

GUIDE FOR PEER REVIEWERS

2017 CALL FOR SR&TD PROJECTS FOREST FIRE PREVENTION AND FIGHTING

JANUARY 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About FCT

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (FCT), the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, is the public agency responsible for implementing the Portuguese government's science and technology policy.

FCT started in August 1997, succeeding the previous equivalent agency, JNICT, created in the 1980s.

FCT's mission is to promote the advancement of scientific and technological knowledge in Portugal, exploring opportunities to attain the highest international standards, in any scientific or technological domain, and to stimulate the diffusion of that knowledge and its contribution to improve education, health, environment, and quality of life and well-being of citizens.

FCT pursues its mission by funding fellowships, studentships and scientific employment, research projects, internationally competitive research centres and state-of-the-art infrastructures, via competitive calls with international peer-review. FCT ensures Portugal's participation in international scientific organizations, fosters the participation of the scientific community in international projects and promotes knowledge transfer between R&D centres and industry. FCT also coordinates the public policy for the Information and Knowledge Society in Portugal and ensures the development of national scientific computing resources closely working with international organizations.

FCT's main roles are:

- To promote, finance, monitor and evaluate science and technology institutions, programmes, projects and training of human resources;
- To promote and support infrastructures for scientific research and technological development;
- To promote the diffusion of scientific and technological culture and knowledge, especially when relevant for educational purposes in close collaboration with the Ciência Viva agency;
- To stimulate the updating, interconnectivity, strengthening and availability of science and technology information sources.

FCT funds all areas of knowledge, including exact, natural and health sciences, engineering, social sciences and humanities.

2. THE 2017 CALL FOR FOREST FIRE PREVENTION AND FIGHTING SR&TD PROJECTS

The 2017 Call for Scientific Research and Technological Development (SR&TD) projects applied to Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting aims to support SR&TD projects in the areas of meteorology, forestry, fire management and prevention, in a clear orientation towards the applicability of the generated knowledge to real problems of the country in the field of forest fire prevention and fighting, as well as the protection of the populations.

This call was launched by FCT through a [public announcement](#) outlining the required features of the applications and the evaluation criteria to be applied. The rules under which the applications and the accepted projects are governed are specified in a public document entitled: [Regulations Governing Access to Funding for Scientific Research and Technological Development Projects](#). The submission period is open between 28th December 2017 and 28th February 2018. The content of the application **must be written in English**, and a version in Portuguese of the Title and the Summary is also required.

Applicants are asked to identify the main scientific area and a secondary scientific area according to the list provided in **Section 2.1**. This list was based on the Fields of R&D classification specified on the **Frascati Manual - OECD 2015**. Applicants also indicate four keywords that most accurately reflect the objectives and content of the proposed project. This will facilitate the assignment of each application to specific reviewers.

Funding of projects is based on peer review of applications submitted online in the referred call. FCT is responsible for the evaluation of the scientific merit of the submitted project proposals. Evaluation of the applications will be performed by an **international panel**.

The projects will be funded by National funds through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. A budget allocation of **€5 million of national state budget** is foreseen and, if justifiable, FCT may strengthen this budget.

2.1 Framework and Identification of Goals and Priorities of the Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting Call

The Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting Call, resulted from the [Council of Ministers through Resolution No. 159/2017, of 30th October 2017](#), in which was approved the creation of an R&D Program for the Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting, with the goal to reinforce the development of R&D activities that intends to encourage and strengthen technological and scientific competencies and capacities. It also intends to ensure the appropriation and incorporation of the scientific knowledge to support operational systems decisions and to facilitate the production of new knowledge with the goal of finding solutions for particular and real problems.

This call aims to support SR&TD projects in the following scientific areas:

- a) Governance of forest resources;
- b) Fire management and extreme fires behavior;
- c) Attitudes and behaviors in prevention and fighting of fires and in land management, including their collaborative dimension;
- d) Forest models and preventive silviculture;
- e) Meteorology, risk estimates and management, including detection of ignitions and early warning optimization, and development of intelligent observation and decision support systems, including advanced remote sensing and artificial intelligence technologies;
- f) Sensing and information systems, and emergency communication systems and their integration into decision-making processes;
- g) Management and valorization of biomass in rural areas;
- h) Models of organization and management of forest areas, in the fields of protection, conservation, agroforest systems, recreation, leisure and production;
- i) Occupational health and safety of fire-fighting personnel;
- j) Post-fire restoration and forest management at different temporal and spatial scales.

This R&D Program will include three calls with an annual basis, to be undertaken from the end of 2017 onwards.

The projects to be included in this R&D Program should adopt a multidisciplinary perspective and an international context, facilitating partnerships with experts and institutions of recognized international merit.

2.2 Main Aspects of the Applications

This call is intended to fund SR&TD projects for Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting, carried out by a team of the Principal Contractor and, if so decided by the applicants, by teams of other Participant Institutions. These are the legal institutions that will receive the funds from FCT, and herein named as beneficiary entities.

The beneficiary entities that may apply, either individually or jointly, are:

- a) Non-entrepreneurial entities of the R&I system, namely:
 - i. Higher education institutions, their institutes and R&D units;

- ii. State or international laboratories with a head office in Portugal;
 - iii. Non-profit private institutions whose main object is R&D activity;
 - iv. Other non-profit public and private institutions developing or participating in scientific research activities.
- b) Companies of any type and under any legal form if included in SR&TD projects led by non-entrepreneurial entities from the R&I system, within an effective collaboration.
 - c) The possible involvement of foreign institutions as participants in the project does not confer them the status of beneficiary.

Besides administrative requirements that are verified by FCT, projects to be funded under this call must meet the following specific requirements:

- Have a maximum duration of 36 months (extendable for 12 months, during its execution, if justified);
- Involve a maximum total eligible investment of €200.000,00, that could reach €400.000,00 when the project comprises, in co-promotion, at least three non-entrepreneurial entities of the R&I system as listed in **Section 2.2 a)**;
- Present a plan for dissemination of results and dissemination of knowledge, as well as a knowledge transfer strategy;
- Identify the Principal Investigator (PI) for the project that is responsible, alongside the Principal Contractor, for meeting the proposed objectives and rules governing the granting of funding;
- Identify a co-responsible for the project, the Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), that will replace the PI when he/she is unable to fulfil his/her duties;
- Each PI may only submit, in that quality, one application for this call. This condition is administratively verified by FCT;
- The PI must have a labour contract or post-doctoral fellowship with the proponent institution;
- The projects submitted under this Call must focus on one or more of the areas described in **Section 2.1**;
- Multiple applications of the same project are not allowed:
 - a) In distinct calls where there is a temporal overlap in the periods of submission of applications;
 - b) In the case of applications to calls with different thematic scopes and taking place at different application periods, the recommendation for funding in one of them is a condition of exclusion from the decision-making process of the others.

Under this call, the following items in SR&TD projects are eligible for funding (cf. [Regulations](#)):

- Expenses with **Human Resources**, dedicated or related to the development of R&D activities with regard to the project's execution, including expenses with grant holders and working contracts directly supported by the beneficiaries.

- a) Grants within SR&TD projects may be of the following types (for more information on these Grants, please refer to the Glossary and Translations section of this Guide):
- i. BCC – Visiting Scientist Fellowship (**up to 12 months**);
 - ii. BI – Research Fellowship;
 - iii. BIC – Scientific Initiation Studentship;
 - iv. BPD – Post-Doctoral Fellowship;
 - v. BTI - Research Technician Fellowship.
- b) For all grants, the monthly amount to be paid to the grant holder is fixed and established by FCT. Furthermore, these grants are tendered and contracted by the beneficiary entities in the context of the supported projects;
- **Missions** (travel, accommodation, registration fees, etc.) in Portugal and abroad;
 - **Acquisition of technical and scientific instruments and equipment**, if indispensable to the project and used during the project’s period of execution, within its useful lifetime;
 - **Amortization of technical and scientific instruments and equipment**, indispensable to the project, with a useful lifetime within the projects period of execution, but not limited to it;
 - **Subcontracts** directly related with tasks and activities of the project;
 - Expenses related to the national and international registration of **patents**;
 - Expenses with the **demonstration, promotion and disclosure of the project’s outputs** (minimum of 15% of the total eligible costs), for dissemination and appropriation actions of the produced knowledge. This includes activities to promote the scientific culture, in order to allow the integration of the scientific knowledge to support operational systems decisions and to facilitate the production of new knowledge with the goal of finding solutions for particular and real problems;
 - **Adaptation of buildings and facilities**, when essential to the development of the project, namely for environmental and security reasons, provided that these costs do not exceed 10% of the total eligible cost of the project;
 - **Acquisition of other goods and services** directly related to the execution of the project, including **consultants’** fees which do not constitute subcontracts;
 - **Indirect Costs, of 25% of the direct eligible expenses** of each beneficiary, excluding subcontracting and resources provided by third parties.

Salaries of public servants are not funded under this call.

The PI, co-PI, the remaining core elements of the applications, as well as the remaining elements of the research team, are responsible for submitting an updated version of their **CV in English**, and keep the information updated until the time of the application’s submission.

2.3 Beneficiaries and Project Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria, both for beneficiary entities and projects, follow the applicable Regulations, and will be subject to an administrative review to be carried out by FCT. Eligibility is thus not part of the evaluation process.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Scoring of the project proposals, towards their selection and ranking, is based on the **Merit of the Project (MP)**, to be calculated according to the following formula:

$$MP = 0.50 A + 0.20 B + 0.10 C + 0.20 D$$

The evaluation of the Merit of the Project is based on the following main four criteria:

- A - Scientific merit and innovative nature of the project from an international standpoint in the scientific area and within the goals of the call;
- B - Scientific merit of the research team;
- C - Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the budget;
- D - Contribution to the knowledge accumulation and competencies of the National Scientific and Technological System in the scientific areas of the call, to the feasibility of their application to improve the goals of the call, and merit of the demonstration, promotion and disclosure of the project's outputs.

The four main criteria are scored using a 9-point scale system (1 – minimum; 9 – maximum) and each of the four criteria is rated using this scale with whole numbers only (decimal ratings are not allowed). The final score of MP is rounded to two-decimal places.

For a proposal to be eligible for funding, the following **minimum score** is required:

- $MP \geq 5.00$ points.

For the purpose of selection and decision-making regarding funding, projects will be ranked by score obtained in the review process in decreasing order. In case of equal ratings, the locking date of the proposals in the FCT's electronic system will be taken into consideration for the ranking list.

In situations where the information provided in the application does not allow a sustained score of a given evaluation criterion, a score of 1 (one) should be given.

3.1 Criterion A

This criterion aims to assess the scientific merit and innovative nature of the project, among other considerations, the following:

- Dully substantiated relevance, originality of the objectives and of the study's object based on the state of the art of the scientific area, and innovative character of the proposed project;
- Potential contribution of the research project to the advancement of knowledge in the field of Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting and to the feasibility of knowledge application;
- Potential impacts of the project results on the economic and technological dimensions, the social and cultural sector, liaison to local and regional entities and problems, and the substantiation and definition of public policies.

3.2 Criterion B

The present criterion is intended to evaluate the scientific merit of the research team, through the following dimensions:

- Merit of the scientific and professional career of the proponents of the project (PI, co-PI and team members), valuing the different components that support a curriculum of scientific merit: participation in research projects; scientific publications; leadership/organization/participation in networks and conferences; participation in activities of scientific training and management; degree of internationalization of the team (when appropriate);
- Abilities and skills to adequately execute the proposed project in the specific area of this call, considering the team's configuration, the availability and commitment of its members (and other entities, when applicable) and the PI's qualifications regarding the project's challenges, both at the scientific and management level, as well as the ability to engage young researchers in training;
- Relevant outcomes of previous projects and their contribution to the advancement of knowledge and to knowledge-based applications, assessed through the qualitative appraisal of publications or other professional and scientific works and actions considered as the most representative of the scientific/professional career of the PI, co-PI and other team members.

3.3 Criterion C

This criterion is intended to evaluate the feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the budget, considering the following aspects:

- Quality (clarity, consistency and adequacy) of the proposed scientific approach, taking into consideration the theoretical framework, the adopted methodology for the development of the project, the work plan proposed and the applicability of the results in the framework of the goals of this call;

- Clear identification of the activities to be developed, their structure and their adequacy to the established methods and objectives;
- Adequacy of the human resources and methodologies to perform the proposed objectives and tasks and meet the proposed deadlines;
- If applicable, analysis of the risks associated to the different stages of the project, with special focus on the identification of the critical points and the corresponding contingency plan to be adopted;
- Adequacy of the physical and financial resources involved in the project, with regard to the host conditions (technical/scientific, organizational management and, when appropriate, co-funding capacity by companies) provided by the beneficiary entities, in particular institutional resources of the participating entities, namely the Principal Contractor;
- Adequacy and consistency of the proposed budget to accomplish the objectives and activities proposed.

3.4 Criterion D

This criterion aims to assess the added value of the project, the applicability of the results and the merit of the demonstration, promotion and disclosure of the project's outputs in the field of the present call - Forest Fire Prevention and Fighting. Due to the thematic line and the objectives of this call, in the evaluation of this criterion, a strong relevance should be given to the production of new scientific and technological knowledge, to the potential of its application and its demonstration and promotion in order to solve particular and real problems.

4. EVALUATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

4.1 General Information

- FCT is responsible for verifying the eligibility requirements of each project according to factual and legally binding criteria;
- The **Merit of the Project** will be assessed by an **international evaluation panel**;
- **Each application** will be remotely and individually evaluated by **two panel members**. One of the panel members will be appointed as the **first reader** of the application;
- All experts will be of acknowledged competence in the scientific areas of the application to be evaluated, and cannot be affiliated with Portuguese institutions or have current or scheduled collaborations with any Portuguese institution;
- Before the remote evaluation process, all panel members will have to sign the Terms of Reference of the call;
- The panel is headed by a Panel Chair and its composition will be disclosed on the FCT website;
- Whenever a particular expertise is not covered by the panel members, the Panel Chair suggests external reviewers to be invited by FCT, to provide an assessment of the application in consideration. The name of the external reviewers will not be made public;
- Distribution of the applications to panel members will take into consideration any Conflict of Interest, as well as, the matching of scientific competences;
- The first time a reviewer logs in the evaluation webpage located at the FCT site he/she has to accept a Confidentiality Statement (**Section 5.1**);
- Prior to access to each application, the reviewer has to declare whether or not a Conflict of Interest is identified for that particular application;
- During the panel meeting all applications shall be discussed. A **ranked list** and a **panel evaluation report** (for each application) will be produced;
- The panel will issue a **panel meeting report** on its activities;
- The panel members are asked to give support to FCT during the period spanning the evaluation meeting and the final decision (*i.e.*, analysis of potential appeals of scientific nature presented by the applicants);
- There is an allocated FCT team for the evaluation panel, which will act as the contact point for the reviewers.

4.2 Constitution of the Evaluation Panel

- The evaluation panel is appointed by the Board of Directors of FCT and approved by the Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education;
- The constitution of the evaluation panel will take into consideration the number and the scientific areas of the applications, an adequate gender balance and a fair geographic and institutional distribution of evaluators;
- A Chair will be invited to head the evaluation panel and is responsible for the following tasks:
 - i. Assigning each application to two panel members;
 - ii. Controlling the quality of the Compilation (Pre-Consensus) and panel evaluation reports;
 - iii. Steering the panel meeting;
 - iv. Communicating the results of the panel meeting to the Board of Directors of FCT;
 - v. Keeping the evaluation process within the defined timeframe and contacting panel members in case of any delay;
 - vi. Supporting the FCT team in the resolution of any Conflict of Interest identified during the evaluation process.

4.3 Evaluation Stages

In this call, the evaluation process of the applications involves the following stages:

- Assignment of the Applications;
- Individual Remote Evaluation (Pre-Meeting Activities);
- Panel Evaluation (Meeting Activities)

4.3.1 Assignment of the Applications

- **Each application** will be remotely and individually evaluated by **two panel members**. One of the panel members will be appointed as **first reader** of the application;
- **Distribution** of the applications to panel members will take into consideration any declared **Conflict of Interest**, as well as the **matching of professional and scientific expertise** with the topic of the application;
- The panel Chair will receive coordinator credentials for the assignment of each application to the respective first and second readers (1st and 2nd readers).

4.3.2 Individual Remote Evaluation (Pre-Meeting Activities)

- After the assignment of all applications, panel members will receive **individual credentials** to start the evaluation process;

- Before accessing each application, the reviewer has to declare whether or not a **Conflict of Interest** is identified for that particular application;
- In case of a Disqualifying Conflict of Interest, the panel Chair should be informed and the application allocated to a different panel member;
- Reviewers must submit an **Individual Evaluation Report** with their assessment for each application assigned to them;
 - i. The **Individual Evaluation Report Form**, includes:
 - The score and comments for each of the four evaluation criteria;
 - An overall comment on the proposal evaluation;
 - Funding recommendation, without specifying the amount;
 - Confidential comments to the evaluation panel may be provided.
 - ii. The assessment should take into account the following **guidelines**:
 - The strengths and weaknesses for each criterion must be identified;
 - The comment for each criterion should be succinct but substantial; this comment should address the relative importance of the criterion and the extent to which the application actually meets the criterion. Suggestions that might help the project team to carry out the project activities may be provided;
 - The overall comment on the proposal should be a global appraisal of the reviewer on the application, stating conclusions regarding the research work and the organization of the project. It must be in accordance with the comments and scores given to each criterion;
 - Comments should also be impeccably polite; if so decided by the panel, the comments may be reproduced totally or partially in the feedback to applicants.
- **Both readers must submit and lock their individual evaluation** for each assigned application in the Individual Evaluation Form;
- The panel member appointed as **1st reader** will only have access to the **Compilation Report Form**, for that particular application, after the submission of the two Individual Evaluation Reports;
- Based on the two individual reviews, the **1st readers** will prepare the **Compilation (Pre-Consensus) Report** for each application. **This report, whose structure is similar to the Individual Evaluation Report, must be submitted and locked up to two weeks before the panel meeting;**
- **Both scores and comments are critically important.** The Pre-Consensus review scores and comments are the starting point for the panel discussions and final panel score during the panel meeting;
- Whenever a reviewer has all her/his reports (Individual Evaluation Reports and Compilation Reports) locked, **panel credentials** will be sent, giving him/her access to all applications, as well as

to all Individual and Pre-Consensus reports. Access to all the information will allow panel members to prepare for the panel meeting.

4.3.3 Panel Evaluation (Meeting Activities)

- During the panel meeting, **all applications must be discussed**;
- The **application’s final scores** for each criterion, as well as the **comments to be made available to the applicants**, will be discussed and agreed upon by the evaluation panel and included in the **Panel Evaluation Report** by the 1st reader;
 - i. The **Panel Evaluation Report Form** includes:
 - The scores and comments for each of the four evaluation criteria;
 - An overall comment on the application;
 - Comments on the proposed budget;
 - Confidential comments to FCT, if necessary.
 - ii. The final panel assessment should take into account the following **guidelines**:
 - All comments should take the form of a statement with respect to the criterion under evaluation; the overall comment should provide a global point of view on the quality of the project;
 - Panel members shall:
 - Avoid comments that provide a mere description or summary of the application;
 - Avoid the use of the first person or equivalent: "I think..." or "This reviewer finds..."; alternatively, panel members are advised to use expressions such as "The panel considers..." or "It is considered...";
 - Avoid asking questions, since the applicants will not be able to answer them;
 - Panel members must always use dispassionate and analytical language: dismissive statements about the team, the proposed science or technology, the knowledge or the field concerned must be avoided;
 - Panel members must evaluate the work that is being proposed, and not the work that they consider should have been proposed.
- The panel will have to prepare a **Panel Meeting Report** containing a summary of the meeting activities that should address (but is not limited to) the following issues:
 - Work methodology adopted by the panel;
 - Identification of Conflicts of Interest and their resolution at any time during the process;
 - Final Panel Ranking.

This report should be signed by all panel members.

- The Panel should prepare an additional document with **Recommendations to FCT** on the various aspects of the evaluation process that may help FCT improve procedures in future calls. This document may include, among other issues considered to be important:
 - Comments and criticisms on the application form, with suggestions for possible improvements;
 - Comments on the material available to panel members, in particular the Guide for Peer Reviewers;
 - Strong and weak aspects of the FCT team;
 - Strong and weak logistical aspects (travel, hotel, meeting).

In summary:

It is the duty of the **evaluation panel** to:

- Prepare a **Panel Evaluation Report** for each application (to be conveyed to the applicants) based on the Compilation (Pre-Consensus) reports and panel discussions;
- Produce a Final **Panel Ranking** of all evaluated applications;
- Prepare a **Panel Meeting Report** with a summary of the meeting activities and comments regarding the evaluation process;
- Prepare a document with **Recommendations to FCT**.

4.4 FCT Evaluation Webpage (<https://sig.fct.pt/evaluation/>)

4.4.1 **Panel Chair Credentials**

Panel Chair credentials give access to the FCT evaluation webpage, and enable Panel Chairs to:

- allocate each application to two panel members and external reviewers (if applicable);
- check the number of applications assigned to each reviewer;
- monitor the individual reviewers' work flow (individual evaluation report submitted by panel members);
- extract an excel file to sort the applications according to various items, including scores, requested funding, etc.

The main menu displays the following options:

Project List – This list displays all the applications submitted to the panel. The reference/title are links to access the overview of the selected application form, the status of its evaluation and the contents of the individual reports, if locked. Each application must be assigned to two panel members.

Evaluators List - This list displays the names of the reviewers and the number of projects assigned to each. By clicking the name, the Panel Chair will access the list of applications associated with each reviewer.

Evaluators / Ratings - List of all projects, with data relative to the reviewers' work flow.

Additional Documents - Set of documents with information on the evaluation process, the particular call, logistical aspects, etc.

Extra Information - Lists that can be extracted to an excel file to monitor the work flow. This includes a list with the information regarding the conflict of interest declared by the reviewer.

Registration Form - To be filled in by the evaluator with her/his Personal Data, Scientific Field and Payment Data.

4.4.2 Individual Credentials

Individual credentials give access to the list of applications assigned to the reviewer, with the type of reader identified. After logging in and accepting the statement of confidentiality, instructions are available at the top of the menu.

For each application, the following is available:

- A statement on Conflicts of Interest;
- The content of the application;
- The Individual and Compilation (Pre-Consensus) (if 1st reader) Report Forms;
- The possibility to **SAVE** the submitted evaluation report - the uploaded information will be kept for future revision;
- The **LOCK** button to submit the evaluation report - the reviewer will no longer be able to modify the uploaded information;

4.4.3 Panel Credentials

Panel credentials give access to the list of all applications and to the respective evaluations (all individual and compilation reports). After logging in, instructions are available at the top of the menu.

For each application, the following is available:

- The content of the application ("Form Overview" tab);
- The Individual and Compilation (Pre-Consensus) Reports ("Evaluation" tab);
- The **Panel Report Form** (to be filled in by the 1st reader) ("Panel Evaluation" tab) – this form has the same structure of the Individual and Compilation reports;

- The possibility to **SAVE** the submitted evaluation report - the uploaded information will be kept for future revision;
- The **LOCK** button to submit the evaluation report - the reviewer will no longer be able to modify the uploaded information.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5.1 Confidentiality

The confidentiality of written applications must be protected. All reviewers involved in the evaluation are asked not to copy, quote, disclose or otherwise use material contained in the applications. All reviewers are requested to accept a statement of confidentiality relative to the contents of the applications and to the results of the evaluation.

The statement that needs to be accepted, which appears the first time the reviewer uses the individual credentials to access the evaluation area, is the following:

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Thank you for accepting to participate in the scientific evaluation of Research Projects submitted to the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (*Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P.*) – FCT.

The reader of this message pledges, on his/her honour, not to quote or using in any way, the contents of the project applications, nor to make available, other than to FCT or the evaluation panel, the results of the evaluation of project applications.

5.2 Conflicts of Interest (Col)

Researchers that have submitted any **application to the present Call**, as PI, co-PI, team member or consultant to the project, **have to decline** participating in the evaluation process. Those with first-degree relationships, domestic partnership or married to the PI, co-PI or any team member are also hindered from being a panel member or external reviewer.

Disqualifying Conflict of Interest

In case a disqualifying conflict of interest is identified, the panel member cannot evaluate the respective application. Panel members are also not allowed to participate in the panel meeting discussion of these applications. Circumstances that could be interpreted as a disqualifying conflict of interest are the following:

1. Personal or financial interest in the application's success;
2. Current or planned close scientific cooperation;

3. Research cooperation within the last three years, *e.g.* joint publications;
4. Dependent employment relationship or supervisory relationship (*e.g.* teacher-student relationship up to and including the postdoctoral phase) within the last five years before the opening date of the call;
5. Affiliation or pending transfer to any of the departments, research centres or companies involved in the project;
6. Researchers who are active in a council or similar supervisory or advisory board of the applying institutions are excluded from participating in the review and decision-making process for applications originating from these institutions.

Potential Conflict of Interest

In the case of a potential conflict of interest, the panel member should notify FCT and clarify if he/she is able to perform an unbiased evaluation or if the conflict should rather be considered as disqualifying. A potential conflict of interest exists in the following circumstances:

7. Relationships other than first-degree, marriage or domestic partnership; other personal ties or conflicts;
8. Participation in university bodies other than those listed under no. 6, *e.g.* in scientific advisory committees in the research environment;
9. Preparation of an application or implementation of a project with a closely related research topic (competition);
10. Participating in an on-going scientific or inter-personal conflict with the applicant(s).

Before starting the evaluation of each application, and in order to be able to access the evaluation form, each reviewer needs to complete a Col Declaration, as follows:

Conflict of Interest Declaration

Please state:

- No, I have no conflict
- Yes, I have a strong conflict (see **Disqualifying Col**)
- It is possible that I have a conflict (see **Potential Col**)

In case of a disqualifying or potential Col, the reviewer is asked to justify the situation.

The **individual reviewer** will not be able to proceed in case of a disqualifying conflict of interest. **In this case, the individual reviewer is required to inform the Panel Chair and FCT team of this situation**, so that the application may be reassigned. The panel meeting report must mention all declared Col.

6. OTHER INFORMATION

The National Qualifications Framework (QNQ) refers to the Portuguese framework for education and includes the following levels:

Level	Qualifications
1	Years 5 and 6
2	Years 7 to 9
3	Secondary Education (Years 10 to 12)
4	Secondary Education with work experience
5	Secondary Education with credits to access Higher Education
6	Higher Education Degree
7	Masters
8	PhD

Please note that this information might be relevant for the understanding of “Level of Qualification” at the “Human Resources information” of the application.

7. GLOSSARY AND TRANSLATIONS

7.1 Portuguese to English translation and explanations:

Agregação/Habilitação = Aggregation/Habilitation.

This is an academic title. It attests the:

- i.) Quality of the academic, professional, scientific and pedagogical curriculum;
- ii.) Capacity to carry out research work;
- iii.) Capability to coordinate and carry out independent research work.

and is issued to PhD holders after a public exam by a jury. The exam is required by the candidates and takes place during two days. This title is a requirement to be an opponent for a position as full professor (professor catedrático) or coordinating researcher (investigador coordenador)

Doutoramento = PhD, doctoral degree

Mestrado = Master's degree

Licenciatura = BA (3, 4 or 5 years graduate course)

Bolsa = Grant, Fellowship

Bolseiro = Grant Holder, Fellow

BCC = Bolsa de Cientista Convidado = Visiting Scientist Fellowship

- Visiting Scientist Fellowships are intended for PhD holders who have scientific curricula of high merit, for the development of research activities in Portuguese scientific and technological institutions, including management and coordination of research projects;
- The total duration of this kind of fellowship may vary between one month and three years. **In the present call only a duration up to 12 months is allowed.**

BPD = Bolsa de Pós-Doutoramento = Post-Doctoral Fellowship

- Post-doctoral Fellowships are intended for PhD holders, preferably for those who obtained the degree less than six years before the date of the application, to carry out advanced research within the scope of Portuguese scientific institutes of renowned competence;

- As a rule, the duration of the fellowship is annual, renewable up to a maximum of six years, pending a favourable evaluation at the end of the first three years;
- BPD grants may, in exceptional cases and depending on budgetary availability of the funding body, include periods of activity abroad, with the maximum duration of one year for PhD holders who obtained their PhD in Portugal and six months for PhD holders who obtained their PhD abroad.

BI = Bolsa de Investigação = Research Fellowship

- Research Fellowships are aimed at holders of a graduate degree or master/PhD holders, so as to obtain scientific training within national research projects or in national scientific and technological institutions;
- As a rule, the duration of the fellowship is annual, renewable up to a maximum of five years, and may not be awarded for periods of less than three consecutive months.

BIC = Bolsa de Iniciação Científica = Scientific Initiation Studentship

- Scientific initiation studentships are intended for students enrolled for the first time in the 1st cycle of a higher education institution or in an integrated Master course, to initiate or reinforce their scientific training, within research projects to be developed in national institutions;
- As a rule, the duration of the studentship is annual, renewable up to two years depending on good academic performance, and may not be awarded for periods of less than three consecutive months.

BTI = Bolsa de Técnico de Investigação = Research Technician Fellowship

- Research technician fellowships aim to provide supplementary, specialized training in Portuguese or foreign scientific and technological institutions, to technicians that may support the operation and maintenance of equipment and infrastructures of a scientific nature, and other important activities for the national scientific and technological system;
- The duration of the studentship is variable, up to a maximum of five years, and may not be awarded for periods of less than three consecutive months.

7.2 Glossary

CoI = Conflict of Interest

Co-PI = Co-Principal Investigator

MP = Merit of the Project

OECD = Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PI = Principal Investigator

Postdoctoral fellow = a PhD holder that has a Post-doctoral grant

R&D = Research and Development

R&I = Research and Innovation

SR&TD = Scientific Research and Technological Development