

Bolsas de Investigação para Doutoramento

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR UP TO 12 DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS 2026/2027 UNDER THE CMU PORTUGAL AFFILIATED PH.D. PROGRAMS INITIATIVE

The Carnegie Mellon Portugal (CMU Portugal) opens a call for applications for up to **twelve (12) Ph.D. Scholarships** (Bolsas de Investigação para Doutoramento, BD), in the framework of the [FCT Regulation for Studentships and Fellowships](#) (RBI) and the [Research Fellowship Holder Statute](#) (EBI), to take place under the CMU Portugal Affiliated Ph.D. Programs initiative (*Programas de Doutoramento Afiliados*), in the following CMU Portugal related areas:

- Biomedical Engineering,
- Cognitive Neuroscience,
- Computer Science,
- Electrical and Computer Engineering,
- Engineering and Public Policy,
- Human-Computer Interaction,
- Language Technologies,
- Machine Learning,
- Materials Science and Engineering,
- Mechanical Engineering,
- Neural Computation,
- Robotics,
- Societal Computing,
- Software Engineering.

The Affiliated Ph.D. Programs initiative has the objective of strengthening the collaboration between the Portuguese higher education institutions and Portuguese companies through a strong partnership with Carnegie Mellon University.

The scholarships will be funded by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT).

After a successful conclusion of the Ph.D. Program, the candidates will be awarded a Ph.D. degree by the host Portuguese university. Details about the CMU Portugal Affiliated Ph.D. Programs initiative can be assessed on the [webpage of the Program](#).

1. ADMISSIONS

The admissions period will be open from **April 14th 2026 at 00:00 (Lisbon, UTC)** to **May 12th 2026 at 23:59 (Lisbon, UTC+1)**.

Applications should be submitted online through the form available on the CMU Portugal [“Admissions and Scholarships” webpage](#) (in the section related to the Affiliated Ph.D. Programs), after a careful reading of all the requirements and submission of the online form with the necessary attachments.

Only applications submitted through this platform will be considered for evaluation. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that the online form is correctly filled out, and the required documents are attached.

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

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

2. SCHOLARSHIPS TYPE AND DURATION

The scholarships are intended for candidates who are registered or meet the necessary requirements to be eligible for a Ph.D. Program in Portugal and that want to pursue research activities necessary to obtain the doctoral degree.

The scholarship typology will be “Bolsa Mista”, this way the work plan will take place in a Portuguese higher education institution and partially at Carnegie Mellon University. Applications that include a collaboration with a Portuguese company in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) will be valued.

The scholarships are awarded on an annual basis and renewed for up to 4 years (48 months). The scholarships cannot be awarded for less than 3 consecutive months. The research period at Carnegie Mellon University should not exceed 1 year (12 months), except agreed otherwise by FCT and all the involved parties (even in this case, the period of the scholarship work plan that takes place in a foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months).

3. ADMISSIBILITY

3.1 Candidates requirements

In accordance with articles 6 and 9, from the FCT Regulation for Studentships and Fellowships (RBI) the following candidates can apply:

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

To apply for the Ph.D. scholarships, it is necessary:

- Hold a Licenciatura, Master's, or equivalent degree, preferably in the CMU Portugal research areas identified in the introduction of the current announcement;
- Reside in Portugal permanently and habitually, at the beginning of the Ph.D. scholarship, a mandatory requirement for both national citizens and foreign citizens;
- Not having benefited from a Ph.D. scholarship or Ph.D. in companies' scholarship directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration;
- Not having a Ph.D. degree.

3.2 Application requirements

For the application to be considered for evaluation, it is mandatory to complete an [online application form](#) with the following attachments:

- Candidate's CV exported through the CIÊNCIAVITAE¹ platform;
- Supervisor in Portugal and co-supervisor at CMU CV's;
- Supervisor(s) in Portugal and co-supervisor(s) at CMU support letters;
 - The CMU support letter should explicitly acknowledge that the CMU faculty advisor will host the student in their home department as a Visiting Scholar at Carnegie Mellon University during the defined visit period.
- 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, Master's, or equivalent 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 degrees², 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 with effect until the end of the application period;
- Statement of purpose;
- Work plan;
- 2 Letters of Recommendation (preferably one letter from the academia and other from the industry).

¹ To register: <https://cienciavitae.pt/>

² The recognition of foreign academic degrees and diplomas as well as the final classification conversion to the Portuguese classification scale can be request at any public higher education institution in Portugal, or at the Directorate General for Higher Education (DGES) for the automatic recognition of the degrees. More information available at: <http://www.dges.gov.pt>

The candidate should consider that:

- In case of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and to ensure the principle of equality between candidates with Portuguese and foreign higher education degrees, it is mandatory to recognize those degrees and convert the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale². For the scholarship contract to be issued, the candidates will need to present the recognition of those degrees and the conversion of the final classification to the Portuguese classification scale;
- Only candidates who have concluded the required Licenciatura and/or Master degree(s) by the applications deadline will be considered for admission;
- Candidates who don't have the degree certificate or diploma available at the time of application should present a declaration of honor in which they state that they have the required degree(s) for the current announcement. For the scholarship contract to be issued, the candidates will need to present the required Licenciatura and/or Master certificate(s).

The candidate can also attach the following optional document that will have a bonus in the evaluation if considered to be eligible:

- Support letter from Portuguese ICT company related to the candidate's work plan;

The online application form, as well as the documents to be attached, should preferably be written in English.

4. HOST INSTITUTIONS, SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION AND WORK PLAN

The candidate must indicate what the host institution will be and the Ph.D. Program in Portugal to which (s)he is registered, will be registered, or has applied to for the next academic year. It must also indicate what will be the CMU hosting department and if (s)he will have a collaboration with a Portuguese ICT company.

It is mandatory for the candidate to present a supervisor affiliated to a Portuguese higher education institution and a co-supervisor affiliated to CMU, justifying his/her choice.

The candidate must also present a Ph.D. work plan with the following information: title, keywords (following the CCS format³); abstract, state-of-the-art review; objectives; detailed description, namely the tasks to be developed as well as the relevance of the work plan towards the CMU Portugal Program; timeline, specifying the periods of stay in Portugal (and, if it is the case, detailing the collaboration with the company) and at CMU; bibliographic references.

4.1 Conditions for International Mobility

In strict compliance with the Principle of Equality enshrined in Article 13 of the Portuguese Constitution and Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the evaluation and selection of candidates within the scope of this Opening Notice are based solely on scientific and academic merit, with no discrimination based on nationality or country of origin.

³ More information: <https://dl.acm.org/ccs>

This program provides for the award of a mixed scholarship, which includes a period of physical mobility and research at Carnegie Mellon University, in the United States of America, under the status of visiting student.

The implementation of the international mobility component is, however, strictly conditional upon the selected candidate obtaining, in a timely manner before the start of the planned stay, the respective visa (e.g., F-1 or J-1) approved by the U.S. consular authorities.

In cases where the issuance of the visa is denied or held up in administrative processing for a period incompatible with the execution of the mobility, due to reasons arising from the immigration policies of the U.S. Federal Government and not attributable to the candidate, such fact will constitute a supervening impossibility of carrying out the international component. In these circumstances, the approved scholarship will automatically transfer, without prejudice to the continuation of funding, to the category of 'Scholarship in the Country' (Bolsa no País) allowing the doctoral program to continue at a Portuguese higher education institution to obtain the national degree. Collaboration with the faculty of Carnegie Mellon University will then be conducted remotely, and any obligation of the Program regarding the payment of fees associated with the visiting student status that have not yet been settled will cease.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation takes into account the candidate's merit, the merit of the work plan, and the merit of the host conditions. Applications considered admissible will be scored on a scale of 0-5 in each of the following evaluation criteria:

Criterion A – Candidate's merit (45%)

- **Subcriterion A1 – Academic path (20%)**, namely the score(s) of the main academic degree(s)⁴; and academic activities in which the candidate participated and/or organized such as non-degree educational programs, training programs, workshops, and other. Relevant international educational experiences will be valorized. This criterion will be assessed via the candidate's academic degree(s) certificate(s) and also the CV;
- **Subcriterion A2 – Professional experience (15%)**, namely professional experience; and/or development of scientific activities such as publications published as author or co-author (in scientific journals, books, book chapters, other), presentations at scientific conferences, participation in scientific research projects, and other. This criterion will be assessed via the candidate's CV and recommendation letters;
- **Subcriterion A3 – Statement of Purpose (10%)**, which should clearly describe: the candidate's skills acquired during the academic and professional path (if applicable); the adequacy of those skills to the Ph.D. program the candidate wants to pursue; and the alignment and contribution that the CMU Portugal Program Affiliated Ph.D. Programs initiative might have to that Ph.D.

⁴ If the candidate presents more than one Licenciatura/Bachelors or/and Master degree(s) the committee will need to choose what will be the degree(s) more aligned with the Ph.D. Program the candidate is applying to and evaluate them as main academic degrees in subcriterion A1. The other degree(s) not considered for this purpose should nevertheless be considered in the subcriterion A1 overall score as part of the candidate's academic curriculum.

- **Criterion B – Merit of the work plan (35%)**, namely its scientific quality, feasibility, and the framework of the work plan research theme in the CMU Portugal Program main areas of research. This criterion will be assessed via the work plan.
- **Criterion C – Merit of the host conditions and supervision (10%)**, namely the host institutions' and Ph.D. Program relevance to the CMU Portugal Program; as well as the supervisor's scientific merit, experience and previous collaboration with the CMU Portugal Program. This criterion will be assessed via the information provided in the online application form, as well as the supervisor and co-supervisor CVs and support letters.
- **Criterion D – Alignment with the CMU Portugal Program (10%)**, namely the candidate's research potential and/or the alignment of the candidate with one of the Program's initiatives and/or the alignment of the candidate with one of the research projects funded by the CMU Portugal Program under the initiatives "Large-scale collaborative research projects " or "Exploratory Research Projects". This criterion will be assessed via the work plan, statement of purpose, candidate and supervisors CV, and online application form.

For the purpose of deciding on the awarding of scholarships, candidates will be ranked according to the weighted average of the classification obtained in each of the 4 criteria, calculated according to the following formula:

$$Final\ score = (0,45 \times A) + (0,35 \times B) + (0,1 \times C) + (0,1 \times D)$$

A **maximum bonus of 0,5 points** will be awarded if the candidate presents a suitable **declaration of support from a Portuguese ICT company** aligned with the work plan submitted in the current application.

For tie-breaking purposes, candidates will be ranked according to the scores assigned to each of the evaluation criteria in the following order of precedence: criterion A, criterion B, criterion C and criterion D.

Important notes for candidates with diplomas issued by foreign higher education institutions:

- 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 the conversion of final classification for the Portuguese classification scale under the applicable terms of legislation.
- Candidates 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 (3,00 points) in subcriterion A1.
- 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 stated above.

Candidates with a final score of < 3,00 points will not be eligible for scholarship awarding.

6. EVALUATION

The application, selection, and admission of the candidates follow the Regulations for Studentships and Fellowships (article 11). Evaluation is based on the merit and motivation of the applicant as assessed through the application.

The CMU Portugal Program committee will be composed of faculty affiliated with CMU and Portuguese higher education institutions and/or research centers 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 composition will be announced in the CMU Portugal website (<https://cmuportugal.org/admissions-and-scholarships/>) before the beginning of the evaluation process.

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.

The 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 sub-criterion, and also the bonus applied.

All the committee members, including the chairs, have committed 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 to guarantee the independence of all opinions produced. The members of the committee cannot be supervisors or co-supervisors of candidates of the same scientific area that they are evaluating.

From the committee meetings, a selection report will be produced by the committee members. It must include the following information:

- Name and affiliation of all the committee;
- Identification of all the excluded applications and respective reasoning (if applicable);
- Detailed evaluation in each criterion for each candidate, as well as a global qualitative evaluation (final evaluation report);
- 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 (if applicable).

7. DISCLOSURE OF RESULTS

The list of candidates to be considered for scholarship will be published in the [CMU Portugal webpage](#). All candidates will be notified via email of the evaluation results.

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

After communication of the preliminary list of results of the evaluation, the candidates have 10 working days to give their opinion at the prior hearing of interested parties, under the terms of articles 121 and following of the Code of Administrative Procedure.

The final decision will be rendered after analyzing the pronouncements presented at the previous hearing of interested parties. From the final decision, a complaint can be filed 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 FCT Board of Directors with delegated competence. Candidates who choose to submit an appeal must address the same to the FCT Board of Directors.

9. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDING REQUIREMENTS

The scholarship contracts are executed directly with FCT. After the candidate's scholarship awarding, and for the contract to be issued, the following documents must be sent:

- Copy of the civil, tax, IBAN and, where applicable, social security identification document(s)⁵;
- Document that proves that the candidate has a permanent residence address in Portugal;
- Copy of the certificate(s) of the academic degree(s) held;
- Presentation of the recognition of foreign academic degrees and conversion of the respective final classifications to the Portuguese classification scale, if applicable;
- Work plan;
- Documents of acceptance and registration in the Doctoral Program to be attended by the candidate or proof of Doctoral Program application;
- Statement by CMU as host institution during the research period at CMU, fulfilling the duties provided for in article 13 of the Research Fellow's Statute (template declaration to be made available by FCT);
- Document proving the candidate's acceptance by the institution where the research activities will take place, guaranteeing the required conditions for its good development, as well as the fulfillment of the duties provided for in article 13 of the Research Fellow's Statute (template declaration to be made available by FCT);
- Statement by the supervisors assuming responsibility for supervising the work plan, according to Article 5-A of the Research Fellow's Statute (template declaration to be made available by FCT), and supervisors [CIÊNCIA ID](#);
- Candidate's CV in [CIÊNCIA VITAE](#) format;
- Updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime (template declaration to be made available by FCT).

⁵ The delivery of these documents is not mandatory if the candidate presents the documents in person to FCT. FCT will take note of all the relevant elements needed to ensure the validity and execution of the contract such as the personal identification number, fiscal number and social security number as well as the date of expiration of these documents.

The scholarship awarding is also dependent on:

- Compliance with the requirements of this announcement;
- The results of the scientific evaluation;
- The absence of unjustified non-compliance with the candidate's duties under a previous scholarship financed directly or indirectly by FCT;
- FCT's budget availability.

Failure to deliver any of the required documents to complete the scholarship contracting process within 6 months from the date of communication of the conditional scholarship decision implies the expiration of the scholarship and the process's termination.

10. FUNDING

Payment of the scholarship will start after 15 working days from the date of receipt by FCT of the scholarship contract signed by the scholarship holder.

Scholarships awarded in the current call will be funded by FCT through the Portuguese government state budget.

11. SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship holders receive a monthly maintenance allowance in accordance with the table in Annex I of the "Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowship" (RBI).

The scholarship 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 that have not adhered to a social security regime can adhere to the voluntary social insurance regime ("Seguro Social Voluntário"), under the terms of the "Código dos Regimes Contributivos do Sistema Previdencial de Segurança Social", supported by FCT under the terms and with the limits provided for in article 10 of the EBI.

More information regarding the monthly stipend, social security and other allowances that can be provided through the scholarship is available on the [FCT webpage](#).

The scholarship holders will pursue their scholarship under the exclusive dedication regime, under article 5 of the RBI.

12. SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENT

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

The payments for the registration, enrollment or tuition components are made by FCT directly to the national institution where the fellow is enrolled in the Ph.D.

13. SCHOLARSHIP RENEWAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The renewal of the scholarship always depends on a requirement submitted by the fellow, within 60 working days prior to the renewal start date, accompanied by the following documents:

- statements issued by the supervisors and by the host institutions with an assessment of the scholarship holder work;
- updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime;
- document stating the active registration of the scholarship holder in the host institutions.

14. INFORMATION AND ADVERTISEMENT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

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 by the scholarship, the mention of financial support from FCT. For this purpose, the FCT and MCTES insignia must be inscribed in the documents referring to these actions.

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 rule at the FCT.

In all scholarships, monitoring and control actions may be carried out by national and community bodies in accordance with the applicable legislation in this matter, having the grantees the obligatoriness to collaborate and provide of the requested information, which includes surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the scholarship has already ceased.

15. 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, gender, 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.

16. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The call is governed by the present Announcement, by the [Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowship \(RBI\)](#), by the [Research Fellowship Holder Statute](#) approved by the Law 40/2004, of August 18, in the current wording, and by other applicable national and community legislation. Additional information may be requested to the email (apply@cmuportugal.org)