

Competitions for Portuguese Grant Programs

Graduate Studies



STATISTICAL AND NARRATIVE REPORT
OFFICER IN CHARGE SOFIA WAHNON
DATE OF REPORT JULY 31ST, 2026



FULBRIGHT
Portugal

Promotion, Competition and the Selection Process

(planning, outreach, media, calendars, pool of evaluators, etc.)

Competitions took place from November 1, 2025, to January 15, 2026.

Media Promotion

Throughout the application period for Portuguese student grants, information about the various award opportunities was prominently featured on the **Commission's website**, included in our newsletter, and disseminated through Fulbright's social media channels, including Facebook, X, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Our well-established network of contacts with the **International Relations Offices** of Portuguese universities, alongside the communication channels of our institutional partners, was also instrumental in disseminating information about the Fulbright Program and supporting our recruitment efforts.

In-person Promotion

The Commission started the AY2026/2027 outreach season by visiting several universities from different regions of the country to present Fulbright grants' portfolio for Portuguese potential applicants, in particular, graduate students: from Universidade do Algarve (South) and Universidade do Porto (North), to Universidade de Coimbra (Center) and Universidade de Évora (Alentejo), to Universidade Católica in Lisbon. Altogether, these sessions were attended by approximately **80 Portuguese prospective applicants in-person**.

During the in-person sessions, the Commission was able to have a few Fulbrighters giving testimonials of their Fulbright experiences – hearing firsthand from Fulbright alumni is one of the most effective ways to showcase the impact of our Program.

Online Promotion

We have also carried out **8** online information sessions with previous Fulbright grantees and their testimonials. These sessions were attended by approximately **150 potential candidates**. Important to note that all the online sessions were recorded and made available at our YouTube channel, having had since then **641 views**.

For the fourth time this year, we partnered with **IMFAHE**, a non-profit mentoring program that connects European students and scholars emigrated through mentorship, workshops, and international fellowships, "bridging the gap between talent and opportunity". **79** Portuguese potential candidates, both students and scholars, actively attended this online session organized by IMFAHE (December 16, 2025).

Also, for the third consecutive year, the Commission partnered with the Gulbenkian Foundation to deliver an online information session specifically for recipients of the **Gulbenkian New Talents Scholarship**, a program that supports outstanding students as they embark on their research careers across a wide range of academic fields. The session, held on December 4, 2025, was attended by **26 students**. And, once again, this online event generated a high level of engagement, with all the participants actively contributing through thoughtful and relevant questions.

A highlight of that session was the testimonial of a Fulbright alumnus and former Gulbenkian New Talent student, whose personal account brought the Fulbright experience to life by sharing his journey as a Portuguese Fulbrighter in the United States. It is also noteworthy that, this year, the Commission received **7 applications** from Gulbenkian New Talents students, **3** of whom were selected as Fulbright grantees. These results are a testament to the continued success of the partnership between our two institutions.

Finally, we continued our practice of reaching out to applicants by email while they were completing their online application forms, reminding them of the importance of submitting complete applications by the deadline. This direct contact helps establish a relationship with applicants from the very beginning of the application process and is a valuable practice that we intend to continue.

Selection Process

As Portuguese applicants are **self-placed**—having already applied to and been admitted by a U.S. host institution—the Board and Selection Committees evaluated all eligible candidates regardless of their field of study.

While Fulbright grants are fundamentally merit-based, the Selection Committee adopted a holistic approach to assessing merit. In addition to academic achievement, the Committee considered candidates' leadership potential, civic engagement, participation in community and social initiatives, access to opportunities and resources, and the individual circumstances and experiences that shaped their path to applying for a Fulbright grant.

All interviews were conducted remotely via Zoom.

Selection Committees

The Committees had the following composition:

"Bolsa Fulbright para Doutoramento com o apoio da FCT"

- **Amanda Franco**, Project officer in the field of Development Education and Global Citizenship at the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.
- **Carina Cunha**, Researcher in Medical Sciences from the University of Minho, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.
- **Marie Blanchard**, Fulbright Portugal Board member, *Counselor for Public Affairs*, American Embassy in Portugal.

"Bolsa Fulbright para Mestrado"

- **Diogo Magalhães e Silva**, Head of the Technology Transfer and Financial Sustainability Office at GeneT, Fulbright Portugal *alumnus*.
- **Francisca Soromelho**, Researcher and Guest Auxiliar Professor in Law from the University of Lisbon, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.
- **Kelly Doss**, Fulbright Portugal Board member, Principal, KSD Consulting.

Fulbright Graduate Studies, Portuguese Ph.D. Students – all fields of study

"Bolsa Fulbright para Doutoramento com o apoio da FCT" – Fulbright Grant for Ph.D. with the Support of FCT (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia I.P.)

The objective of this award is to support students admitted to an American University to pursue a Ph.D. program. Eligible applicants must have a *licenciatura* (undergraduate) degree; proficient knowledge of the English language; and an admission letter from one accredited University in the U.S. .

The Portuguese Ph.D. self-placed students competition had its 8th edition this year with the support of FCT – The Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology.

During the competition period, we received e-mail requests for information from **8** students. This year, **20** applications were opened on the online portal and **10** were submitted in due time (last year, we received 9). From those, 2 did not meet the application requirements and therefore were not eligible.

Given that, **8** applications were reviewed. At this stage, **2** candidates withdrew from the Fulbright application process. Thus, **6** candidates were interviewed by the The Selection Committee. At the end, the Committee agreed to nominate with ranking **3** candidates. However, 1 candidate withdrew from the Program and, finally, **2** candidates accepted nomination.

In terms of geographical area of residence, candidates were from different districts of Portugal: from Faro in the **South** of the country, to Porto in the **North**, to the **Center** (Lisbon, Leiria, and Viseu). 1 applicant resided abroad (Germany).

The 8 eligible applications received for the Fulbright Ph.D. Grant reflected a gender-balanced applicant pool, with **4** female and **4** male candidates.

Graduate Studies: Portuguese Master's Students – all fields of study

"Bolsa Fulbright para Mestrado" – Fulbright Grant for Master's

The objective of this award is to support students admitted to an American University to pursue a master's program. Eligible applicants must have a *licenciatura* (undergraduate) degree; proficient knowledge of the English language; and an admission letter from one accredited American University.

During the competition period, we received e-mail requests for information from over **20** students, making this the most sought-after Fulbright grant for Portuguese students.

This competition had its 8th edition this year. There were **12** submitted applications but only **8** were eligible.

All 8 eligible applications underwent close review. The Selection Committee recommended **5** candidates to be interviewed. After the interviews, **1** candidate was nominated by the Committee.

Half of the applications came from the district of Lisbon (**50%**). Despite this percentage, we have been emphasizing that the entire application process is online. And, in fact, this year again we had 1 applicant from Madeira (**13%**), 1 from Algarve (**13%**), and 2 applying from abroad (**25%**), studying and living in Switzerland and the Netherlands.

As in the previous year, **63%** of this year's applications (5 out of 8) came from female candidates.

The applicant pool also remained notably young. All candidates (**100%**) were between 21 and 25 years old, and **75%** were still pursuing their undergraduate studies at the time they applied for the Fulbright Program.

Statistics

Overall numbers

Applicants			Grantees			Success Rates	
Degree Objective	Number	%	Degree Objective	Number	%	Degree Objective	%
Ph.D.	8	50%	Ph.D.	2	67%	Ph.D.	25%
Master's	8	50%	Master's	1	33%	Master's	13%
Total	16	100%	Total	3	100%	Total	19%

Home Institutions

Licenciatura degree

Graduate Studies						
Applicants		Number	%	Grantees		%
Universidade de Lisboa		6	38%	Universidade Nova de Lisboa		50%
Universidade Nova de Lisboa		4	25%	Universidade de Lisboa		17%
Universidade Europeia		2	13%	Total		100%
Universidade do Algarve		1	6%			
Universidade do Minho		1	6%			
ISCTE-IUL		1	6%			
Abroad		1	6%			
Total		16	100%			
PhD.						
Applicants		Number	%	Grantees		%
Universidade de Lisboa		5	63%	Universidade de Lisboa		50%
Universidade Nova de Lisboa		2	25%	Universidade Nova de Lisboa		50%
Universidade do Minho		1	13%	Total		100%
Total		8	100%			
Master's						
Applicants		Number	%	Grantees		%
Universidade Nova de Lisboa		2	25%	Universidade Nova de Lisboa		100%
Universidade Europeia		2	25%	Total		100%
Universidade do Algarve		1	13%			
Universidade de Lisboa		1	13%			
ISCTE-IUL		1	13%			
Abroad		1	13%			
Total		8	100%			

Statistics (cont.)

Master's degree, when applicable

PhD.		
Applicants	Number	%
Universidade de Lisboa	4	50%
Abroad	2	25%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	13%
Universidade de Minho	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Universidade de Lisboa	1	50%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Major Academic Discipline

Graduate Studies		
Applicants	Number	%
Business	3	19%
Economics	2	13%
Physics	2	13%
Architecture	1	6%
Arts	1	6%
Jazz Studies	1	6%
Law	1	6%
Literature	1	6%
Mathematics	1	6%
Mechanical Engineering	1	6%
Political Science	1	6%
Psychology	1	6%
Total	16	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Law	1	33%
Literature	1	33%
Political Science	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Ph. D.		
Applicants	Number	%
Physics	2	25%
Architecture	1	13%
Economics	1	13%
Literature	1	13%
Mathematics	1	13%
Political Science	1	13%
Psychology	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Literature	1	50%
Political Science	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Master's		
Applicants	Number	%
Business	3	38%
Arts	1	13%
Economics	1	13%
Jazz Studies	1	13%
Law	1	13%
Mechanical Engineering	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantee	Number	%
Law	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Host Institutions

Graduate Studies			
Applicants		Number	%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology		3	19%
Berkeley University		2	13%
Louisiana State University		1	6%
Princeton University		1	6%
SCAD		1	6%
Stanford University		1	6%
University of New Haven		1	6%
University of Notre Dame		1	6%
University of Southern California		1	6%
Columbia University		1	6%
Georgetown University		1	6%
Hult		1	6%
Manhattan School of Music		1	6%
Total		16	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Stanford University	1	33%
University of Notre Dame	1	33%
University of Southern California	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Ph.D.

Applicants	Number	%
Berkeley University	2	25%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2	25%
Louisiana State University	1	13%
Princeton University	1	13%
Stanford University	1	13%
University of Notre Dame	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Stanford University	1	50%
University of Notre Dame	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Master's

Applicants	Number	%
University of Southern California	1	13%
Columbia University	1	13%
Georgetown University	1	13%
Hult	1	13%
Manhattan School of Music	1	13%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	1	13%
SCAD	1	13%
University of New Haven	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantee	Number	%
University of Southern California	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Geographical Area of Residence (District)

Graduate Studies					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
Lisboa	7	44%	Lisboa	2	67%
Abroad	3	19%	Leiria	1	33%
Faro	2	13%	Total	3	100%
Leiria	1	6%			
Madeira	1	6%			
Porto	1	6%			
Viseu	1	6%			
Total	16	100%			

Ph.D.					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
Lisboa	3	38%	Leiria	1	50%
Faro	1	13%	Lisboa	1	50%
Leiria	1	13%	Total	2	100%
Porto	1	13%			
Viseu	1	13%			
Abroad	1	13%			
Total	8	100%			

Master's					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantee	Number	%
Lisboa	4	50%	Lisboa	1	100%
Aboard	2	25%	Total	1	100%
Faro	1	13%			
Madeira	1	13%			
Total	8	100%			

Statistics (cont.)

Gender

Graduate Studies					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
Female	9	56%	Female	2	67%
Male	7	44%	Male	1	33%
Total	16	100%	Total	3	100%

Ph.D.					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
Female	4	50%	Female	1	50%
Male	4	50%	Male	1	50%
Total	8	100%	Total	2	100%

Master's					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantee	Number	%
Female	5	63%	Female	1	100%
Male	3	38%	Total	1	100%
Total	8	100%			

Age Range

Graduate Studies					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
21-25	12	75%	21-25	1	33%
26-29	2	13%	26-29	1	33%
30-35	1	6%	30-35	1	33%
36-45	1	6%	Total	3	100%
Total	16	100%			

Ph.D.					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
21-25	4	50%	26-29	1	50%
26-29	2	25%	30-35	1	50%
30-35	1	13%	Total	2	100%
36-45	1	13%			
Total	8	100%			

Statistics (cont.)

Master's

Applicants	Number	%
21-25	8	50%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
21-25	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Current Position

Graduate Studies

Applicants	Number	%
Student	9	56%
Liberal Profession	3	19%
Researcher	2	13%
Teacher	2	13%
Total	16	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Student	1	33%
Liberal Profession	1	33%
Researcher	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Ph.D.

Applicants	Number	%
Student	3	38%
Liberal Profession	2	25%
Researcher	2	25%
Teacher	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Liberal Profession	1	50%
Researcher	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Master's

Applicants	Number	%
Student	6	75%
Liberal Profession	1	13%
Teacher	1	13%
Total	8	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Student	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Duration of Stay

Ph.D.					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
5 years	6	75%	5 years	1	50%
6 years	2	25%	6 years	1	50%
Total	8	100%	Total	2	100%

Master's					
Applicants	Number	%	Grantees	Number	%
2 years	6	75%	1 year	1	100%
1 year	2	25%	Total	1	100%
Total	8	100%			

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July 31st, 2026