

EVALUATION GUIDE

**STIMULUS OF SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYMENT
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT CALL (CEEC INST)**

2nd Edition

1. INTRODUCTION

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT), the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, is the public agency that supports Science and Technology in all areas of knowledge. FCT aims to promote research talent through sustainable advanced training and consolidation of scientific careers, to support the development of research centres that are international leaders in their field, to foster international competitiveness and visibility of Research and Innovation carried out in Portugal, to facilitate access of the scientific community to state-of-the-art Research Infrastructures, and to encourage knowledge transfer between Research and Development (R&D) Centres and the private sector, as well as Public Administration.

FCT funds people (by awarding studentships and scientific employment contracts), ideas (through R&D project grants), Research Centres and Infrastructures, as well as International Cooperation.

This call aims at funding scientific employment contracts for PhD holders centred on an institutional scientific employment programme. It is based on peer reviewing proposals submitted by applicant institutions. The call entails a [public announcement](#) (in Portuguese) outlining the required features of the applications and the evaluation criteria to be applied, as well as the number of contracts to be funded.

The present call will be open from **11th of March** until **16th of April 2021**.

This document outlines the evaluation process and procedures adopted in the 2nd edition of the Call for the Stimulus of Scientific Employment – Institutional Support (CEEC Inst), announced by FCT on December 23, 2020.

2. SCIENTIFIC EMPLOYMENT – INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Strengthening scientific employment in Portugal is a central issue to the programme of the XXII Constitutional Government and to the National Reforms Programme. In this context, FCT provides financial support to encourage recruitment of new researchers in the context of career development plans, thereby providing institutional renewal and stimulating scientific employment.

FCT issued in 2017 the [Regulation of Scientific Employment](#) (REC), updated on December 2019, and two instruments were created to promote scientific employment: an **individual programme** for the direct hiring of doctoral researchers by R&D institutions; and an **institutional programme**, for developing scientific employment and career plans by the beneficiary institutions.

The present call aims to support and strengthen scientific careers in R&D institutions based on their specific employment programmes with a target of hiring a total of 300 PhD holders. Researchers to be hired should be highly motivated scientists seeking to develop, carry out and coordinate top quality research in Portuguese institutions.

Beneficiary institutions are non-business entities in the R&I system, namely higher education institutions, their institutes and R&D units; associate laboratories; State or international laboratories headquartered in Portugal; private non-profit institutions whose main object is R&D activities; collaborative laboratories; technology interface centres; research infrastructures.

Four levels of career stages will be considered for the contracts under the Decree-Law no. 57/2016 of 29 August:

- a) **Junior Researcher:** Ph.D. holders with a reduced post-doctoral experience in the scientific area of application;
- b) **Assistant Researcher:** Ph.D. holders with more than 5 years of post-doctoral research, with relevant experience in the scientific area of application but with no need to demonstrate scientific independence;
- c) **Principal Researcher:** Ph.D. holders with more than 5 years of post-doctoral research, with relevant experience in the scientific area of application and demonstrating scientific independence for the last 3 years;
- d) **Coordinating Researcher:** Ph.D. holders with more than 5 years of post-doctoral research, holders of a title of *agregação* or *habilitação*, with relevant experience and demonstrating scientific independency and leadership evidence in the scientific area of application.

Permanent contracts will consider the three levels specific to the Statutes of Research, University Teaching and Polytechnic Teaching careers:

Table 1 – Types and career levels in Research, University teaching and Polytechnic teaching

Career Type / Stage	A	B	C
Research	Assistant Researcher (<i>Investigador Auxiliar</i>)	Principal Researcher (<i>Investigador Principal</i>)	Coordinating Researcher (<i>Investigador Coordenador</i>)
University Teaching	Assistant Professor (<i>Professor Auxiliar</i>)	Associate Professor (<i>Professor Associado</i>)	Full Professor (<i>Professor Catedrático</i>)
Polytechnic Teaching	Assistant Professor (<i>Professor Adjunto</i>)	Coordinating Professor (<i>Professor Coordenador</i>)	Principal Coordinating Professor (<i>Professor Coordenador Principal</i>)

Each institution can only submit one application as single proponent, except for large institutions, which may submit one application per each group of more than 300 PhD holders.

3. SECTIONS OF THE APPLICATION

Applications are submitted online via a dedicated [FCT web application](#).

The application must include the following parts for evaluation:

1. Description of the beneficiary institution
2. Associated R&D Units
 - 2.1 R&D Unit identification
 - 2.2 Articulation with the beneficiary Institution

3. Components of the application

A. Host conditions of the proponent institution, during the last 5 years (2015-2019)

A.1 Beneficiary Institution

A.1.1 Institution characterization

Total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, including post-doc fellows on 31st of December 2019

A.1.2 Profile of the faculty and/or research staff

a) Total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019

b) Total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019

c) Total number of top career positions (B and C in Table 1): Principal Researcher and Coordinating Researcher; Full Professor and Associate Professor; Principal Coordinating Professor and Coordinating Professor, registered on 31st of December 2019

A.1.3 Calls opened to reinforce the top career positions

Number of calls opened during the last 5 years (2015-2019) for the categories of: Principal Researcher and Coordinating Researcher; Full Professor and Associate Professor; Principal Coordinating Professor and Coordinating Professor or equivalent

A.1.4 Results of the institutional strategy for the recruitment of PhD holders

Institutional strategy for recruitment and career development of PhD researchers in terms of rejuvenation, new positions of researchers and academic staff aiming at reinforcing their specific careers

Number of calls opened for permanent appointment of professors and researchers, over the last 5 years (2015-2019)

A.2 Identification, by title, starting date, duration and summary of results, of a maximum of five relevant programmes, initiatives or activities in science, technology or innovation, performed by the candidate institution

A.3 Level of integration of activities, namely research, innovation, interaction with society and higher/advanced education, evidenced by the candidate institution

A.4 Outreach activities promoting scientific culture among different sectors of the society

B. Scientific Employment Plan of the proponent institution, planned for the next 5 years (2021-2025)

B.1 Beneficiary Institution

B.1.1 Institutional Strategy for the recruitment of PhD holders

Institutional strategy for recruitment and career development of PhD researchers in terms of rejuvenation, new positions of researchers and academic staff aiming at reinforcing their specific careers

a) Number of calls, for professor and researcher positions, to be opened over the next 5 years (2021-2025)

b) Number of calls, for permanent appointment of professors and researchers, to be opened over the next 5 years (2021-2025)

B.1.2 Calls planned to reinforce the top career positions

Number of contracts, over the next 5 years (2021-2025), for the categories of: Principal Researcher and Coordinating Researcher; Full Professor and Associate Professor; Principal Coordinating Professor and Coordinating Professor or equivalent

B.2 Identification of a maximum of five relevant programmes, activities or initiatives in science, technology or innovation

B.3 Level of integration of activities, namely research, innovation, interaction with society and higher/advanced education

B.4 Outreach activities promoting scientific culture among different sectors of the society

B.5 Expected contributions of the proposed Scientific Employment Plan to the achievement of specific UN Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, which should be clearly identified by relating them with the proposed planned calls

4. Financial support requested for a period of 6 years, in terms of number and level of new positions and duration, to be accomplished by the proponent institution

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Two evaluation criteria will be used:

A - Hosting conditions and institutional practices (40%)

B - Scientific Employment Plan (60%)

Criterion A

The merit of the application will be evaluated regarding the hosting conditions and procedures of recruitment. This criterion considers the integration of highly qualified scientific and academic staff and the promotion of scientific, technological, cultural, or artistic development by the institution, during the last 5 years (2015-2019). The following sub-criteria will be assessed:

- A1. **Contractual level:** Ratio between the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time) and the total number of scientific and academic PhD holders, researchers and professors, including post-docs fellows, registered on 31st of December 2019;
- A2. **Recruitment:** Ratio between the number of calls opened during the last 5 years (2015-2019) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time), registered on 31st of December 2019;
- A3. **Careers:** Ratio between the total number of researchers and professors with a permanent appointment and the total number of scientific and academic PhD holders, researchers and professors, including post-docs fellows, registered on 31st of December 2019;
- A4. **Strengthening careers:** Ratio between the total number of contracts signed for top career positions (type B and C shown in table 1) during the last 5 years (2015-2019) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time), registered on 31st of December 2019;
- A5. **Excellence, level 1:** Based on the 5 most relevant programmes, activities, initiatives or achievements in science, technology or arts, considered as such by the institution, during the last 5 years (2015-2019);
- A6. **Excellence, level 2:** Based on the level of articulation between scientific, innovation higher/advanced education and interaction with the society activities, considered as such by the institution;
- A7. **Excellence, level 3:** Based on the 5 most relevant programmes, activities, initiatives or achievements promotion of scientific culture and innovation, considered as such by the institution.

Weighting factors

$$A = 0.1(A1+A2+A3+A4) + 0.2(A5+A6+A7)$$

Criterion B

The merit of the Scientific Employment Plan for the next 5 years (2021-2025) will be based on the following sub-criteria:

- B1. **Recruitment:** Ratio between the number of calls for professors and researchers positions planned for the next 5 years (2021-2025) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time), registered on 31st of December 2019;
- B2. **Careers:** Ratio between the number of professors and researchers with a permanent appointment planned to be hired in the next 5 years (2021-2025) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time), registered on 31st of December 2019;
- B3. **Strengthening careers:** Ratio between the number of new contracts of top career positions (type B and C shown in table 1) planned for the next 5 years (2021-2025), and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract (permanent or with a determined duration in time), registered on 31st of December 2019;
- B4. **Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDG 2030):** Based on the contribution of the Scientific Employment Plan to the achievement of the selected Goals and Targets of SDG 2030 taking into account the relations between each planned new contract and specific goal(s) and target(s);
- B5. **Excellence, level 1:** Based on the 5 most relevant programmes, activities or initiatives in science, technology or innovation planned by the institution for the next 5 years (2021-2025);
- B6. **Excellence, level 2:** Based on the planned initiatives to promote the level of articulation between scientific, innovation higher/advanced education and interaction with the society activities planned by the institution for the next 5 years (2021-2025);
- B7. **Excellence, level 3:** Based on the 5 most relevant programmes, activities, initiatives or achievements for the promotion of scientific culture and innovation planned by the institution for the next 5 years (2021-2025).

Weighting factors

$$B = 0.1(B1+B2+B3+B4) + 0.2(B5+B6+B7)$$

Criteria A1 to A4 and B1 to B3 should be considered in relative terms, considering the size and type of institution.

Determination of ratios of the above sub-criteria is shown in the appendix I.

5. SCORING SYSTEM

The scoring system uses a 10-point scale with 0.1 increments. The maximum score is 10 and the minimum is 1.

The Final Score (FS) is given by the formula:

$$FS = 0.4A + 0.6B$$

Each sub-criterion is scored separately with one decimal place and the final score (FS) is presented with two decimal places. **The minimum merit threshold for a proposal to be considered for funding is a Final Score of 7.00.**

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

6.1 CONSTITUTION OF THE EVALUATION PANELS

The evaluation will be performed by a panel of international experts, appointed by the FCT President, on behalf of the Board, of recognised scientific and academic merit and experience in institutional management and evaluation of highly qualified scientific human resources, thus assuring representation of the scientific areas covered by the four FCT scientific councils.

6.2 EVALUATION STAGES

The evaluation process of the applications comprises the following stages:

- 1) Applications eligibility and assignment to reviewers
- 2) Remote evaluation
 - a) Initial phase
 - b) Consensus phase
- 3) Panel Meeting

APPLICATIONS ELIGIBILITY AND ASSIGNMENT

FCT will check the eligibility of the submitted applications according to the required criteria described in the announcement. However, an application can be declared ineligible at any stage of evaluation. If any doubt arises during the evaluation process, the Panel Chair and FCT should be informed.

Each application will be remotely **assessed by two panel members**, one lead reviewer (1st reader/rapporteur) and one 2nd reader.

The Panel Chair will be responsible for the assignment of the applications to the respective lead reviewer and 2nd reader.

The distribution of the applications to panel members must consider any declared CoI, as well as the matching of professional and scientific expertise with the scientific field of action of the proponent institution.

REMOTE EVALUATION

a) INITIAL PHASE

Before the assessment, reviewers must declare whether or not a CoI is identified for that particular application.

In case of a **disqualifying Col**, the Panel Chair and the FCT should be informed and the application reassigned to another reviewer by the Chair.

In the case of a **potential Col**, the panel member should notify FCT so that it is clarified, after a proper analysis, if s/he is able to perform unbiased evaluation or if the conflict should rather be considered as disqualifying.

Panel members must submit an initial report with their assessment for each application. The Final Score (FS) of each application will be calculated taking into account the weight given to each criterion (please see section 5), presented with two decimal places.

b) CONSENSUS PHASE

For each application, the panel member appointed as **1st reader is responsible for preparing the consensus report** to be submitted to the panel based on the two initial reviews.

The consensus report, similar in structure to the initial reports, is the starting point for the discussion during the panel meeting. This report is composed of a proposal of the number and type of positions to be supported in each application taking into account the final and independent scores as well as the type and size of the institution.

PANEL MEETING

The videoconference panel meeting will be coordinated by the Panel Chair, to proceed with the following activities:

- Ensure that each application receives a fair judgment and is discussed appropriately;
- Prepare a provisional ranked list of all applications under evaluation;
- **Prepare a panel meeting report** with a summary of the meeting that should include the provisional ranked list of all applications and the identification of disqualifying Conflict of Interest. This report will be signed by the Panel Chair, after receiving the agreement of all panel members.

Only the applications with **final scores equal to or above 7,00 will be selected for funding.**

6.3 FEEDBACK TO BE TRANSMITTED TO APPLICANTS

The evaluation comments may be succinct but should be adequate to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the application. The use of standard comments is strongly discouraged. A minimum of 1000 characters (with spaces) is required.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

7.1 CONFIDENTIALITY

The confidentiality of applications must be protected. All reviewers involved in the evaluation are asked not to copy, quote or otherwise use material from the applications. Reviewers are also requested to sign a statement of confidentiality relative to the contents of the applications and to the results of the evaluation. The first time a reviewer has access to the evaluation area, s/he will have to confirm the following statement:

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Thank you for accepting to participate in the scientific evaluation of the Stimulus of Scientific Employment – Institutional Support submitted to the *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P.* (FCT, I.P.).

The reader of this message pledges, on his/her honour, not to quote or use in any way the contents of the applications, nor to make available, other than to the FCT, I.P. or the Evaluation Panel, the results of the evaluation.

7.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST (CoI)

Experts with first-degree relationships, domestic partnership or married to Dean, Director, President, or member of any Board of Directors of an applicant institution, are hindered from being a member of the evaluation panel.

Any CoI must be declared prior to the evaluation process.

DISQUALIFYING CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

In case a **disqualifying** conflict of interests is identified for an application, the panel member cannot evaluate it nor participate in its discussion. Circumstances that should be interpreted as a disqualifying CoI are the following:

1. Personal or financial interest in the application's success;
2. Current or planned close scientific cooperation with the applicant institution;
3. Affiliation, or pending transfer, to any Department, Institution or Research Centre involved in the application;
4. Be, or plan to in the next 5 years, an active member in a council or similar supervisory board of the Department, Institution or Research Centre of the applicant institution.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

In the case of a **potential CoI**, the **Panel Member should notify FCT** in order to clarify it. After a proper analysis, it will be decided if s/he is able to perform an unbiased evaluation or if the conflict should rather be considered as disqualifying. A potential CoI exists in the following circumstances:

1. Relationships other than first-degree, marriage or domestic partnership, or other personal ties or conflicts with Dean, Director, President, or member of any Board of Directors of an applicant institution;
2. Participation in university bodies other than those listed under no. 4 of disqualifying Col, *e.g.*, scientific advisory committees in the research environment;
3. Involvement in a project or other activities with the applicant institution;
4. Any other circumstance the reviewer feels that may not be impartial.

In case of a disqualifying Col, the reviewer will not be able to proceed with the evaluation. The reviewer should immediately inform the Panel Chair and the FCT team, so that the application may be reassigned. The Panel meeting report must mention disqualifying ColS of all panel members.

8. PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

Once the provisional ranked lists of the evaluation results are communicated, applicant institutions may use their right to dispute the proposed decision in the preliminary hearing phase, which takes place during the **10 working days following the communication of provisional results.**

At this stage, panel members are asked to give support to FCT through the analysis of submitted complaints that applicants may consider relevant to the appeal. The Chair should guarantee the quality of the comments to be transmitted to the applicants.

Comments of scientific nature are analysed by the evaluation panel that previously evaluated the application, which is also responsible for correcting possible misjudgements or clarifying alleged inaccuracies.

The analysis of these comments is **neither a second assessment** of the application **nor an additional opportunity for the applicant institutions present new information.** It should only serve to identify any error that may have occurred during the evaluation and that is now addressed by the applicant institution. Any identified error should be corrected, and the score may be changed accordingly or remain the same.

The applicant institutions must submit their comments in English.

APPENDIX I – Indicators used to calculate the ratios for each sub-criterion

Criteria	Designation	Description	Ratio*
A1	Contractual level	Ratio between the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, including postdoc fellows, registered on 31st of December 2019	A.1.2 a)/A.1.1
A2	Recruitment	Ratio between the number of calls opened, for permanent appointment of professors and researchers, over the last 5 years and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019	A.1.4/A.1.2a)
A3	Careers	Ratio between the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a permanent appointment and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, including postdoc fellows, registered on 31st of December 2019	A.1.2 b)/A.1.1
A4	Strengthening careers	Ratio between the total number of top career positions and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019	A.1.2 c)/A.1.2 a)
B1	Recruitment	Ratio between the number of calls for professor and researcher positions, to be opened over the next 5 years (2021-2025) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019	B.1.1 a)/A.1.2 a)
B2	Careers	Ratio between the number of calls for permanent appointment of professors and researchers, to be opened over the next 5 years (2021-2025) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019	B.1.1 b)/A.1.2 a)
B3	Strengthening careers	Ratio between the number of contracts, over the next 5 years for top career positions (2021-2025) and the total number of PhD holders, researchers and professors, with a legal contract or permanent appointment, registered on 31st of December 2019	B.1.2/A.1.2 a)

*Calculated considering the information provided on the respective fields of the application form (please consult the Application Guide, number 3 of *Lista de Campos do Formulário de Candidatura*)