

RESEARCH ASSISTANT – 1 (one) vacancy

The Centre for Social Studies (CES) – Associate Laboratory - University of Coimbra (Portugal), calls for applications for **one position for Research Assistant** (CES/21/2026-RA-FARMHEROES) within the project “FarmHeroes - Fostering Attractive and Resilient Farming through Generational Renewal” (Grant Agreement 101293728), funded by the European Research Executive Agency (REA) of the European Commission under the framework programme Horizon Europe 2021-2027, and coordinated by the Principal Investigator (PI) Nancy Duxbury (http://www.ces.uc.pt/investigadores/cv/nancy_duxbury.php).

A. Project Description:

Generational renewal in agriculture is crucial to driving innovation in the sector, and ensuring viable long-term solutions to contemporary challenges of food security, environmental protection and rural economic development. Yet pursuit of agriculture as a profession is often limited to those raised on farms, further hampered by societal perceptions of farming as low status, risky and unrewarding. FarmHeroes will reframe societal perceptions of farming in Europe as a modern, meaningful and attractive profession. It will generate new evidence on how farming is perceived across society, what makes it appealing or unattractive, and actively test how perceptions can be reshaped. Research will address critical evidence gaps: how farmer and farm worker identities are formed; how socio-economic and cultural factors intersect with perceptions of farming; and how households, communities and under-represented groups can open diverse pathways into farming as a profession. Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) are integrated to enrich methodologies and co-develop innovative tools for communication and economic development, including creative foresight, gamification, and collaborative business models. A bespoke AI model will, for the first time, enable systematic mapping of agricultural and related curricula across Europe, broadening the reach of the research and assessing the attractiveness of different curricula to diverse cohorts and entry pathways. A European Youth Farming Survey will test qualitative findings and quantify differences across regions, genders and socio-economic groups. Findings will be translated into accessible, durable resources embedded in existing organisations. These include the Storytelling Platform, training modules and AI Curriculum Evaluation Interface. A network of young farmer Ambassadors, National AgriFutures Action Groups, Macro-Regional Labs, and the European AgriFutures Forum will mobilise diverse stakeholders and co-develop policy mixes and initiatives. By combining youth engagement, cultural innovation, AI-enabled research, inclusivity and macro-regional analysis, FarmHeroes will improve public perceptions of farming, broaden entry pathways, and provide evidence informed tools to support CAP post-2027 and the long-term attractiveness of European agriculture.

Within this multifaceted context, the work at CES will focus on CCI mapping, analysis, and profiling of partnerships and collaborations between CCIs and farmers/agriculture; analysis of the role of CCIs in shaping agricultural attractiveness; leading the development of case studies and other resources resulting from this work, including defining the framework for sampling, consent, and analysis protocols for the case

studies; designing, implementing, and documenting structured collaboration workshops in four macro-regions of Europe; and monitoring and mentoring new farmer-CCI collaborations (pilots) for business development. The preparation and dissemination of a collaboration model guide as well as research findings for both practitioner and academic audiences are integral parts of these activities. The work will also involve providing input to and reviews of methodologies and reports led by other partners in the project, and other collaborative processes, activities, and meetings.

Expected duration of project execution: 48 months, starting October 1, 2026

B. Scientific Field: Social Sciences

C. Candidates' Profiles:

The selected researcher is expected to have experience in supporting the implementation of the project's scientific tasks, valuing flexibility, a spirit of initiative and the ability to work in a team. Fluency in English and Portuguese, spoken and written, is a fundamental condition.

D. Work plan, tasks:

The selected researcher is expected to contribute to the implementation of the project's scientific tasks, as well as to support any activities associated with the project's general goals. The selected candidate must have a profile that guarantees the monitoring of the scientific execution of the project, responding directly to the PI.

More specifically, s/he will work directly with the Principal Investigator, supporting the team in the following tasks:

- a) Carry out research, including conducting interviews, developing transcripts, document analysis, organizing and analyzing data, developing case studies, comparison and synthesis of findings;
- b) Contribute to the planning and coordination of workshops and fieldwork in a collaborative context involving project partners, and to the development and implementation of tools to gather and organize data to identify place-based cross-sectoral collaboration pathways;
- c) Contribute to monitoring pilot collaboration projects and guiding mentorship-related meetings;
- d) Contribute to providing input and review comments on methodological frameworks and reports led by other project partners;
- e) Actively contribute to the organization, analyses, documentation, and publishing of findings, including research articles and a collaboration model guide;
- f) Participate in meetings and academic conferences;
- g) Contribute to the organization of academic conferences and other activities developed by the project;
- h) Contribute to drafting the project reports to be submitted to the EC;
- i) Contribute to the project's daily management tasks.

E. Applicable Legislation and Regulations:

Labour Code Law No. 7/2009, of February 12th (and subsequent amendments).

F. Workplace:

Research will be performed at the Centre for Social Studies facilities in Coimbra, Portugal. Researchers will occasionally need to travel to other locations to perform research tasks. Successful candidates are expected to move to Coimbra for the duration of the contract.

G. Duration of the Contract:

A temporary contract ("termo incerto"), fulltime, will be signed for the sole purpose of the execution of the project, in exclusive dedication.

The total duration of which may not exceed four years (Clause 5, Article 148 of the Labour Code), and will automatically end with the completion of the activities provided for in the activity plan, which are developed until the end of the project scheduled for 30/09/2030. Moreover, according to Article 112 of the Labour Code, paragraph 2 a), a trial period of 30 days is established.

If the selected candidate does not meet all the conditions to start the contract within the defined period: 1 – the duration of the contract can be reduced; 2 – the contract can be assigned to the applicant classified in the next position; or 3 – the position may not be awarded.

H. Application Deadline:

Call opens on: August 10, 2026

Call closes on: August 21, 2026

I. Application process:

Applications must include:

- Presentation/Motivation letter in English (max. 2 pages);
- Curriculum Vitae of max. 5 pages, highlighting the items most relevant to the topic of the call;
- Sample of published writing in English;
- Copy of qualification certificates and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes. If, for the application, the applicant does not have proof of recognition of their academic degree by the Portuguese Higher Education System (Decree-Law 66/2018), they must submit a declaration of honour committing themselves to deliver the recognition of the degree within 30 days after the communication of the application results (cf. point L.).

Applications must be sent by email to concursos@ces.uc.pt until the final deadline.

Applications must be addressed to the President of the Jury, with the email Subject: Application to CES call CES/21/2026-RA-FARMHEROES.

3. Requirements

3.2 Skills/Qualifications

J. Preferred selection criteria and their weighing:

- Demonstrated academic interest and experience in carrying out research on cultural and creative

- enterprises/initiatives in non-urban areas (35%);
2. Experience in conducting research using qualitative methodologies, such as interviews, collaboration workshops involving practitioners, and experience in analyzing and synthesizing research documents and practice-based/policy reports (30%);
 3. Experience in research management; previous experience in academic projects related with culture-based initiatives in non-urban areas will be valued (15%);
 4. Excellent language skills in both oral and written English, including ability to independently write in this language, and experience publishing and presenting research findings for academic and other audiences (10%);
 5. Autonomy, critical thinking and availability for national and international travel (10%).

4. Additional info

Benefits

K. Monthly Allowance:

- a. Temporary contract ("termo incerto").
- b. The gross monthly salary will be 1762,31 euros, with the right to holiday and Christmas allowance and food allowance, in accordance with the Labour Code.

Eligibility criteria

L. Mandatory requirements:

1. Hold a master's degree in Social Sciences (see associated conditions in a)), with special focus on the sociology of culture or cultural entrepreneurship;

a) Applicants with an academic degree and diploma issued by a foreign Higher Education Institution must present proof of recognition of the academic degree by the Portuguese Higher Education System, (law DL66/2018). Any candidate without the recognition of the degree(s) will be admitted to the competition, but during the evaluation process the selection panel, cannot:

- 1) recognize the candidate's grades and assess according to the possession of such grades;
- 2) give equivalence to, or validate, the grade of her/his degree;
- 3) use that note or its conversion as an evaluation parameter.

The selection of a candidate in such a situation can only proceed to the contract signature after the candidate provides the recognition of the academic degree made by the Portuguese authorities. The selected candidate will have to deliver the recognition of the degree within 30 days after the communication of the results. After 30 days, the jury may decide to 1. either extend the deadline for the candidate to prove the recognition; 2. assign the contract to the applicant classified in the next position; 3. or not award the position.

Selection process

M. Selection process:

The selection of the candidate will be made based on the curricular evaluation and, in case of a tie among the best candidates, interviews will be carried out in person or remotely. When applying the two methods of selection, curricular evaluation and interview, each will have a valuation of 50% in the final classification. In the interview, in order to clarify aspects related to the curriculum and previous experience, the candidate's ability to integrate the project, analysis and critical thinking, motivation and interest, and communication and verbal expression in English will be evaluated.

The jury reserves the right to not select any applicants for the positions, if applications do not meet the necessary standards and/or profiles in terms of absolute merit.

N. Selection Panel:

- Nancy Duxbury (president)
- Silvia Ferreira (permanent member)
- Gonçalo Canto Moniz (permanent member)
- Giovanni Allegretti (permanent member)
- Isabel Ferreira (substitute member)

O. Communication of Results:

All candidates will receive the results of the selection process by email. The minutes of the selection process will be made available for public consultation in the facilities of the Centre for Social Studies.

Additional comments

P. Other complementary information:

Equality of opportunities:

CES abides by the national law that regulates the prevention, prohibition and fighting against discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic identity, colour, nationality, family background, and territory of origin (Law nº 93/2017, 23 August).

Data protection:

By submitting your application, you are agreeing with the use of your personal data by CES administrative services for the sole purpose of the current call, namely to be contacted directly by CES services and allow the communication of results as in point n. of this call. CES abides by the principles of GDPR.

Contact:

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Centro de Estudos Sociais
Universidade de Coimbra

ces.uc.pt

Website for additional job details

<https://www.ces.uc.pt/pt/agenda-noticias/emprego-bolsas-estagios>



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