

Competitions for Portuguese Grant Programs

Research Students



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

As part of its outreach activities for the 2026/2027 academic year, the Commission visited Universidade de Coimbra and Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Lisbon campus) to promote the Fulbright Program and its research grant opportunities. The two sessions were attended by **23 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 candidates are self-placed—having already secured an affiliation with a U.S. host institution and obtained an invitation letter—the Board and Selection Committees evaluated all eligible candidates, regardless of their field of study. While Fulbright grants are fundamentally merit-based, Selection Committees adopted a holistic approach to assessing merit. In addition to academic achievement, the Committees 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.

Evaluation Committees

The Committees had the following composition:

"Bolsa Fulbright para Investigação com o apoio da FCT"

- **Ana Quartin**, representing Fulbright Board member and partner, the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (FCT), Head of the International Relations FCT Department.
- **João Pereira dos Santos**, Assistant Professor from NOVA School of Law, Fulbright Portugal *alumnus*.
- **Rosana Alves**, Postdoctoral Researcher at the Centre of Molecular and Environmental Biology, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.

"Bolsa Fulbright para Investigação com o apoio da FLAD"

- **João Horta Belo**, Assistant Professor in the field of Physics from the University of Porto, Fulbright Portugal *alumnus*.
- **Michael Baum**, Executive Board Member at FLAD, Full Professor at the Católica University, Fulbright Portugal *alumnus*.
- **Regina Duarte**, Principal Researcher in the field of Chemistry from the University of Aveiro, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.

"Bolsa Fulbright para Investigação"

- **Bruno Reynaud de Sousa**, Space Law and Policy Expert, Professor at the School of Law of the Universidade do Minho, Fulbright Portugal *alumnus*.
- **Marta de Menezes**, Artistic Director of Cultivamos Association, Fulbright Portugal *alumna*.
- **Sheree Mitchell**, Fulbright Portugal Board member, President of Immersa Global.

Fulbright Research Students – all fields of study

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

The objective of this award is to support research projects in all fields of study to be carried out at accredited universities, research centers, and other nonprofit institutions whose mission includes the production and dissemination of knowledge, such as museums, hospitals, libraries, and similar organizations in the United States, during 4 to 9 consecutive months.

Eligible applicants must be Ph.D. students holding a FCT grant; have proficient knowledge of the English language; and an affiliation letter, i.e., agreement with their research project from one accredited American university or research center; as well as a letter of agreement from their scientific supervisor in Portugal.

It was the 10th year that this competition was carried out in partnership with FCT, the Portuguese public Foundation for Science and Technology.

During the competition period, we received e-mail requests for information from approximately **20** students. At the end, **11** qualifiable applications were submitted and reviewed (a marked decrease of 36%, as last year 30 eligible applications were received and reviewed).

After undergoing close review, the **11** candidates were recommended by the Committee of Board and Selection members to be interviewed. After the interviews, **9** candidates were nominated, which at the end represents a success rate of **82%**.

This year, we received **4** applications from female candidates (**36%**) and **7** from male candidates (**64%**), reversing the trend observed in recent years, during which women submitted a higher number of applications in this grant category.

In terms of geographical area of residence, all applications from the **9** with final approve were from outside Lisbon: from the North of Portugal (Aveiro, Braga and Porto) and from the Center (Coimbra).

As for the selection of American states and host institutions, the data shows that Portuguese research students have chosen affiliation from a large range of universities in the U.S.: from Massachusetts to California, to Colorado, Michigan, North Carolina and Delaware.

"Bolsa Fulbright para Investigação com o apoio da FLAD" – Fulbright Grant for Research with the Support of FLAD (Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento)

The objective of this award is to support master's students enrolled at Portuguese higher education institutions who wish to undertake a four-month research project, in any field of study, at a U.S. university or research center.

Eligible applicants must have a *licenciatura* (undergraduate) degree; proficient knowledge of the English language; an affiliation letter (agreement with their research project from one accredited American university or research center); and have a letter of agreement from their academic supervisor in Portugal.

It was the 7th edition of this competition in partnership with FLAD-The Luso-American Foundation for Development. The number of inquiries from students wanting to know more about this particular award was approximately **15**, including by email, phone, and even by WhatsApp, a tendency noted already last year.

This year, **7** applications were opened and **4** submitted within the time frame (against 9 from last year). After undergoing close review, the **4** candidates were recommended by the Committee of Board and Selection members to be interviewed. After the interviews, the Committee nominated **3** candidates with ranking, representing a success rate of **75%**.

Just as above, all candidates came from outside of Lisbon: Aveiro, Porto, Coimbra and Santarém.

Also, similar to last year, the majority of the candidates were male (**75%**).

Fulbright Grant for Research

The purpose of this award is to support research projects to be carried out at accredited universities, research centers, and other nonprofit institutions whose mission includes the production and dissemination of knowledge, such as museums, hospitals, libraries, and similar organizations in the United States, for a period of four to six consecutive months.

Eligible applicants must hold a *licenciatura* (undergraduate) degree; demonstrate proficiency in English language; and secure an affiliation letter from a U.S. university or research center confirming its willingness to host the proposed research project. Unlike other Fulbright grant categories, applicants for this award are not required to be enrolled in an academic degree program. They may already be pursuing professional careers in any discipline or field of expertise.

During the application period, the Commission responded to email enquiries from approximately **15** prospective applicants. **27** applications for this grant were opened on the online Application Portal. At the end, a total of **13** applications were submitted (14 in the previous year), of which one was deemed ineligible. Following a thorough review of the **12** eligible applications, the Board and Selection Committee recommended **6** candidates for interview. Following the interviews, the Committee nominated **2 Principal candidates** and **4 Alternate candidates**. Both Principal candidates accepted their nominations.

In terms of geographical distribution, the largest share of candidates (**33%**) came from Lisbon. **3** candidates were living and studying abroad at the time of application, **2** were from Vila Real in northern Portugal, and the remaining candidates came from the districts of Aveiro, Porto, and Setúbal.

Finally, 5 candidates (**42%**) were female and 7 (**58%**) were male

Statistics

Overall numbers

2026 Fulbright Research Grants	Number
Applicants	28
Grantees	14
Success Rate	50%

Home Institutions (*Licenciatura*)

Applicants	Number	%
Universidade de Lisboa	6	21%
Universidade de Aveiro	5	18%
Universidade do Minho	5	18%
Universidade de Coimbra	4	14%
Universidade do Porto	3	11%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	4%
Universidade Nova de Lisboa	1	4%
Instituto Politécnico do Porto	1	4%
ISCTE-IUL	1	4%
Abroad	1	4%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Universidade de Aveiro	4	29%
Universidade do Minho	3	21%
Universidade de Coimbra	2	14%
Universidade de Lisboa	2	14%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	7%
Universidade do Porto	1	7%
Instituto Politécnico do Porto	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Home Institutions when attending a Master's program

Applicants	Number	%
Universidade de Coimbra	2	29%
Universidade do Minho	2	29%
Universidade de Aveiro	1	14%
Universidade do Porto	1	14%
Instituto Politécnico do Porto	1	14%
Total	7	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Universidade de Aveiro	1	33%
Universidade de Coimbra	1	33%
Instituto Politécnico do Porto	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Home Institutions when attending a Ph.D. program

Applicants	Number	%
Universidade de Aveiro	3	19%
Universidade de Coimbra	3	19%
Universidade do Minho	3	19%
Universidade de Lisboa	2	13%
Abroad	2	13%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	6%
Universidade Nova de Lisboa	1	6%
Universidade do Porto	1	6%
Total	16	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Universidade de Aveiro	3	30%
Universidade do Minho	3	30%
Universidade Católica Portuguesa	1	10%
Universidade de Coimbra	1	10%
Universidade de Lisboa	1	10%
Universidade do Porto	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Major Academic Discipline

Applicants	Number	%
Biomedical Engineering	6	21%
Medical Sciences	4	14%
Social Sciences	3	11%
Biology	2	7%
Mechanical Engineering	2	7%
Architecture	1	4%
Aerospace Engineering	1	4%
Business	1	4%
Computer Science	1	4%
Electrical Engineering	1	4%
Genetics	1	4%
Marine Biology	1	4%
Pharmacology	1	4%
Physics	1	4%
Policy	1	4%
Psychology	1	4%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Biomedical Engineering	4	29%
Mechanical Engineering	2	14%
Medical Sciences	2	14%
Biology	1	7%
Electrical Engineering	1	7%
Genetics	1	7%
Pharmacology	1	7%
Psychology	1	7%
Social Sciences	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Host Institutions

Applicants	Number	%
Harvard University	3	11%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	3	11%
Stanford University	3	11%
University of Colorado Boulder	2	7%
University of North Carolina	2	7%
Children's Hospital of Los Angeles	1	4%
Colorado State University	1	4%
Dartmouth University	1	4%
Drexel University	1	4%
Georgia Institute of Technology	1	4%
Indiana University-Bloomington	1	4%
New Jersey City University	1	4%
Princeton University	1	4%
University of Alaska Southeast	1	4%
University of California, Los Angeles	1	4%
University of Delaware	1	4%
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	1	4%
University of Notre Dame	1	4%
University of Texas at Austin	1	4%
Wake Forest University	1	4%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Harvard University	2	14%
University of Colorado Boulder	2	14%
Children's Hospital of Los Angeles	1	7%
Colorado State University	1	7%
Dartmouth University	1	7%
Drexel University	1	7%
Stanford University	1	7%
University of Delaware	1	7%
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	1	7%
University of North Carolina	1	7%
University of Notre Dame	1	7%
Wake Forest University	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Geographical Area of Residence (District)

Applicants	Number	%
Aveiro	5	18%
Lisboa	5	18%
Coimbra	4	14%
Porto	4	14%
Braga	3	11%
Abroad	3	11%
Vila Real	2	7%
Santarém	1	4%
Setúbal	1	4%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Aveiro	4	29%
Braga	3	21%
Coimbra	2	14%
Lisboa	2	14%
Porto	2	14%
Santarém	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Gender

Applicants	Number	%
Male	17	39%
Female	11	61%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Male	9	36%
Female	5	64%
Total	14	100%

Age Range

Applicants	Number	%
25-29	17	61%
20-24	5	18%
35-39	3	11%
40-45	2	7%
30-34	1	4%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
25-29	10	71%
20-24	3	21%
30-34	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Statistics (cont.)

Current Position

Applicants	Number	%
Ph.D. Student	17	61%
Master's Student	7	25%
Not enrolled in a program	4	14%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
Ph.D. Student	10	71%
Master's Student	3	21%
Not enrolled in a program	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Duration of Stay

Applicants	Number	%
6 months	15	54%
4 months	7	25%
5 months	3	11%
9 months	3	11%
Total	28	100%

Grantees	Number	%
4 months	5	36%
6 months	4	29%
9 months	3	21%
5 months	2	14%
Total	14	100%

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July 31st, 2026