

**Call For Applications For  
Up to 10 Doctoral Scholarships 2026/2027**

**Guidelines**

Within the framework of the Carnegie Mellon Portugal (CMU Portugal), the Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) opens a call for applications for up to **ten (ten) Ph.D. Scholarships** (Bolsas de Investigação para Doutoramento, BD). The Ph.D. will take place in Portugal and at Carnegie Mellon University under the scope of the CMU Portugal Dual Degree Ph.D. Programs in the following fields:

- [Cognitive Neuroscience \(PCN\)](#)
- [Computer Science \(CS\)](#)
- [Electrical and Computer Engineering \(ECE\)](#)
- [Engineering and Public Policy \(EPP\)](#)
- [Human-Computer Interaction](#)
- [Language Technologies \(LTI\)](#)
- [Machine Learning \(ML\)](#)
- [Neural Computation \(PNC\)](#)
- [Robotics](#)
- [Societal Computing \(SC\)](#)
- [Software Engineering \(SE\)](#)

Successful candidates to the CMU Portugal Dual Degree Ph.D. Programs spend up to two years at CMU and up to three years at a University in Portugal. At the end of their successful program, the candidates are awarded two Ph.D. degrees, one awarded by CMU and the other by the partner University in Portugal. Details of the Dual Degree Ph.D. programs are available in the url's above, for additional information regarding each Dual Degree Ph.D. Program see the [CMU Portugal website](#)

The admissions will generally be open from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup> 2025, 04:59 a.m. (WEST – Lisbon), according to the specifications given in the previous page. Applications are submitted directly through the Ph.D. program admissions webpage of each Department at CMU. The FCT Scholarship will only be granted if the candidates are accepted by a Ph.D. Program at CMU and by a partner Portuguese University.

Each candidate may only submit one application, otherwise all applications will be withdrawn.

False statements or acts of plagiarism made by the candidates will result in the cancellation of the application and the possible adoption of sanctioning measures

toward the candidate.

Applications submitted before the call deadlines and until a specific date may present reduced application fees. More information is available on the CMU applications page of each Ph.D. Program.

### **Dual Degree Ph.D.'s available and application deadlines**

- [Cognitive Neuroscience \(PCN\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 (11:59 p.m., EST)
- [Computer Science \(CS\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Electrical and Computer Engineering \(ECE\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 (12:00 a.m., EST) to December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (11:59 p.m., EST)
- [Engineering and Public Policy \(EPP\)](#) applications open from October 15<sup>th</sup> 2025 (12:00 a.m., EST) to December 15<sup>th</sup> 2025 (11:59 p.m., EST)
- [Human-Computer Interaction](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Language Technologies \(LTI\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Machine Learning \(ML\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Neural Computation \(PNC\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 (11:59 p.m., EST)
- [Robotics](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Societal Computing \(SC\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)
- [Software Engineering \(SE\)](#), applications open from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to December, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 (03:00 p.m., EST)

## CMU Portugal Scholarship Process Calendar

Phase	Milestone	Observations	Document Section
<u>A. Application Phase</u>	Prepare and submit your application to CMU	October through December. Check the specific date for your program	<u>1. How to apply and admission requirements</u> <u>2. Funding Support</u>
<u>B. Selection Phase</u>	Selection of the candidates	January-February 2026	<u>3. Selection process and results announcement</u>
	Informing the candidates about the selection outcome	April 2026	
<u>C. Scholarship Contract and Registration</u>	Formal request for Ph.D. scholarships to FCT and publishing the selection results on the CMU Portugal Program website	May-June 2026	<u>4. Scholarships request to FCT and announcement of the results</u>
	Students registration at CMU and Portuguese University; Scholarship contract	July-September 2026	<u>5. Students registration and scholarship contract</u>
	CMU Portugal Scholarship Starting Date	September 2026	<u>6. Scholarship starting date and beginning of the academic year</u>

## A. APPLICATION PHASE

### 1. Admission Requirements and How to Apply

Pursuant to article 6 in conjunction with article 9 of the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships (RBI) of FCT, Portuguese citizens, citizens of other European Union member states, and third-country nationals holding the academic degree required to enroll in a Ph.D. Program (Licenciatura or master's degree), in accordance with the procedures adopted by Carnegie Mellon University, may apply to this call, taking into account the research areas specified by the CMU Portugal Program available in the CMU Portugal website. Individuals who have previously received an FCT-funded doctoral fellowship, for the same purpose, are not eligible for this call. The Ph.D. candidate's application should satisfy the requirements established in article 10 of the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships of FCT, in accordance with the procedures adopted by Carnegie Mellon University.

The CMU Portugal Program has a decentralized applications process for admission in which each Ph.D. program manages its own application process. **Applications are submitted directly to CMU.** To apply, follow the next steps:

- 1- Determine which dual degree Ph.D. Program you are interested;
- 2- Go the "Admissions and Scholarships" page on the CMU Portugal Program website;
- 3- Select the Ph.D. Program and follow the application process described.

As a general guideline, students are required to submit the following documents in order to successfully submit an application to a Ph.D. program (*Please note that the admissions requirements will vary from department to department and the information indicated below is general*):

- Candidate's CV;
- Certificates of qualification of the academic degrees held, specifying the final classification and, if possible, the classifications obtained in all subjects taken, or, alternatively, the candidate's declaration of honor on how (s)he completed the Licenciatura's or Master's degree by the end the application deadline;
- Registration of recognition of the academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions and registration of the final classification conversion to the Portuguese classification scale for those degrees, or, alternatively, the candidate's declaration of honor on how (s)he obtained the recognition of the foreign degree equivalent to a graduate or master's degree until the end of the application period;
- Statement of purpose;
- Letters of Recommendation (the number of letters may vary according to the CMU department);
- GRE test is waived for the EPP Ph.D. Program Fall admissions cycle and optional for the ECE Ph.D. Program (more information available in [this page](#)). For the School of Computer Science, the GRE scores are optional for the CS, LTI, ML, Robotics, and SC Ph.D. Programs, and not required for the HCI, and SE Ph.D. Programs. Please refer to the [School of Computer Science GRE policies](#) in place for each Ph.D. Program for more information. The GRE scores are not required for PCN and PNC Ph.D. Program. Please refer to the [Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) for more information.
- English proficiency test is mandatory. Usually the preferred test is the "TOEFL" (Test of English as a Foreign Language), although "IELTS" (International English Language Testing System) or the "DET" (Duolingo English Test) may be accepted as well. More information on the English proficiency requirements available in the CMU Ph.D. Program admissions webpage provided in the announcement.

The information provided in the application form as well as the documents to be attached should be written in English. The certificates of qualification of the academic degrees held can be written in English or Portuguese.

The scholarship will only be granted if the candidates are accepted by CMU and by one of the Portuguese Universities Ph.D. programs eligible under the CMU Portugal Program Dual Degree Ph.D. Programs agreement. Information on the Ph.D. Programs in Portugal under this agreement is available [here](#).

### **GRE and TOEFL tests**

Candidates should submit the results of both the "TOEFL" (Test of English as a Foreign

Language) and, if required by the Ph.D. Program, the “GRE” (general exam of the Graduate Record Examination). While TOEFL is preferred the “IELTS” (International English Language Testing System) or the “DET” (Duolingo English Test) may be submitted.

Click [here](#) to register in the GRE test. Now GRE offers the possibility of making the test at home, while maintain also the option of making the test on-site. Currently in Portugal, this test can only be taken on-site in Lisbon. GRE Scores are usually valid for five years; older scores will not be considered.

An English proficiency test is required for international applicants whose native language is not English.

### **GRE and TOEFL tests: main policies**

The requirements of the Program are aligned with the requirements of each Ph.D. It is advised to confirm the specific requirements of the Ph.D. you are intended to apply:

- [School of Computer Science GRE policies by Program](#)
- [Electrical and Computer Engineering GRE policy](#)
- [Engineering and Public Policy GRE policy](#)

For candidates whose native language is not English, the TOEFL is required. Alternatively, candidates may submit the IELTS or the Duolingo test.

Details on each Ph.D. Program’s TOEFL, Duolingo, or IELTS requirements are available [here](#):

- School of Computer Science policy can be found [here](#)
- Electrical and Computer Engineering policy can be found [here](#)
- Engineering and Public Policy policy can be found [here](#)

### **Research Topics**

Research topics available for Ph.D. Scholarships, as well as the supervisors at both CMU and Portugal, are defined by the CMU Portugal Program. Hence, candidates do not need to present a work program or an adviser’s support letter and CV at the time of application. Financial assistance is granted on the basis of the student’s potential for scholarship and creative research, and their fit with the research topics available.

## **2. Financial Support**

### **2.1 CMU Portugal Doctoral Program Funding**

The dual degree student’s funding is supported by FCT through the Carnegie Mellon Program and is available for a period of up to 5 years (2 years during the student’s stay at Carnegie Mellon University and 3 years at Portugal).

### **Scholarships Support and Duration**

The dual degree Ph.D. programs have a typical duration of 5 years, in order for the student to meet the requirements of both universities involved, thus spending up to three years in

Portugal and up to two years in the United States of America. Typically, students start the coursework in a Portuguese university – currently there are six Portuguese universities involved (Aveiro, Coimbra, Lisboa, Minho, Nova de Lisboa, and Porto) – then spend a period of time at CMU, in Pittsburgh, in the United States of America, and finally return to Portugal to complete the Ph.D.

The Ph.D. students enrolled in the dual degree Ph.D. program will receive financial support in a form of a Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program Fellowship that will cover tuition fees paid directly to the institution and a monthly stipend. While staying in Portugal, the accepted candidate will receive the fellowship directly from FCT. While pursuing their studies at Carnegie Mellon, the Ph.D. students will receive the funding through the CMU home department of the doctoral program in which they are enrolled.

Once the candidate accepts the admission offer, instructions on the steps to be followed will be provided. Awarded scholarships shall start on the beginning of the 2024/2025 academic year.

## **B. SELECTION PHASE**

### **3. Evaluation process and results announcement**

The application, selection, and admission of the candidates follow the procedures adopted by the corresponding Department at Carnegie Mellon University and the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships (article 11). Evaluation is based on the merit and motivation of the applicant as assessed through the application and is conducted in two phases by a CMU admissions committee and a CMU Portugal Program committee.

Once the set of students that meet the minimum requirements to be considered eligible for admission in the dual degree program at CMU is found by the CMU admissions committee, then these candidates are forwarded to the CMU Portugal Program committee to decide the scholarship's awarding and to be recommended for admission in the corresponding Portuguese University in the scope of the CMU Portugal Program.

The CMU Portugal Program committee will be composed of faculty affiliated with Portuguese higher education institutions partners to the Program and will have expertise in each area available in the current announcement. The CMU Portugal Program Directors will chair the CMU Portugal Program committee.

The CMU Portugal Program committee will assess applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in this Call for Proposals, considering the elements of evaluation. This committee will produce, for each application, a final evaluation report where it is clearly stated the reasoning for the scores given in each criterion and subcriterion.

All the committee members, including the chairs, have committed to respecting 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 to guarantee the independence of all opinions produced.

From the committee meetings, a selection report will be produced that will be the responsibility of all members. It must include the following information:

- Name and affiliation of all the members of the committee;
- Identification of all the excluded applications and respective reasoning;
- Individual evaluation file for all candidates with the score in each criteria and subcriteria and a global qualitative evaluation;
- Provisional list of classification and ranking of candidates, in descending order of the final classification, of all the applications evaluated by the panel;
- Conflict of interest declaration from each member of the committee;
- Possible delegations of votes and powers due to justified absence.

## **C. SCHOLARSHIP AND REGISTRATION**

### **4. Scholarships request to FCT and public announcement of the results**

Once the selection report is produced, the coordination office of the CMU Portugal Program will notify all candidates regarding their scholarship awarding status. After the prior hearing of interested parties (which takes place during the 10 working days after the provisional results announcement), the coordination office of the CMU Portugal Program will notify, with the final version of the selection report, all candidates regarding their scholarship awarding status, and will send the report together with all the necessary elements to FCT for review. After FCT's approval, results are published in the CMU Portugal website, under the "[Admissions and Scholarships](#)" page.

### **5. Students registration and scholarship contract**

As soon as the CMU Portugal scholarship is approved, both CMU Portugal Coordination Offices in Portugal and at CMU will start the process of registration of the student and also formalizing the student funding at CMU and Portugal. We strongly recommend the reading of the [call's announcement](#) for all the information concerning the documents that are needed for the FCT contract. More information about the scholarship is also available in the [student guide](#).

### **6. Scholarship starting date and beginning of the academic year**

The CMU Portugal scholarship starting date will be September 2024 for the most cases, which coincides with the beginning of the academic year in Portugal in most Universities.

We strongly recommend the reading of the student guide for more information on the required VISA if you are planning to start the Ph.D. in the United States or residence card if you are planning to start the Ph.D. in Portugal.

### **Thank you for your interest in the Carnegie Mellon Portugal Program!**

Please take a look around to learn more about the CMU Portugal Program. If you have any questions, please visit our [F.A.Q.](#) and [News](#) pages. Should you still have any unanswered questions, feel free to contact us via email: [info@cmuportugal.org](mailto:info@cmuportugal.org).