

Regulation | Application Guidelines

Ignition Grants for Interdisciplinary research at NOVA

Preamble

A key strategic goal of NOVA University Lisbon (hereinafter NOVA or University) is to promote collaborative and interdisciplinary research initiatives, driven by multidisciplinary teams, to tackle complex scientific and societal challenges. In line with this objective and with the support of Fundação Santander Portugal, the "Ignition Grants for Interdisciplinary Research" call (hereinafter the "Call") is designed to support early to mid-career researchers (PhD holders) in developing their work at NOVA. The aim of this Call is to foster new interdisciplinary collaborations among experts from diverse fields within NOVA's R&D Units, strengthening or encouraging the creation of relevant and/or emerging interdisciplinary research lines.

Article 1

Object

The present Regulation defines the terms and rules of participation in the *Call*, which is promoted by NOVA, through the Rectorate's Research & Innovation Services, and supported by Fundação Santander Portugal.

Article 2

Overview and Scope

1. The *Call* aims to fund interdisciplinary projects, responding to complex scientific issues and societal challenges, that may generate new relevant knowledge within NOVA, developed by multidisciplinary teams of researchers integrated into the Organic or R&D Units or other structures of the University, and who carry out research at NOVA.
2. As ignition grants, this Call is intended to support the early development of original and interdisciplinary scientific ideas, with the results expected to pave the way for the expansion of these ideas into broader and more ambitious research projects, forming the basis for future applications to national and/or international R&D funding programs.

3. The *Call* is open to any areas of knowledge, provided that interdisciplinary collaboration is ensured.
4. All research proposals submitted under this *Call* must align with and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the United Nations Agenda 2030.
5. Proposals for projects that are already funded nationally or internationally, or are only focused on the dissemination or communication of science, will not be considered under this *Call*.

Article 3

Beneficiaries and Eligibility

1. Research teams that are composed of researchers from NOVA Organic and R&D Units or from other structures carrying out research at NOVA can apply for funding.
2. Researchers who are or have already been Principal Investigators (hereinafter PIs) of awarded projects in the Interdisciplinary Energy Research & Innovation Initiative under the NOVA Interdisciplinary Research Community in Sustainable Energies Systems cannot apply as PIs.
3. A researcher can only participate in a maximum of two proposals, and only once as Principal Investigator (PI) of a project.
4. The application can include the involvement of entities outside NOVA as collaborating entities in the project, not being conferred the quality of funding beneficiary.

Article 4

Project Funding

1. The *Call* has a total budget allocation of 60,000€ (sixty thousand euros), designated for awarding two projects.
2. The maximum funding limit for each project is 30,000€ (thirty thousand euros).
3. The research projects, including their financial implementation, must be completed within one year of signing the simplified grant agreement.
4. The total budget allocation specified in number 1 above may be eventually increased if the jury chooses to award more than two projects, based on the high quality of the submitted applications, provided that additional funds can be reallocated to this *Call*.

5. For clarification, it is also possible to award more than two projects under the funding specified in number 1 of this Article, depending on the budgets proposed by the selected proposals, as the proposed budget may be lower than 30,000€ (thirty thousand euros).
6. The jury has the right not to award any funding if none of the applications submitted is of good quality or meets the objectives of the *Call*.

Article 5

Eligibility Conditions for the Principal Investigator and Project Team

1. To be eligible for the *Call*, the PI must hold a doctoral degree for a maximum of 12 years counting from the date of the defense of the thesis until the beginning of the month in which this call for applications is launched¹.
2. The project team must include two to five researchers, including the PI, from at least two R&D Units of NOVA in different Organic Units and different scientific areas².
3. The application must contain at least one co-Principal Investigator (co-PI), who must belong to an Organic Unit and scientific area different from the PI's.
4. While the project team may be primarily made up of NOVA members, it may include collaborators from institutions external to NOVA; however, the total number of project team members cannot exceed the limit specified in number 2 of the present Article.

Article 6

Submission of Applications

1. The application to this *Call* is submitted by filling in an appropriate form, which can be accessed from the *Call*'s webpage or through this [link](#).
2. To ensure the application is complete, the PI must also complete a brief questionnaire on the Santander Open Academy platform³ ([here](#)), which aims to

¹. Eligibility can be extended for reasons such as maternity, paternity, illness, national service, training, natural disasters, or asylum as defined by the European Research Council (ERC) in the current ERC Work Programme. Supporting documents attesting to these situations must be attached.

² The classification of NOVA's R&D Units by scientific area can be consulted here: <https://www.unl.pt/en/investigacao/ecossistemas-de-investigacao/>

³ Privacy and Personal Data Protection terms and conditions of Santander Open Academy platform are described in Annex I.

collects the PI's identification data; this questionnaire must also be submitted before the application deadline.

3. The application form mentioned in number 1 requires the completion of basic information about the project, the PI, and the project team, as well as the submission of mandatory PDF documents, namely the scientific description of the project.
4. The template of the project's scientific description will have to be completed in English with the following information:
 - i. PI's experience and expertise through a Narrative CV;
 - ii. Complementarity of the team members, including a 2-page CV of each team member;
 - iii. Project information: title, objectives, description of innovative and interdisciplinary nature of the project, detailed research plan with associated budgetary needs, implementation timeline, expected impacts and a description of specific deliverables for evaluation;
5. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the call and the composition of the jury, the use of scientific language that is not specific to a single disciplinary area is recommended.
6. It is the PI's responsibility to ensure that all project team members are recognized in the proposal and are informed of their application to this competition.
7. It is the responsibility of candidates to be aware of all the competition requirements.
8. The PIs and other project team members are responsible for ensuring the originality of the submitted proposal, guaranteeing its authorship, and accepting full responsibility for any potential claims from third parties related to copyright or, industrial property rights. They must also declare, under oath, that the project proposal is not receiving funding from any other source.
9. The project proposal must ensure the principles and procedures of ethics and integrity of the research activities.

Article 7

Deadlines

1. The call for the submission of applications to the *Call* will run between 03 December 2024 and 30 January 2025.
2. The evaluation and selection of applications will take place until 28 February 2025.

3. The results will be communicated to the candidates in March 2025.
4. Awarded projects are intended to start on 01 April 2025 and must be completed within twelve months.
5. Any changes to the dates mentioned above must be formally communicated to the candidates via email.

Article 8

Jury and Conflicts of Interest

1. The evaluation of the applications will be carried out by a Jury, appointed by NOVA's Vice-Rector for Research. The list of appointed jury members will be published on the call page in due course.
2. The Jury consists of a variable number of members, with a maximum of 6 members, with at least half being external to NOVA.
3. The Chairperson of the Jury may either be the Vice-Rector for Research at NOVA or a person that the Vice-Rector designates, who will be responsible for coordinating the work of the Jury, including the admissibility of the applications received.
4. Given the unpredictable nature of the research proposals to be evaluated, jury members may consult experts in specific fields to provide an opinion on the applications under evaluation.
5. The deliberations of the Jury are taken by a simple majority of the present members; the Chairperson holds a casting vote, exercised only in the event of a tie during the voting process by the members present.
6. Jury decisions are not subject to appeal.
7. To avoid conflicts of interest, members of the jury:
 - i. Are not permitted to participate in any of the project teams competing in the call.
 - ii. Must refuse to participate in the evaluation of projects in which they are or will foreseeably be in a conflict of interest, namely by:
 - a) Co-authoring scientific work with the PI within the three years preceding the opening of the application period;
 - b) Having a family relationship with the PI;
 - c) Having a scientific or personal conflict with the PI;

- d) Being in any other situation that could raise doubts, either for themselves or a third party, regarding their ability to evaluate the application impartially, either in relation to the PI or any other relevant project team member.

Article 8

Evaluation of applications

1. Only eligible applications (c.f. Articles 5 and 6) will be considered for evaluation.
2. The evaluation process focusses mainly on the quality of the proposal (QP), based on the following criteria:
 - a. Criterion A. Interdisciplinary quality of the project and the team, considering:
 - i. Contribution to build scientific knowledge that integrates relationships between various disciplines;
 - ii. The potential of the ignition project to significantly advance scientific knowledge;
 - iii. The interdisciplinary nature of the research team and its scientific quality.
 - b. Criterion B. Scientific quality and impact of the project, considering:
 - i. The coherence and feasibility of the work plan and proposed deliverables
 - ii. Adequacy of the requested budget;
 - iii. The development of a project of high relevance and scientific impact to the University;
 - iv. The adequacy of the approach to the following cross-cutting aspects of research: integration of the gender dimension and other aspects of diversity; open science practices; and SDGs addressed.
 - c. Criterion C. Scientific quality and potential of the PI, considering their career stage and based on their narrative CV, including:
 - i. The contributions of the PI to their scientific field, to the research community and, if applicable, to society, from an overall perspective of the PI's career;

- ii. Relevance of the PI's experience to the implementation of the project;
 - iii. The potential of the PI for creative and independent thinking.
3. The classification of the applications is obtained through the following weighting factors: $QP = 0,3 * A + 0,5 * B + 0,2 * C$.
4. The criteria are evaluated on a scale from 1 to 10 (whole numbers), with the QP result rounded to the nearest tenth.
5. If deemed necessary, the Jury may conduct interviews or ask for additional information about the project and the vision of the PI.
6. Funding will be awarded to the projects that obtain the highest sum of scores, up to the funding limits described in Article 4.

Article 9

Funded projects and Expenditures

1. Funded projects will receive up to 70% of the total budget at the start of the project, with the remaining amount provided after a mid-term evaluation or upon a justified request from the PI to address urgent needs.
2. The predefined deliverables of the funded projects may be audited after six months. If the interim evaluation is not satisfactory, NOVA reserves the right to suspend the awarded funding.
3. The funding will be awarded in the form of research grants to the Organic Unit of the PI, and all necessary costs to perform the research activities within the framework of the proposed projects will be eligible, including:
 - i. Personnel costs;
 - ii. Purchase of goods and services;
 - iii. Purchase of equipment and software;
 - iv. Missions;
 - v. Overheads;
 - vi. Other justifiable expenses.

Article 10

Final Report

The PI of projects approved under this Call shall submit, up to three months after the end of the project's execution, a final report containing the most relevant results and the actions to disseminate them to the non-scientific public.

Article 11

Non-discrimination Policy and Equal Access

NOVA promotes a policy of non-discrimination, diversity and equal access, whereby no candidate may be privileged, benefited, prejudiced or deprived of any right.

Article 12

Disclosure

NOVA will ensure that the funded projects are publicized as widely as possible on the institutional website and social media.

Article 13

Final dispositions

1. This Regulation is in force until the end of the awarded projects within the *Call*.
2. NOVA and the Jury will make every effort to ensure that this Calls meets the highest standards of quality and accuracy, namely regarding reliability and objectivity of the information and the respective selection, evaluation, and awarding process.
3. Personal data involved in the proposals and grants will be collected and processed following the General Data Regulation (Regulation (EU) No. 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the Council, of April 27, 2016). More information about this topic available in Annex I.
4. All the applicants and results generated within the *Call* are subject to the Intellectual Property Regulation of NOVA (Regulation No. 1104/2020, of December 22, 2020).
5. Applications must not contain technical, scientific, or other information that may be considered confidential.
6. This Regulation may be revised when necessary.

Article 14

Doubts and Omissions

Doubts and omissions resulting from the application of this Regulation will be submitted to the Jury for consideration.

Lisbon, 3 December 2024

(revised on 15 January 2025)

ANNEX I

OPEN SANTANDER ACADEMY PLATFORM

Privacy and Personal Data Protection

1. Processing of Personal Data by UNIVERSIA HOLDING, S.L.

Applicants will register on the Santander Open Academy Platform provided for this purpose and available at: (https://www.santanderopenacademy.com/pt_pt/index.html) and will accept the terms and conditions how UNIVERSIA HOLDING, S.L., acting as data controller, will collect and process their personal data necessary to apply to the “*Ignition Grants for Interdisciplinary Research at NOVA*”.

Applications must also expressly authorize UNIVERSIA HOLDING, S.L., on the platform, to collect, record and process their personal data directly for these purposes, as well as to transfer them to Universidade NOVA de Lisboa as responsible for the Call and Fundação Santander as the promoter.

Privacy Police can be found on the following page:

https://www.santanderopenacademy.com/pt_pt/legal/privacy.html.

Applicants are responsible for the reliability of the information provided by them and may be asked to provide supporting evidence of that information.

The legal basis for processing applicants' personal details the performance of a contract put in place through acceptance of the General Conditions of Use.

2. Processing of Personal Data by Universidade NOVA de Lisboa and Fundação Santander Portugal acting both as independent data controller.

2.1. Data Controller contact details:

- a) Universidade NOVA Lisboa: Campus de Campolide, 1099-085 Lisboa, Portugal (dpo@unl.pt)
- b) Fundação Santander Portugal: Rua Áurea, n.º 88, 1100-063 Lisboa, Portugal (fundacao@santander.pt).

2.2. The data controllers identified in paragraph 2.1 process the applicant's personal data.

2.3. Purposes of and Legal Basis for processing:

- a) Fundação Santander Portugal access applicants' personal data for the performance of a contract the application guidelines for the program “*Ignition Grants Ignition Grants for Interdisciplinary research*” as the promoter.

b) Universidade Nova de Lisboa access applicants' personal data for the performance of a contract the regulation | application guidelines for the program “Ignition Grants *Ignition Grants for Interdisciplinary research*” as the responsible for the Call.

2.4. Retention period:

a) Fundação Santander Portugal: The personal data collected and processed by the Fundação Santander will be kept for the period necessary for the purposes of the processing referred above and subsequently deleted within 12 months of collection or for a longer period if required by law or regulation, or if retention is necessary to safeguard the exercise of rights and in particular in the context of possible legal proceedings.

b) Universidade NOVA de Lisboa: The personal data collected and processed by NOVA will be kept for the period necessary for the purposes of the processing referred above and subsequently deleted within 12 months of collection or for a longer period if required by law or regulation, or if retention is necessary to safeguard the exercise of rights and in particular in the context of possible legal proceedings.

2.5. Rights of Data Subjects

The data subjects have right to access their Data, and to request the rectification of any inaccurate data, to request its portability and, where permitted by law, the right to object to processing, to restrict processing and request they be it erased by means of a written communication duly signed by the data subject and, where applicable, to withdraw consent, or any other applicable right applicable by law.

For the purposes of exercising their rights, data subjects may contact each data controller for the following contacts:

a) Fundação: privacidade.fundacao@santander.pt

b) Universidade Nova de Lisboa: dpo@unl.pt

Data subjects have the right to lodge a complaint with the Comissão Nacional Proteção de Dados: www.cnpd.pt