

BOL/2026/00014

Call for Applications for the Award of One Doctoral Research Grant

The Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES-Iscte) of Iscte – Knowledge and Innovation hereby opens a call for applications for the award of one (1) doctoral research grant within the scope of the project “fAlces - Facial Recognition Technologies: Etho-Assemblages and Alternative Futures”, ERC Advanced Grant no. 101140664, funded by the European Union through the European Research Council (ERC).

About the Project

Facial recognition technologies, among the most widespread applications of artificial intelligence (AI) across different sectors of society, from public security to commerce, mobile technology, banking and finance, have generated varied, contradictory and complex reactions, along a continuum between their normalisation and acceptance and public criticism and opposition. Although their expected benefits are often associated with security and protection, critics underline that these technologies normalise mass surveillance, undermine privacy and human rights, exacerbate discrimination, and present flaws and inaccuracies that are difficult to overcome. The fAlces project is grounded in the following central questions: what matters in facial recognition technologies, and why? What forms of citizenship and public engagement are affected? How do multiple and complex ethical choices emerge? This study proposes to develop a new theory of the face by mobilising an innovative methodology that takes into account the perspectives of different social groups, including academic and corporate developers, activists and NGOs, racialised populations, and artists.

The doctoral research grant will be awarded for the development of research activities within subprojects 3 and 4 of fAlces, devoted respectively to non-governmental organisations that contest, reject or criticise the expansion of facial recognition technologies (subproject 3), and to Black communities vulnerable to discrimination perpetuated by these technologies (subproject 4).

The call for the award of the grant is open under the following conditions:

Scientific Area: Social Sciences

Admission requirements:

Applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in the fields of Social Sciences or Humanities and must be enrolled in a PhD programme in one of these fields by the date of contract signature, in accordance with Article 6 of the FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships (Regulation no. 950/2019).

If the academic degree has been awarded by a foreign higher education institution, it must be recognised by a Portuguese higher education institution, under the terms set out in Article 25 of Decree-Law no. 66/2018, of 16 August, which approves the legal framework for the recognition of academic degrees and higher education diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and paragraph e) of no. 2 of Article 4 of Decree-Law no. 60/2018, of 3 August. Any formalities established therein must be completed by the date of contract signature.

Further information may be obtained at: <https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/reconhecimento?plid=374>

Preferred requirements:

- a) Research experience in Social Sciences or Humanities, namely in the study of topics such as social movements and activism associated with the surveillance of the general population and of racialised communities.
- b) Experience in qualitative methodologies, particularly in conducting individual and group interviews, document analysis, digital ethnography, and in-person ethnography.
- c) Experience in the use of qualitative data analysis software (e.g. NVivo, MAXQDA).
- d) Proficient command of spoken and written English.

Work Plan:

The work plan is integrated into the research and scientific dissemination activities of the fAlces project and must be carried out through the development of a doctoral thesis within the framework of subprojects 3 and/or 4.

The grant holder will be responsible for the following tasks:

- a) Surveying and systematising academic literature and other relevant documentation, contributing to the bibliographic database in Mendeley;
- b) Participating in the development of methodological tools for the collection of qualitative data;
- c) Transcribing and analysing interviews, as well as carrying out ethnographic observation (in person and/or digital);

- d) Supporting the overall implementation of the project, namely through the production of reports and documents on results and collaboration in dissemination activities;
- e) Participating in the writing of scientific publications;
- f) Participating in project meetings and events;
- g) Preparing a doctoral thesis within the specific thematic areas of subproject 3 and/or 4.

Duration of the grant:

The grant will have a duration of 12 months, with an expected starting date of 01-10-2026, and may be renewed for an equal or different period up to the maximum limit of the approved funding or up to the maximum duration allowed for this type of grant (whichever occurs first). Under no circumstances may it exceed the limits established in nos. 3 and 6 of Article 7 of Regulation no. 950/2019, of 29 November, published in the *Diário da República*, no. 241, Series II, of 16 December (FCT Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships).

Applicable legislation and regulations:

Statute of the Research Fellow, as amended by Decree-Law no. 123/2019, of 28 August; Regulation for Research Studentships and Fellowships of the Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., Regulation no. 950/2019; Decree-Law no. 66/2018, of 16 August (legal framework for the recognition of academic degrees and higher education diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions); and all other applicable legal provisions.

Place of work and scientific supervision:

The work will be carried out at the Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES-Iscte) of Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon, under the scientific supervision of Doctor Helena Machado.

Monthly maintenance allowance:

The amount of the grant, under an exclusive dedication and full-time regime, is €1,359.64, in accordance with the table of grants awarded directly or indirectly by FCT, I.P. in Portugal (<https://www.fct.pt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Tabela-de-Valores-SMM-2026.pdf>), and will be paid monthly by bank transfer to the grant holder. The grant holder may also be reimbursed for the amount

corresponding to the Voluntary Social Security Scheme, if they choose to subscribe to it. The grant holder will also benefit from the payment of tuition fees by the project.

Selection methods:

The selection process will be based on curricular evaluation. If several applicants are considered to have the appropriate profile for carrying out the work plan, the Selection Committee reserves the right to invite the three highest-ranked candidates in the curricular evaluation for an interview, to be conducted in English. In this case, the curricular evaluation will account for 60% and the interview for 40% of the final score. If the Committee considers interviews unnecessary, the curricular evaluation will account for 100% of the final score.

The criteria for curricular evaluation are as follows:

- a) academic background (30%);
- b) research experience (40%);
- c) demonstrated experience in the items listed under the preferred factors (30%).

The curricular evaluation of applicants will be carried out in accordance with the above criteria, using an integer scale from 0 to 20.

The Selection Committee reserves the right to:

- d) select for the position the highest-ranked candidate, following the order established in the final ranking list, whenever the selected candidate does not fulfil the requirements for formalising the contract or in the event of unavailability;
- e) not award the grant if none of the applicants matches the desired profile.

Composition of the Selection Committee:

Applicants will be assessed by a Selection Committee composed of Doctor Helena Machado (CIES-Iscte), who will chair the Committee, and Committee Members Doctor Susana de Noronha (CIES-Iscte) and Doctor João Santos (CIES-Iscte).

Publication/notification of results:

The results of the evaluation will be made public through the publication of the lists of admitted and excluded applicants and the final ranking list, and all applicants will be notified by email. The prior hearing period for interested parties shall take place within the 10 working days following notification of the results.

Application deadline and submission procedure:

The call is open from 6 May to 4 June 2026, and only applications submitted within this period will be accepted.

Applications must be submitted, on a mandatory basis, through the submission of the following documents on the Iscte – Knowledge and Innovation Recruitment platform, at <https://recrutamento.conhecimentoinovacao.iscte-iul.pt/jobs>:

- i) Motivation letter describing the reasons for interest in the position;
- ii) Detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- iii) Copy of the Bachelor's and Master's degree certificates, including a transcript of records with the grades obtained in each curricular unit;
- iv) Proof of enrolment in a study cycle leading to the award of a doctoral degree or, alternatively, a declaration on honour stating that the applicant will be able to present this document by the date of contract signature;
- v) Other relevant supporting documents, including up to two letters of recommendation.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

Within the framework of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, Iscte adopts the principles of Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment ([OTM-R Policy](#)), ensuring equal opportunities for all applicants.