

Notice of the Call for Pioneer Research Grants for PhD Students

The Business Research Unit (BRU), Iscte-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, opens a call for 2 (two) research grants for PhD students, hereinafter referred to as Pioneer Research Grants (BI) for PhD, in the areas of Economics, Finance, Management, and DBA – Doctor of Management (exclusively for the DBA program without agreement with other universities) under the FCT, I.P. Studentships Regulations (RBI) and the FCT, I.P. Research Fellows Statute (EBI).

The grants will be funded by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia / Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) under the Collaboration Protocol between FCT and Iscte, within the scope of the PIONEER Alliance (<https://pioneer-alliance.eu>), for the Financing of the Multiannual Plan for Research Grants (BI) for PhD Students (hereinafter referred to as the Protocol), which aims to enhance the creation of synergies and the sharing of research environments between Iscte and the Alliance's partner Universities.

1. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

The competition runs from April 8, 2026, at 6 pm (Lisbon time) to June 13, 2026, at 6:00 pm (Lisbon time).

The applications and the supporting documents for the application provided for in this Call Notice must be submitted on the platform <https://recrutamento.iscte-iul.pt/jobs>.

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

The provision of false statements or acts of plagiarism by candidates shall constitute grounds for the cancellation of their application, without prejudice to the imposition of other disciplinary measures.

2. TYPE AND DURATION OF THE RESEARCH GRANTS

The Pioneer Research Grants (BI) for PhD are intended to finance R&D activities by students enrolled in a doctoral program at Iscte, aiming at the consolidation of their scientific training through the development of research work leading to the award of the academic degree of doctor, conferred by Iscte, in the R&D domains covered by the Business Research Unit (BRU).

The research activities leading to the obtaining of the academic degree of PhD of the selected fellows will take place at the Business Research Unit (BRU) which will be the host institution of the fellows, and the research must be framed in the strategy and the activity plan of this R&D Unit, and will be developed within the scope of one of the following Doctoral Programs associated to BRU-Iscte, in a joint supervision including, in addition to the Iscte supervisor, one supervisor from another university

participating in the PIONEER initiative:

- PhD in Economics – Iscte Business School
- PhD in Finance – Iscte Business School
- PhD in Management – Iscte Business School
- Doctor of Management (DBA) – Iscte Business School

The duration of the grants is, as a rule, annual, renewable for up to four years (48 months), and no grants may be awarded for a period of less than 3 consecutive months.

The grants are of mixed typology, and the period of the work plan at the foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months.

3. WORK PLAN OF THE RESEARCH GRANTS

The work plan should focus on research that falls within the scope of the BRU-Iscte research groups (<https://bru.iscte-iul.pt/research/groups/>) and in connection with the mission of the PIONEER Alliance, namely in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 – *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*, and covering at least one of the following topics: *Sustainable and resilient cities; Digital Transition; Nature in the City; Mobility; Questioning urban transition; Energy in the City; Vulnerability, Inclusion and Health in the city; Global cities.*

4. BENEFICIARIES OF THE RESEARCH GRANTS

The Pioneer PhD Research Fellowships are intended for candidates who are already enrolled, or who meet the necessary conditions to enroll in one of the doctoral programs listed in point 2 of this Call for Applications and who wish to develop research activities leading to the award of a doctoral degree at the Business Research Unit (BRU).

5. ADMISSIBILITY

5.1 Candidate Admissibility Requirements

The following may apply to this call:

- National citizens or citizens of other Member States of the European Union;
- Third-country nationals;
- Stateless persons;
- Citizens benefiting from political refugee status.

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

- Have a bachelor's or master's degree in Economics, Finance, Management, or a related field;
- Live permanently and consistently in Portugal on the date of the start of the period of the work plan abroad, a requirement applicable to both national and foreign citizens;
- Not have benefited from a PhD research grant or a PhD research grant in enterprises directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration;
- Does not hold a PhD degree.

5.2 Application Admissibility Requirements

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

- Details of the identity card/citizen card/passport;
- Curriculum vitae of the candidate;
- Certificates of qualification of the academic degrees held, specifying the final classification and, if possible, the classifications obtained in all subjects taken, or, alternatively, a declaration of honor by the candidate that he or she has completed the bachelor's or master's degree by the end of the application deadline;
- Record of recognition of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions and record of the conversion of the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale, or, alternatively, declaration of honor by the candidate that he or she obtained the recognition of the foreign degree equivalent to that of bachelor's or master's degree with effect from the end of the application deadline;
- Motivation letter, including a research plan, and how it aligns with the objectives of the call;
- 2 letters of recommendation;
- The application and all documents associated with it, including letters of motivation and recommendation, must be written in Portuguese or English.
- In the case of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and to ensure the application of the principle of equal treatment to candidates who hold foreign and national academic degrees, it is mandatory to recognize these degrees and convert the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale.

The recognition of foreign academic degrees and diplomas, as well as the conversion of the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale, can be requested at any public higher education institution or at 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 at the following address: <http://www.dges.gov.pt>.

- Only candidates who have completed the cycle of studies leading to a bachelor's or master's

degree by the end of the application deadline will be admitted. If they do not yet have the certificate of completion of the course, a declaration of honor will be accepted by the candidates that they have completed the necessary qualifications for the purposes of the competition by the end of the application deadline. The award of the research grant is subject to submission, at the time of signing the contract, of evidence of the holder's academic qualifications.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation takes the candidate's merit into account .

Applications considered admissible will be scored on a scale of 0 to 20 in each of the following evaluation criteria:

- Criterion A – Evaluation of the academic, scientific, and professional curriculum, with a weight of 50%;
- Criterion B – Evaluation of the motivation for applying for the research grant, with a weight of 10%;
- Criterion C – Interview, with a weight of 40%.

An individual interview will be conducted with all candidates who, based on the documentary analysis, score 14 points or higher. The interview may be conducted remotely via videoconference. The candidate's interview will be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 20 points.

For deciding on the award of research grants, candidates will be ranked according to the weighted average of the classification obtained in each of the 3 criteria, translated by the following formula:

$$\text{Final grade} = (0.5 \times A) + (0.1 \times B) + (0.4 \times C)$$

For tie-breaking purposes, the ranking of the candidates will be based on the classifications assigned to each evaluation criterion in the following order of precedence: criterion C, criterion A, criterion B.

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

- Candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions may apply and will be evaluated with the same criteria as candidates with diplomas issued by Portuguese institutions, provided that they submit, in their application, proof of recognition of academic degrees and conversion of the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale under the terms of the applicable legislation.
- Candidates with recognized foreign diplomas who do not present proof of conversion of the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale will be evaluated with a minimum classification of 10 points in criterion (A).
- In any case, research grants 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.

Candidates whose application is evaluated with a final classification of less than (15) points are not eligible for the research grant.

7. EVALUATION

The candidate evaluation panel consists of the following members:

- José Manuel Gonçalves Dias, Iscte Business School (panel Coordinator, effective member);
- João António Rodrigues Madeira, Iscte Business School (effective member);
- Sofia de Sousa Vale, Iscte Business School (effective member);
- José Carlos Gonçalves Dias, Iscte Business School (substitute);
- Nádia Nogueira Simões Crespo, Iscte Business School (substitute).

The evaluation panel will assess applications against the evaluation criteria contained in this Call for Applications, weighing the elements of assessment.

All panel members, including the coordinator, commit to respecting a set of responsibilities essential to the evaluation process, such as upholding impartiality, the declaration of any potential situations of conflict of interest, and confidentiality. At all times throughout the evaluation process, confidentiality is fully protected and ensured to guarantee the independence of all opinions produced.

For each application, a final evaluation form will be produced by the panel where the arguments that led to the classifications attributed to each of the evaluation criteria will be presented in a clear, coherent, and consistent way.

Minutes of the evaluation panel's meetings shall be produced under the responsibility of all its members. The minutes and their annexes must include the following information:

- Name and affiliation of all members of the evaluation panel;
- Identification of all excluded applications and their reasons [if applicable];
- Methodology adopted by the panel for cases considered particular [if applicable];
- Final Evaluation Forms of 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;
- Any delegation of votes 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 candidate to send the application/indicated in the application.

9. DEADLINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRIOR HEARING, COMPLAINT, AND APPEAL

Following the communication of the provisional list of the evaluation results, candidates have a period of 10 working days to, if they wish, express their opinion at a prior hearing of interested parties, under the terms of articles 121 et seq. of the Code of Administrative Procedure.

The final decision will be issued after the analysis of the pronouncements presented at the preliminary hearing of interested parties. A complaint may be lodged against the final decision within 15 working days, or, alternatively, an appeal may be lodged within 30 working days, both counted from the date of the respective notification. Candidates who choose to submit a complaint must address their complaint 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. RESEARCH GRANT AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Research grant contracts are signed directly with FCT.

The following documents must be sent, at the time of the eventual award of the grant, for the purposes of its contracting:

- a) Copy of 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 record of recognition of foreign academic degrees and conversion of the respective final grades to the Portuguese grading scale, if applicable;
- d) Work plan;
- e) Document proving enrollment and enrollment in one of the Doctoral Programs identified in this Notice;
- f) Declaration of the supervisor(s) of Iscte assuming responsibility for the supervision of the work plan, under the terms of Article 5-A of the Research Grant Holder Statute (draft of the declaration to be made available by FCT);
- g) Document proving the acceptance of the candidate by the institution where the research activities will take place, ensuring the necessary conditions for its proper development, as well as compliance with the duties provided for in article 13 of the Research Grant Holder Statute (draft of the declaration to be made available by FCT);
- h) Updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime (draft of the declaration to be made available by FCT);

The granting of the research grant is also subject to:

- compliance with the requirements set out in this Notice;
- the result of the evaluation;
- the absence of unjustified non-compliance with the duties of the grant holder under a previous grant contract funded, directly or indirectly, by FCT;
- FCT's budget availability.

Failure to submit any of the documents required to complete the research grant award process within six months of the date on which the decision to award the grant conditionally was notified will result in the grant being expired and the process being closed.

¹ The availability of these documents may be replaced, at the option of the applicant, by the presentation in person at the financing entity, which will keep the elements contained therein that are relevant to the validity and execution of the contract, including the civil, tax and social security identification numbers, as well as the validity of the respective documents

11. FINANCING

Payment of the research grants will begin after the return of the duly signed research grant contract by the candidates, which must occur within a maximum period of 15 working days from the date of receipt.

The research grants awarded under this call will be funded by FCT with funds from the State Budget and, when eligible, with funds from the European Social Fund, through the Demography, Qualifications and Inclusion Program (PDQI), in accordance with the regulatory provisions established for this purpose.

12. COMPONENTS OF THE RESEARCH GRANT

Research grant holders are awarded a monthly maintenance allowance under the terms set out in the table in Annex I of the RBI.

The research grant may also include other components, under the terms of Article 18 of the RBI and for the amounts provided for in its Annex II.

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

All research grant holders who are not covered by any social protection scheme can ensure the exercise of the right to social security by joining the voluntary social security scheme, under the terms of the Code of Contributory Schemes of the Social Security System, with FCT ensuring the costs resulting from contributions under the terms and with the limits provided for in article 10 of the EBI.

13. PAYMENTS OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE RESEARCH GRANT

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

Payments for the registration, enrolment, or tuition fee components are made by FCT directly to the national institution where the grant holder is registered or enrolled in the PhD.

14. RESEARCH GRANT RENEWAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The renewal of the research grant always depends on an application submitted by the research grant holder, within 60 working days prior to the renewal start date, accompanied by the following documents:

a) declarations issued by the supervisor(s) and the host entity(s) regarding the supervision of the grantee's work and the assessment of their activities;

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

15. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY OF THE FUNDING AWARDED

In all R&D activities directly or indirectly funded by the grant, namely, in all communications, publications, and scientific creations, as well as theses, carried out with the support provided for in the grant, mention of financial support from FCT and the European Social Fund must be expressed, namely, through the Demography, Qualifications and Inclusion Program (PDQI).

For this purpose, the insignia of the FCT, MCTES, ESF, and EU must be included in documents related to these actions, in accordance with the graphic standards of each operational program.

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

In all grants, and in particular in the case of actions supported by European 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 on this matter, and the supported grantees are obliged to collaborate and provide the requested information, which includes carrying out surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the research grant has already ceased.

16. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

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

17. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

The Call is governed by this Notice, by the Regulation of Research Grants of FCT, I.P., in the consolidated version with the changes resulting from the update, approved on December 10, 2025 by the Board of Directors of FCT, I.P. in force from 25/12/2025, by the Statute of the Research Grant Holder approved by Law No. 40/2004, of 18 August, as amended, and by other applicable national and European Community legislation.