratory Research Projects Proposals Writing](#), the [Terms of Reference for the 2021 Call for Exploratory Research Proposals \(ERPs\) under the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program](#), the [Guide for Peer Reviewers](#), the [CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide](#) and the [Ethics Self-Assessment Guide](#).

7. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

The eligibility conditions are those indicated in Article 6 of the [FCT Projects Regulation](#) and those indicated in the present call.

7.1. Principal Investigator

The lead Portugal Principal Investigator (PI):

- Submit only one proposal as PI in this call for projects;
- Must have a doctoral degree. The document certifying the doctoral degree must 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, at the time of the Acceptance Document, a written agreement between the parties must be submitted, according to point c) of item 1 of article 6 of [FCT Projects Regulation](#);
- Must 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 previously financed projects;
- Proposals will also not be accepted from lead Portugal PIs who have been 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

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

7.3. Principal Contractor

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

Applications to projects where 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

An international panel of independent reviewers will carry out the evaluation. The selection 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 2021 Call for Proposals – Guide for Peer Reviewers and in the Terms of Reference for the 2021 Call for Exploratory Research Proposals (ERPs) under the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program:

- 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. Scientific merit of the research team;

- C. Impact of the project results in a real-world problem and potential for opening longer-term research avenues;
- 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 0.1 increments. The final score of MP is rounded to two- decimal places. If the 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, a minimum score of MP equal or higher than 5.00 points is required.

For selection and decision-making regarding funding, projects will be ranked by the MP score obtained in the review process in decreasing order. In case of ties (projects with the same MP score), the ratings assigned to criteria A, B, C and D will be used sequentially and by descending order to provide the final ranking of the projects.

9. PUBLICATION AND COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

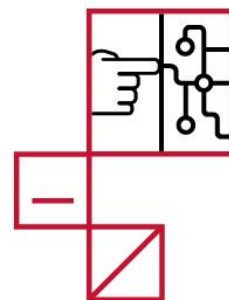
This Announcement and other relevant materials and information, particularly the Regulations for Projects Exclusively Funded by National Funds, are available at the [FCT website](#).

For inquiries of a scientific nature, please contact the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program at research@cmuportugal.org.

For specific information related to application submission, please contact concursoprojetos@fct.pt.

Helena Pereira

President, Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P.



Carnegie Mellon Portugal

www.cmuportugal.org

