

NOTICE OF THE CALL FOR 15 PHD RESEARCH GRANTS

Reference: BD 2020-006

CIIMAR - Interdisciplinary Center for Marine and Environmental Research, an R&D unit of the national science and technology system (hereinafter referred as CIIMAR) opens a call for the award of 15 (fifteen) research grants, hereinafter referred to as PhD Research Grants, in the Marine and Environmental Sciences and Technologies area, under the FCT Research Grants Regulation (RBI) and the Research Fellow Statute (EBI).

The scholarships will be financed by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) under the Collaboration Protocol for Financing the Multiannual Plan for Research Scholarships for PhD Students, signed between FCT and the R&D Unit Interdisciplinary Marine and Environmental Research Center, R&D Unit No. 4423.

1. APPLICATION PRESENTATION

The competition is open between May 6 and 5:00 pm (Lisbon time) on May 29, 2020.

Applications and supporting documents for the application provided for in this Call for Proposals must be submitted, necessarily, by computer platform submitted to <http://byt.ciimar.up.pt/inscricoes-byt-phd/>

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

False statements or plagiarism leads to the cancellation of the application, in addition to other sanctioning measures.

2. TYPE AND DURATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Research grants for doctorates are intended to finance the carrying out, by the fellow, of research activities leading to obtaining the academic degree of doctor in Portuguese universities.

The research activities leading to the achievement of the academic degree of doctor will take place at the Interdisciplinary Center for Marine and Environmental Research, which will be the host institution of the scholarship holders, without prejudice to the work may be carried out in collaboration between more than one institution.

The research activities leading to obtaining the academic degree of doctor of the selected scholarship holders must be framed in the plan of activities and strategy of the Interdisciplinary Center for Marine and Environmental Research, and must be developed within the scope of the following Doctoral Programs:

- PhD program in Marine Biotechnology and Aquaculture (FCUP - Faculty of Sciences, University of Porto, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Environmental Contamination and Toxicology (ICBAS - Institute of Biomedical Sciences of Abel Salazar, Faculty of Sciences of the University of Porto and Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Porto, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Animal Science (ICBAS - Institute of Biomedical Sciences of Abel Salazar, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Aquatic Sciences (ICBAS - Institute of Biomedical Sciences of Abel Salazar, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Biology (FCUP - Faculty of Sciences, University of Porto, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Environmental Sciences and Technology (FCUP - Faculty of Sciences, University of Porto, University of Porto),
- PhD program in Science, Technology and Management of the Sea (FCUP - Faculty of Sciences, University of Porto, University of Porto)
- PhD program in Civil Engineering (FEUP - Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto, University of Porto).

The selected fellows will be integrated in the complementary activities program BYT - Blue Young Talented PhD from CIIMAR.

The work plan may take place entirely or partially in a national institution (scholarship in the country or mixed scholarship, respectively).

The duration of the scholarships is, as a rule, annual, renewable up to a maximum of four years (48 months), and a scholarship cannot be awarded for a period of less than 3 consecutive months.

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

3. GRANT RECIPIENTS

Doctoral Research Grants are intended for registered candidates or candidates who satisfy the necessary conditions to enroll in one of the Doctoral Programs contained in point 2 of this Notice and who intend to develop research activities leading to the achievement of the academic degree of doctor at the Interdisciplinary Center for Marine and Environmental Research, or at host institutions associated with it.

4. ADMISSIBILITY

4.1 Candidate's Admissibility Requirements

Can apply to this contest:

- National citizens or citizens of other member states of the European Union;
- Citizens of third States;
- Stateless persons;
- Citizens with political refugee status.

To apply for the PhD Research Grant, it is necessary to:

- Hold a master's degree or legal equivalent in areas within the Marine and Environmental Sciences and Technologies, namely Marine Sciences and Technologies, Aquatic Sciences, Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Bioengineering, Bioinformatics, Biological Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Bioinformatics, Oceanography, Biotechnology, Marine Sciences and Technologies, Engineering (Biological, Biomedical, Environmental or Civil) or related areas, or hold a bachelor's degree within the aforementioned areas and hold a school or scientific curriculum especially relevant that is recognized as attesting the capacity to carry out this cycle of studies by the legal and statutory competent body of the University of Porto.
- Living permanently and habitually in Portugal, if the work plan associated with the scholarship is partially carried out by foreign institutions (mixed scholarships); this requirement is applicable to both nationals and foreigners.
- Not having benefited from a doctoral or doctoral scholarship in companies directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration.

4.2 Application Admissibility Requirements

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

- Name and contact details (phone and email);
- Updated Curriculum vitae of the applicant, in English;
- Certificates of qualifications of all academic degrees obtained (graduate and master's degrees), with final average and with ratings in all disciplines performed;
- Registration of recognition of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions and registration of the conversion of the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale, when applicable, in accordance with the provisions of DL No. 66/2018, of 16-8 or replaced by the candidate's declaration of honor, with the verification of this condition only during the contractualization phase of the scholarship;
- Work plan proposal;
- One motivation letter, explaining the reasons for her/his application, presenting her/his academic/professional career path and how it is related to the work plan;

Regarding the above mentioned admissibility requirements, the following should be noted:

Candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions can apply and will be evaluated using the same criteria as candidates with diplomas issued by Portuguese institutions, provided that they present, in their application, proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion of classification final for the Portuguese classification scale under the terms of the applicable legislation.

The recognition of foreign academic degrees and diplomas as well as the conversion of the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale can be required in any public higher education institution, or in the Directorate-General for Higher Education (DGES, only in the case of automatic recognition).

Regarding this matter, it is suggested to consult the DGES portal through the following address: <https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/reconhecimento> or University of Porto page: https://sigarra.up.pt/up/en/WEB_BASE.GERA_PAGINA?p_pagina=equival%c3%aancia%20e%20reconhecimento%20de%20graus%20estrangeiros%20na%20u.porto

Only candidates who have completed the cycle of studies leading to the degree of bachelor or master until the end of the application period, will be admitted. If they do not have the certificate of completion of the course yet, it can be accepted a declaration of honor from the candidates until completed the necessary documentation. The sign of the scholarship is always dependent on the presentation of the original certificates of the academic qualifications required.

5. WORK PLANS AND SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Work Plan must be written in English and must define the main objectives of the thesis project to be developed, as well as the main research questions to be answered, taking into account the first theme that was chosen by the candidate. The Plan should also include a review of the state of the art on the subject in question, the methodologies to be used and the expected results, highlighting the relevance of the proposed research work and its innovative contribution. The plan should also include a brief summary of the proposal and a work schedule.

The candidate must select from among the proposed topics available on the platform mentioned above, a topic of his preference, for which he/she must prepare a proposal for a work plan. The candidate will be able to choose other topics as secondary choices (for which he/she won't have to present a work plan). The work plan prepared by the candidates will be used only as an evaluation criterion, and, after selecting the candidates, they should prepare a definitive work plan with the help of the respective guidance team, to be submitted to the respective doctoral programs.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND BONUSES

The evaluation takes into account the candidate's merit and the following criteria.

Admitted applications will be scored from zero (0.000 minimum classification) to five (5,000 maximum classification) in each of the four evaluation criteria:

Criterion A - Academic curriculum;

Criterion B - Scientific curriculum;

Criterion C - Merit of the work plan;

Criterion D - Letter of motivation.

For the purpose of deciding on the granting of scholarships, candidates will be ranked according to the weighted average of the classification obtained in each of the four criteria, with a weighting of 40% for the Academic Curriculum (A), 30% for the Scientific Curriculum (B), 20% for the Merit of the work plan (C), and 10% for the Motivation Letter, translated by the following formula:

Final Grade = $(0.40 \times A) + (0.30 \times B) + (0.20 \times C) + (0.10 \times D)$.

For tie-breaking purposes, the ranking of candidates will be made based on the ratings assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order of precedence: criterion A (Academic curriculum), criterion B (Scientific curriculum), criterion C (Merit of the training plan) criteria) (motivation letter).

In any of the evaluation criteria, the ratings will be assigned to three decimal places. The values resulting from the application of any formulas specified in this notice will be rounded to the third decimal place, using the following rule: when the fourth decimal place is equal to or greater than 5 (five), it will be rounded up; when the fourth decimal place is less than 5 (five), the value of the third decimal place will be maintained.

Applicants whose application is evaluated with a final classification below three values (3,000) are not eligible for the scholarship.

The entire assessment will be reasoned in a clear, concise and sufficient manner.

6.1. Criterion A - Academic curriculum

The score of this criterion is calculated based on the final classifications that appear in the academic degree certificates presented by the candidate in the application form: i) Degree + Master / Integrated Master; ii) Degree only; or iii) Masters only, according to Table 1.

Table 1. Reference table for defining the score for criterion A - Academic curriculum

Graduate + Master degrees (pre- or post-Bologna) or Integrated Master degree (300-360 ECTS)		Graduate degree (180 ECTS) (pre- or post-Bologna)		Master degree (90-120 ECTS) (pre- or post-Bologna)	
Final Grade	Score	Final Grade	Score	Final Grade	Score
≥ 18	5,0	≥ 17	3,5	≥ 17	3,0
17	4,5	16	3,0	16	2,5
16	4,0	15	2,5	15	2,0
15	3,5	14	2,0	14	1,5
14	3,0	<14	1,5	<14	1,0
<14	2,5				

Note: the classification to be considered is that contained in the respective degree certificates submitted at the time of application. In the case of certificates of qualifications whose final classification is presented with decimal places, it will be rounded to the unit following the following rule: when the decimal place is equal to or greater than 5, it will be rounded up in excess; when the decimal point is less than 5, the value will be maintained. In the case of calculating the simple arithmetic average between the degree note and the master's note, the notes contained in the certificates (even if they have decimal places) will be considered, with rounding performed after obtaining the result of such average.

IMPORTANT: if the degree certificates obtained abroad are not accompanied by the respective recognition, the classification to be attributed to criterion A will be one (A = 1).

In order to apply the scores provided in Table 1, it is mandatory to submit, in the case of application, the following documents:

a) Certificate of qualification of academic degrees, specifying the final classification and, if possible, the classifications obtained in all subjects taken. In “post-Bologna” training, you must present the 1st and 2nd cycle of study certificates or, if it is not a bi-stage training, the integrated master certificate. In “pre-Bologna” courses, you must present the degree and master certificates.

b) Candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions can apply and will be evaluated using the same criteria as candidates with diplomas issued by Portuguese institutions, provided that they present, in their application, proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion from the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale under the terms of the applicable legislation.

Applicants with foreign degrees who do not show proof of conversion from the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale will be evaluated with the minimum classification (1 point) in criterion A.

In any case, scholarship contracts with candidates with diplomas issued by foreign institutions will only be concluded upon presentation of proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion of the final classification, as indicated above.

For the purposes of applying Table 1, the following is considered:

- a) The final average of "graduate + masters", in a pre or post-Bologna course, results from the simple arithmetic average of the final grade obtained in the 1st cycle ([180 ECTS credits]) / licentiate and the final grade obtained in 2 1st cycle ([90-120 ECTS credits]) / master's degree, by applying the following formula:

$$\text{Final score average (graduate + master degrees)} = \frac{\text{1st cycle final grade (graduate degree)} + \text{2nd cycle final grade (master)}}{2}$$

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- b) In the case of integrated master's degrees conferred by institutions that do not issue certificates with discrimination of the final grades of 1st and 2nd cycles, the final classification registered in the degree certificate is considered after completion of the cycle of studies [300 to 360 credits (ECTS)].
- c) If an integrated master's certificate [300-360 credits (ECTS)] and a pre-Bologna or 2nd cycle master's degree are presented, the final classification of the integrated master's degree must be considered.
- d) In the case of presentation of only a bachelor's or master's certificate (s), the classifications in the respective columns of Table 1 apply.
- e) When candidates present more than one equivalent degree and / or master's degree (equivalent number of ECTS credits), it is up to the panel to decide which (or which) academic degree (s) is most suitable (m) the work plan and which should, therefore, be accounted for in calculating the classification of the academic curriculum (criterion A). For example, if a candidate presents a degree certificate and more than a master's certificate, the panel should consider the master's degree that best fits the work plan. However, if a candidate presents certificates of integrated master and master of 2nd cycle of studies (without a degree certificate or 1st cycle of studies), the panel will necessarily have to consider the integrated master in calculating the classification of the course academic, as previously indicated. The evaluation panel should consider the other course (s) presented by the candidate in the evaluation of criterion B, valuing his scientific curriculum. In any case, the methodology decided and applied by the panel must be explained in the respective evaluation and in the panel meeting reports.

6.2. Criterion B - Scientific curriculum

In assessing this criterion, the evaluators must analyze and consider the candidate's curriculum holistically, assessing in an integrated manner the merit of his academic, scientific and professional path. In this

analysis, evaluators should consider several dimensions of the curriculum that can demonstrate a relevant personal, scientific and professional path.

The classification to be given in this criterion should reflect a global and integrated view of the candidate's personal curriculum.

Disability Bonuses

Applicants that state a degree of disability equal to or above 90% shall have a bonus of 20% on criterion A – Academic Curriculum and criterion B – Scientific Curriculum. Applicants that state a degree of disability equal to or above 60% and under 90%, shall have a bonus of 10% in these criteria. The degree of disability should be duly proven by submitting, in the application form, the document “Atestado de Incapacidade Multiuso”, issued according to the Decree-Law no. 202/96, of 23 of October, in its current version.

6.3. Criterion C - Merit of the Work Plan

The Merit of the Work Plan, a criterion weighted at 20%, must be evaluated considering the following three sub-criteria:

C1 - Grounded relevance of the object of study;

C2 - Scientific quality of the state of the art and the methodology of the work plan;

C3 - Feasibility of the work plan.

In the evaluation of subcriterion C1, the clear definition of research objectives and questions, the potential contribution of the research project to knowledge and the advancement of science and technology should be valued.

In the evaluation of subcriterion C2, the relevance of the state of the art presented and the proposed research methodology should be considered, taking into account its clarity, consistency and coherence, according to internationally accepted standards.

In the evaluation of subcriterion C3, the adequacy of the methodologies to the tasks and objectives provided for in the work plan should be valued in terms of the number of months indicated for carrying out the same, as well as the total time foreseen for the completion of the project. If applicable, the analysis of the risks inherent to the various phases that constitute it will also be assessed, possibly with the preliminary

identification of the most critical points and the corresponding contingency measures to be adopted.

The presentation of a timeline should also be considered, as well as additional and optional information related to the work plan such as schemes, formulas or figures.

6.4. Criterion D - Motivation Letter

The classification to be attributed in this criterion should take into account the clarity with which the applicant identifies the reasons underlying his application and the maturity with which he faces the performance of the proposed research activities.

7. EVALUATION

Before the start of the evaluation process, CIIMAR will nominate and publicize the evaluation panel, which will be coordinated, by indication of the board of direction of CIIMAR, by one of its members, who has the responsibility to ensure that the evaluation exercise is carried out with transparency, impartiality and independence, in accordance with the provisions of article 37 of Decree-Law no. 63/2019, of 16 May.

The evaluation panel will assess applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in this Call for Proposals, considering the elements of evaluation.

All panel members, including the coordinator, make a commitment to respect a set of responsibilities essential to the evaluation process, such as the 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 ensured in order to guarantee the independence of all opinions produced.

Panel members, including the coordinator, cannot be advisors or co-supervisors of candidates with applications submitted to the competition.

For each application, a final evaluation form will be produced by the panel, in which the arguments that led to the classifications attributed to each of the evaluation criteria and subcriteria will be presented in a clear, coherent and consistent manner, also explaining any bonuses attributed.

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

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 their reasons;
- Methodology adopted by the panel for cases considered private;
- Final Evaluation Sheets for each candidate;
- Provisional list of classification and ranking of candidates, in descending order of the final classification, of all applications evaluated by the panel;
- CDI statements from all panel members;
- Possible delegations of votes and powers due to justified absence.

8. DISCLOSURE OF RESULTS

The results of the evaluation are communicated via e-mail to the e-mail address indicated in the application and published on the CIIMAR website.

9. TIME LIMITS AND PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY HEARING, COMPLAINT AND APPEAL

After communicating the provisional list of the results of the evaluation, the candidates have a period of 10 working days to, if they wish, to give their opinion at the preliminary hearing of interested parties, under the terms of articles 121 and following of the Code of Administrative Procedure.

The final decision will be disclosed after the analysis of the pronunciations presented at the previous hearing of interested parties. The final decision may be lodged within 15 working days, or, alternatively, an appeal may be filed within 30 working days, both counted from the respective notification. Candidates who choose to submit a complaint must address their pronouncement to the member of the FCT Board of Directors with delegated competence. Candidates who choose to submit an appeal must address it to the FCT Board of Directors.

10. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTSHIP GRANTING

Research scholarship contracts are signed directly with FCT.

The following documents must be sent, when granting the scholarship, for the purposes of contracting:

- a) Copy of the civil, tax and, when applicable, social security identification document (s)¹;
- b) Copy of the certificates of qualifications of the academic degrees held;
- c) Presentation of the registration record for the recognition of foreign academic degrees and conversion of the respective final classifications to the Portuguese classification scale, if applicable;
- d) Document proving registration and enrollment in one of the Doctoral Programs identified in this Notice;
- e) Statement by the supervisor (s) assuming responsibility for supervising the work plan, pursuant to Article 5-A of the Research Fellow's Statute (draft declaration to be made available by FCT);
- f) Document proving the candidate's acceptance by the institution where the research activities will take place, guaranteeing the conditions necessary for its good development, as well as the fulfillment of the duties provided for in article 13 of the Research Fellow's Statute (draft declaration to be made available by FCT);
- g) Updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime (draft declaration to be made available by FCT).

The granting of the scholarship is still dependent on:

- compliance with the requirements provided for in this Opening Notice;
- the result of the scientific evaluation;
- the absence of unjustified non-compliance with the grantee's duties under a previous scholarship contract financed, directly or indirectly, by FCT;
- FCT's budget availability.

Failure to deliver any of the documents necessary to complete the process of contracting the scholarship, within 6 months from the date of communication of the decision to grant the conditional grant, implies the expiration of the referred grant and the end of the process.

11. FINANCING

¹ The presentation of these documents may optionally be substituted by the in-person presentation in the funding agency, which will keep all the elements needed for the validation and execution of the contract, including the numbers of personal identification, taxation and social security, as well as the respective dates of expiry.

The scholarship payment will start after the applicants return the duly signed scholarship contract, which should occur within a maximum period of 15 working days from the date of receipt.

The scholarships awarded under this call will be financed by the FCT with funds from the State Budget and, when eligible, with funds from the European Social Fund available under PORTUGAL2020, through, inter alia, the Northern Regional Operational Program (NORTE 2020), The Regional Operational Program of the Center (Centro 2020) and the Regional Operational Program of the Alentejo (Alentejo 2020), in accordance with the regulatory provisions established for this purpose.

12. FUNDING

Scholarship recipients receive a monthly maintenance allowance in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI <https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/valores.phtml.en>.

The exchange may also include other components, under the terms set out in article 18 of the RBI and at the amounts provided for in its Annex II.

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

All scholarship holders who are not covered by any social protection regime can ensure the exercise of the right to social security through adherence to the voluntary social insurance regime, under the terms of the Contributory Schemes of the Social Security Social Security System, ensuring the FCT charges resulting from contributions under the terms and with the limits provided for in article 10 of the EBI.

13. PAYMENT OF STUDENTSHIP ALLOWANCE

Payments due to the grantee are made by bank transfer to the account identified by the grantee. The monthly maintenance allowance is paid on the first working day of each month.

Payments for the registration, enrollment or tuition components are made by FCT directly to the national institution where the fellow is enrolled or enrolled in the PhD.

14. SCHOLARSHIP RENEWAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The renewal of the scholarship always depends on applicant's submission, within 60 working days prior to the start date of the renewal, accompanied by the following documents:

a) Declaration issued by the supervisor (s) and by the host entity (ies) on the monitoring of the grantee's work and the evaluation of his activities;

- b) updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime;
- c) document proving renewal of enrollment in the cycle of studies leading to the degree of doctor.

15. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY OF THE FINANCING GRANTED

In all R&D activities directly or indirectly financed by the scholarship, namely, in all communications, publications and scientific creations, as well as theses, carried out with the support provided for in the scholarship, the mention of financial support from FCT and the Fund must be expressed European Social Program, namely through the Northern Regional Operational Program (NORTE 2020), the Regional Operational Program of the Center (Centro 2020) and the Regional Operational Program of Alentejo (Alentejo 2020). For this purpose, the FCT, MCTES, ESF and EU insignia must be inscribed in the documents referring to these actions, according to the graphic rules of each operational program.

The dissemination of results of research funded under the RBI must comply with the rules for open access to data, publications and other research results in force at FCT.

In all exchanges, and in particular in the case of actions supported by community funding, namely from the ESF, monitoring and control actions may be carried out by national and community bodies in accordance with the applicable legislation in this matter, with mandatory support from scholarship holders collaboration and provision of the requested information, which includes carrying out surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the scholarship has already ceased.

16. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

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

17. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The Contest is governed by this Opening Notice, by the FCT Research Scholarship Regulation, approved by Regulation No. 950/2019, published in the II Series of the DR of December 16, 2019, by the Research Scholarship Statute approved by the Law No. 40/2004, of August 18, in the current version, by the Collaboration and Financing Protocol to support a multi-annual research scholarship plan for PhD students at the R&D Unit No. 4423 and by other national legislation and european law applicable.