



CALL FOR

PhD GRANTS

APPLICATION GUIDE

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ACRONYMNS

MPP	MIT Portugal Program
MPP2030	MIT Portugal Partnership 2030
CV	Curriculum Vitae
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
EBI	Research Fellowship Holder Statute
FCT	Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P.
RBI	FCT Regulation for Studentships and Fellowships

USEFUL LINKS

MPP webpage for the Call for PhD Grants - 2021

<https://www.mitportugal.org/education/2021-call-for-phd-grants/>

FAQs

<https://www.mitportugal.org/education/2021-call-for-phd-grants#faqs>

CIÊNCIA ID

<https://www.ciencia-id.pt>

CIÊNCIAVITAE

<https://cienciavitae.pt>

SlideRoom Applicant Help Center

https://help.liaisonedu.com/SlideRoom_Applicant_Help_Center

1. INTRODUCTION

The Application Guide is a document that intends to assist the applicants in submitting their applications for the MIT Portugal Call for PhD Grants – 2021.

This guide does not replace or override the information specified in the [Research Fellowship Holder Statute](#), in the [FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships](#) or in the [Notice of the Call](#).

The MIT Portugal Program (MPP) is a strategic international partnership between Portuguese universities and research institutions, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Portuguese government, as well as partners from industry and other non-academic institutions.

First established in Portugal in October 2006 and renewed in 2013, MPP has been developing a research platform for cutting-edge concepts in emerging areas of science and technology. The first two phases of the program demonstrated a high-profile effort to prove that an investment in science, technology, and higher education can have a positive, lasting impact on the economy. Phases I and II addressed key societal issues through quality education and research in the emerging field of engineering systems while educating future leaders in science, technology, entrepreneurship, and the innovation of technological systems.

The third and current phase of the program - MIT Portugal Partnership 2030 (MPP2030) - was launched in June of 2018 and funded by the [Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia \(FCT\)](#). MPP2030 will continue to uphold MIT's strong commitment to collaborate with Portuguese institutions with the goal of strengthening Portugal's knowledge base and international competitiveness through strategic investments in research, people, and ideas. The program aims to create a vibrant, interactive, and sustainable collaborative platform that addresses the complex challenges of global and societal impact.

Within the scope of the new partnership, MPP2030 focuses on developing research in four strategic areas all of which include data science intensive approaches and methodologies:

- [Climate Science & Climate Change](#)
- [Earth Systems: Oceans to Near Space](#)
- [Digital Transformation in Manufacturing](#)
- [Sustainable Cities](#)

The Mission of MPP2030 is to foster collaborative research between MIT and Portuguese universities, research institutes, laboratories, and companies, targeting innovative, high-impact ideas and research projects with the full potential to address complex challenges of global and societal impact.

The MIT Portugal Partnership 2030 is inviting submissions for the 2021 Call for PhD Grants. This call will be hosted under the MPP2030 and the grants to be awarded are FCT PhD Scholarships. Therefore, these

scholarships follow the [Research Fellowship Holder Statute](#) in the [FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships](#).

2. PREPARE FOR THE APPLICATION

2.1. Who can apply?

All individuals who satisfy the requirements specified in the [FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships \(RBI\)](#), in the [Research Fellowship Holder Statute \(EBI\)](#) and in the [Notice of the Call](#) may apply to the 2021 Call for FCT-MPP2030 PhD Grants. Therefore, before you start to prepare your application, read these documents carefully.

FCT also recommends reading the [CIÊNCIAVITAE Guide](#). You may also consult the list of [FAQs](#), available at [MPP webpage](#).

2.2. Application platform

The application platform is hosted in SlideRoom service and can be directly accessed by the following address: <https://mitportugal.slideroom.com/#/permalink/program/60515>

To prepare and submit your application, you need to be registered in SlideRoom. When registering, please pay attention to the contact details you list, as they will be used to send you reminders, notifications, and decisions regarding the present Call for PhD Grants.

2.3. Application Form

To access the application form, please head to <https://mitportugal.slideroom.com/#/permalink/program/60515> and click on the button "Apply Now." Login to your SlideRoom account or register to begin the application.

You can only register and submit **a single application**.

The form is filled in directly in the platform, and it is always available to view and to edit until the due date, and before you submit the application. **As soon as you submit your application, you will not be able to unsubmit or perform any change.**

By applying, you agree to have your personal data collected by MIT Portugal. It will not be sold, shared, or made public in any circumstance. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@mitportugal.org.

2.3.1. Structure of the Form

The form asks for the following information:

1. Personal Data
2. Academic Records
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Work Plan
5. Motivation
6. Host and Supervisor

Section 3 of this Guide details the necessary content and information in each section of the application form.

In addition to the fields for filling in with your proposal information, you will have to list 2 references that will be contacted to submit a recommendation letter on your behalf.

2.3.2. Application Form Submission

During the application period, you can edit again your application as much as necessary before you submit it. Be aware that different versions of the application will not be recorded. The system only saves the last version of the application.

2.3.3. Specific Features of the Form: Word Limit and Optional Fields

Some fields of the form have a limited number of characters. If you exceed the number of characters specified for each field, the additional characters won't appear in the submitted application. Text-limited fields have a counter, so you know how many characters you've filled in. Additionally, mandatory and optional fields are identified on the form.

2.4. General Recommendations

MPP suggests that you follow these recommendations when preparing your application:

- Plan and complete the application process as early as possible, in order to ensure that you will have time to obtain support from MPP, if necessary;
- Most questions you will have are answered in this Guide, in the [Notice of the Call](#), [FAQs](#) and on the form itself. Please read all text carefully before contacting MPP with any questions;
- Always verify and confirm the appearance of your application text, ensuring it's the way you want it to appear before you submit it;
- If you need to upload several documents in a field that allows only a single file upload, please merge your PDFs into one file;
- When uploading files, please pay attention to the recommended file name you should name your file;
- We will NOT accept late applications;
- You should not assume that the form, the rules for submission or the grants (conditions/features) are the same as previous MPP and FCT calls;
- Complete and update your CV in the [CIÊNCIAVITAE](#) curriculum management platform. This is the information that will be considered for your application, and must therefore present all scientific productions and activities duly referenced and identified;
- If you update your CV on the [CIÊNCIAVITAE](#) platform, you will need to re-upload/update your CV on the application as well.

2.5. Admissibility requirements

Under penalty of non-admission of the application, it is mandatory to/for:

- Associate your updated curriculum vitae (CV) in the [CIÊNCIAVITAE](#) platform;

- Present a detailed description of your work plan for the research activities to be developed;
- Supervisors affiliated with Portuguese institutions to update their CV in [CIÊNCIAVITAE](#), so it can be exported in PDF file and uploaded to the SlideRoom;
- Present a motivation letter, in which you explain the reasons for applying, the trajectory of your scientific and/or professional career, and how it fits the proposed work plan.
- If applicable, you can also discuss relevant achievements in the motivation letter (there will also be a space to upload other documents if you deem them necessary);
- Two signed reference letters to be associated to your proposal. The candidate will identify two references for the letters (name, institution and email) during the application, who will be contacted automatically by email to submit the letter. The candidate is responsible for monitoring the process and ensuring that all letters are submitted by the references until the end of the call (**5 pm - Lisbon time - on July 2, 2021**). The recommendation letters should include the context of the academic and/or professional relationship of the referee with you, and should also, preferably, indicate the reference to this Call (2021 FCT-MPP2030 PhD Grants). Recommendation letters should refer to the maturity and adequacy of applicant's profile to the proposed work plan;
- Present the application, and all of its related documents (including motivation and recommendation letters) in English. Only the academic records and CVs from supervisors can be presented in either Portuguese or English.

Please refer to the [Call Notice](#) for further details about the admissibility requirements. The present document is only a guide to assist you on the preparation of your application.

2.6. How to address questions to MPP

Questions related to the application, application form or its filling should be sent to MPP through the following email address info@mitportugal.org, referring to “**Call for 2021 FCT-MPP2030 PhD Grants**” in the message subject. In case you have already started your application, you should also mention its reference, indicating it in the subject of the email: “**Call for PhD Grants 2021 – YOUR NAME**”.

MPP guarantees answers only up to 4 working days before the application submission deadline (**5 pm - Lisbon time - on July 2, 2021**).

We recommend that, before contacting MPP, you should carefully read all the documents related to the Call, including the list of [FAQs](#), available at the MPP website.

3. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

3.1. Personal Data

You will provide personal information necessary for us to identify and contact you:

- CiêncialD: If you don't have a CiêncialD's unique identifier, visit <https://www.ciencia-id.pt/>, and register to get a CiêncialD.
- Name: State your full name without abbreviations.

- Gender
- Phone number: State your phone number, including country code. Example: +351-123456789.
- Primary email address
- Nationality
- Identification document and number
- Date of Birth: please note the format of mm/dd/yyyy.

3.2. Academic Records

The submission of degree certificates is a mandatory admissibility requirement. Only the degree certificates uploaded in the application form will be considered for evaluation purposes.

Similarly, in case of academic degrees obtained abroad, only degrees with the respective recognition/equivalence and conversion to the Portuguese grading scale, and with uploaded proof, will be considered.

3.2.1. Academic Degrees Obtained in Portugal

In case of academic degrees obtained in Portugal, according to the respective situation, applicants must comply with the following:

- For post-Bologna academic degrees, applicants should specify the grades obtained in the 1st and/or 2nd study cycles;
- In case of Integrated Master's degrees, for whom the institutions do not provide separate grades for the 1st and 2nd cycle of study, it should be detailed the final grade of both cycles;
- For pre-Bologna academic degrees, applicants should indicate the grades obtained for the graduate and/or Master's degrees.

You can add details up to 2 Degrees. Please add information for the most recent degrees. If you have more than 2 degrees, please add information for the additional degrees in the uploaded degrees proof. When uploading the academic records and degree proofs, please merge all documents in a single PDF file before uploading.

3.2.2. Academic Degrees Obtained Abroad

In order to comply with Portuguese legislation regarding the recognition of foreign qualifications, all the rights inherent to academic degrees granted by foreign higher education institutions are duly recognized to the holders of these degrees. This recognition is subject to the presentation of the academic degrees recognition and conversion of the final grade to the Portuguese grading scale, requested to the Dean of a public Portuguese University, the Head of a Public Polytechnic Institute or the Director-General for Higher Education; or by the presentation of the equivalence/recognition, registered by a public higher education institution.

The legal regime applicable to the recognition procedures is approved by the Decree-Law no. 66/2018, of 16 August, if requested after 1 January 2019. For requests submitted before 1 January 2019, the

applicable legal procedure is ratified by Decree-Law 341/2007, of 12 October, and regulated by Decree no. 227/2017, of 25 July, or, alternatively, for equivalence processes, the request is governed by the Decree-Law no. 283/83, of 21 June.

For further information, we recommend you to visit the website of the Directorate General for Higher Education (Direção-Geral do Ensino Superior, DGES): <https://www.dges.gov.pt/en>.

Applicants with foreign academic degrees should:

- State the country where the degree was obtained;
- Indicate the foreign academic degree granting institution;
- Indicate the year of conclusion of the degree;
- Select the type of recognition in the drop-down list menu;
- Indicate the original final grade of that degree;
- Specify the grade converted to the Portuguese grading scale, in case your degree has been converted by a public Portuguese Higher Education Institution or by DGES;
- Upload the recognition/equivalence of the degree and the conversion of the final grade to the Portuguese grading scale.

We highlight that the submission of both the recognition of academic degrees and the respective final grade conversion is mandatory.

3.2.3. Annexes Submission

Applicants should submit an electronic version of the certificates corresponding to each indicated degree, also indicating the grade for each course whenever possible. In case the degree certificate and the certificate of the grade obtained in all curricular units are independent documents, please merge all documents into a single PDF file and upload it into the field “Proof of Degree.”

You can also submit the diploma supplement and your Percentile; the upload of both documents is optional. The diploma annex is a supplementary document containing detailed information concerning the training carried out, results obtained and the characteristics of the education institution, from an international mobility perspective. We recommend the submission of this document. The Percentile in the concluded degree is a document that allocates the grade obtained by a student within the total of grades awarded in the year in which the student obtained the degree at the same education institution and for the same course.

All the documentation necessary for application evaluation should be uploaded within the appropriate fields of the application form; **MPP will not accept any paper documents.**

Please merge all documents related to your academic records in order as a single PDF file before submission.

3.3. Curriculum Vitae

The curriculum vitae to be associated with the application is the CV exported from the [CIÊNCIAVITAE](#) curricular management platform and uploaded to the MPP Call for PhD Grants application form.

To export your CV from [CIÊNCIAVITAE](https://cienciavitae.pt) you need to:

- Visit <http://cienciavitae.pt>
- Login on or register for your CIÊNCIAVITAE account
- Update and review all the information on your CIÊNCIAVITAE
- Click on the small arrow next to your profile alias on the top right screen
- On the drop-down menu, click on “export curriculum”
- Select:
 - Export Format: PDF format
 - Curriculum model: Full
 - Period: All the period
 - Order of presentation: Descending
 - Privacy Level: All
- Click on Export and save the generated PDF file on your computer. Please check if everything looks OK with the generated PDF file before upload.

Applicants are not allowed to use CVs from other platforms or styles.

Please upload the generated PDF file to the application platform. You will be able to replace it with newer versions if needed while you are editing the application.

3.4. Workplan

3.4.1. Scientific Area

Select the primary scientific field and the secondary scientific field that better matches the proposed work plan.

Remember that the areas listed in the fields are the strategic research areas for the MPP:

- [Climate Science & Climate Change](#)
- [Earth Systems: Oceans to Near Space](#)
- [Digital Transformation in Manufacturing](#)
- [Sustainable Cities](#)

and are **all Data Science driven**.

The combination of the main scientific field/secondary field will determine the evaluation panel that will assess your application. Before submitting the application, you should confirm that this selection of areas corresponds to your proposal theme.

3.4.2. Title

State the title of your work plan. This should be concise, understandable for anyone with a general scientific

background, and adequate for public disclosure.

3.4.3. Keywords

State four to six keywords that best describe the work plan, separated by “;”.

3.4.4. Abstract (maximum 1000 characters)

This section is a synthesis of your work plan. A good summary should be clear and well-structured, showing that you are able to summarize the object of research, the aims of the project, and the main expected contributions of the research work.

3.4.5. State of the Art (maximum 3000 characters)

The state of the art or literature review brings together, analyzes, and discusses published work in the area of your work plan. Its purpose is to provide a theoretical grounding for the object of research by referring to previous studies, which should be confronted and interrelated, especially if they are contradictory to each other. Additionally, you should point out the originality of your proposal.

3.4.6. Objectives (maximum 2000 characters)

The purpose of this field is to provide a description of the project's main research questions and goals.

3.4.7. Detailed description (maximum 6000 characters)

This field should contain the detailed work plan and a description of how the aims of the research project will be achieved. The descriptions should provide all the necessary elements to allow assessment by the evaluation panel, namely the methodological approach, description of tasks, their interrelatedness, sequence, and schedule. It may also include a contingency plan describing how to conduct the project with the social distancing measures in place.

3.4.8. MIT Portugal framing (maximum 2000 characters)

Describe how your thesis proposal fits within the [MIT Portugal's 2030 strategy](#).

Visit <http://mitportugal.org/> for more information.

3.4.9. Timeline

You have the option to include a chart with milestones for the different tasks so we may analyze the feasibility of the proposed work plan. The timeline is not mandatory, but is highly recommended. To make a timeline you may use specific software tools or an Excel sheet that should then be converted into a PDF file.

3.4.10. Additional supporting documents

You may also share documents containing formulas, schematics, diagrams, charts, or images in this field. In any case, the annexes should only be examples or demonstrations of what has been described in the

various fields of the application form and, therefore, should not be considered its extension. If you plan to develop part of your work in collaboration with additional institutions, besides your host institution(s), you may submit a “Supporting letter,” attesting for the respective collaboration. The letter of support should be issued and signed by the institution. Please provide the URL for the download of the supporting documentation.

3.4.11. Bibliographic references

Use this field to specify bibliographic references (a maximum of 30) that support your work plan and detail all the necessary elements that will enable the panel to identify the references in relation to your project. You should format your bibliographic list in a consistent manner according to a scientific approved referencing style. This field has a limited space of 10,000 characters, indicated in the respective counter.

3.5. Motivation

3.5.1. Motivation Letter (maximum 6000 characters)

The motivation letter is mandatory and a fundamental element of the application. In it, you should objectively explain the reasons why you are ideally suited to carry out the proposed work plan, namely the reasons behind your application, the robustness of the proposed research activities, and how the achievement of a doctoral degree will impact your professional career.

If you attach a document or artistic achievement that best represents your scientific and/or professional career, you must justify the reason for including it in your motivation letter. A reminder that the motivation letter can only be written in English under penalty of non-admission of the application.

3.5.2. Most Representative Document

You may present a document that you consider to be the most representative of your scientific and/or professional career path. This document is of optional submission and should be a URL. We emphasize that, in case of submission, this choice should be clearly justified in the Motivation Letter.

3.6. Host and Supervisor

3.6.1. Host Institution

State the institution(s) where you are going to develop your work plan.

3.6.2. Doctoral Granting Institution

State the higher education institution that will grant the PhD degree.

3.6.3. PhD Program

State the PhD Program that you will enroll or are enrolled in to perform the proposed thesis work plan.

3.6.4. Supervisor(s)

The purpose of this field is to identify the supervisor and optional co-supervisor(s) who will take on the responsibility for monitoring and supervising your research project.

Each application can have a maximum of three associated supervisors, with one being the main supervisor (mandatory) and the other two co-supervisors (optional). Excluding exceptional circumstances, duly explained, the supervisor and supervisors must be associated to at least one of the host institutions, in order to guarantee a continuous and fruitful work with the grantee.

Any fully active researcher holding a PhD may be a supervisor or co-supervisor.

Provide information about your supervisors, namely:

- Name: State the supervisor's full name without abbreviations, multiple supervisor names are permitted.
- Email: provide the institutional (only institutional emails are allowed) email(s) of the supervisors listed before.
- Institution: state the institution(s) to which your supervisor(s) are affiliated to.
- Commitment Letter and CV – Upload a **signed commitment letter by your supervisor(s)** stating that (s)he accepts to supervise you, in case you are awarded with the FCT-MPP2030 PhD Grant. The **supervisor's CV should be an appendix to the commitment letter**. The CV should be exported from [CIÊNCIAVITAE](https://cienciavitae.pt), for supervisors affiliated to Portuguese higher education institutions. **In case of multiple supervisors, please merge all commitment letters and CVs in a single PDF file before upload.**

To export the CV from [CIÊNCIAVITAE](https://cienciavitae.pt), please ask your supervisor to:

- Visit <http://cienciavitae.pt>
- Login on or register for a CienciaVitae account
- Update and review all the information on his/her CienciaVitae
- Click on the small arrow next to the profile alias on the top right screen
- On the drop-down menu, click on “export curriculum”
- Select:
 - Export Format: PDF format
 - Curriculum model: Full
 - Period: All the period
 - Order of presentation: Descending
 - Privacy Level: All
- Click on Export and save the generated PDF file on his/her computer. Please confirm if everything looks OK with the generated PDF file and merge it to the commitment letter before uploading it.

3.6.5. Adequacy of Supervising Team (maximum 3000 characters)

In this field, you should describe the adequacy of the supervising team (including supervisor and co-supervisors, if applicable) and the means available at the host institution(s) for the full implementation of the work plan.

3.7. References

The recommendation letters are mandatory. Two recommendation letters are required, which must be signed by the respective issuers. Only letters written in English will be accepted. Recommendation letters written in alternative languages will not be considered and the application will be considered non-admissible.

There is no set format for the recommendation letters. However, they should include references to this call (2021 FCT-MPP2030 PhD Grants), the context in which the recommender is familiar with the applicant work and qualities, as well as her/his opinion regarding the maturity and adequacy of the applicant's profile to perform the proposed work plan.

The reference letters are submitted in closed. You should provide the Name, Title, Email Address, Phone Number, Organization, and Relationship of the applicant's references. The application platform will immediately send an email to your reference providers asking them to go to the online Reference Portal and upload or write a letter for you. Once a reference provider completes this, the letter is attached to your application.

The reference grid shows the status of your references and allows you to resend the requests, if needed. Although you cannot edit your application once you have submitted it, you can log back in and check/ the status of your letter or edit your reference provider information any time before they submit their recommendation.

3.8. Application Submission

Please take your time to review the application and to be sure all information is correct and follows the guidelines present in this application guide.

After submitting the application, you won't be able to edit or unsubmit.

You do not need to wait for recommendation letters to be completed before submitting your application. While filling your application you will need to input the details of your references, and the reference letters are attached to the application as they come in. If you have a problems with pending reference letters after application submission, you can view your completed application and resend or edit the request if needed, by login back to the application portal.

Please be aware that you need to submit your application as well as ensuring the that the two (2) references upload their letters before the call due date. Your application will be automatically excluded if missing any of the mandatory documentation (including the reference letters) by the call due date.