

Call for applications

Research Scholarship (one position) CES/27/2026-BI-URGE

The Centre for Social Studies (CES) – Associate Laboratory - University of Coimbra (Portugal), invites applications for one (1) PhD Researcher position full-time (CES/27/2026-BI-URGE) in the FCT project “URGE - Cultivating Equality: Rural Women, Food Systems and Agroecology in the Iberian Peninsula”, funded by national fundings and FEDER, with the reference COMPETE2030-FEDER00931800, and coordinated by Rita Calvário, integrated researcher at DINAMIA’CET-Iscte and collaborative researcher at CES.

CES provides a stimulating intellectual environment in the domain of social sciences and humanities. The project is part of the research Thematic Line Risk(s), Ecologies, Health, which aims to promote an integrated approach to risks and threats and their impacts on the ecosystem and human and non-human well-being, proposing sustainable, ecological and equity-based alternatives for production and consumption, and social well-being, and relying on collaborative and participatory methodologies.

A. Project Description Cultivating Equality: Rural Women, Food Systems and Agroecology in the Iberian Peninsula

URGE examines the perspectives, agroecological practices, and demands of rural women engaged in family farming in Portugal, Galicia and the Basque Country. Using a gender lens and participatory feminist methodologies, this comparative project seeks to amplify rural women’s voices and strengthen their role in shaping sustainable, equitable, and inclusive food policies and food systems. The project pursues three objectives: (1) identify the factors that enable or hinder women’s participation in agriculture and explore their priorities for more sustainable and inclusive agrifood policies, particularly the CAP; (2) document and analyse rural women’s historical and contemporary struggles and demands at local, national, regional, and European levels; and (3) make visible the contributions of rural women to the development, maintenance, and dissemination of sustainable, fair, and inclusive food systems. To achieve these objectives, URGE will: (a) co-design research agendas with rural women through Local Research Planning Workshops in each territory; (b) organise an Agroecological Caravan to foster dialogue and knowledge exchange among women and key stakeholders; (c) conduct oral history interviews to document women’s experiences and struggles around agriculture, food, and gender; and (d) develop focused case studies on rural women’s agroecological practices across the participating territories.

Expected duration of project execution: 36 months, May 2025 – April 2029.

b. Scientific field:

Social Sciences and Humanities

c. Work plan, tasks:

The selected researcher is expected to have the following responsibilities as part of the development of their PhD thesis:

1. Conduct a systematic literature review on: (a) agri-food systems, agroecology, and gender in Europe, with a focus on Portugal and Spain; and (b) feminist approaches to agrarian, food, and rural studies.
2. Support the organisation and implementation of the Local Research Planning Workshop and the Agroecological Caravan in Portugal.
3. Contribute to data collection and analysis for oral history interviews and focused case studies with a focus on selected case studies in Portugal, Galicia, and the Basque Country, potentially covering one, two, or all three cases.
4. Provide project coordination support, including the organisation of and participation in project meetings and dissemination events.
5. Contribute to the production and dissemination of project outputs, including reports, policy briefs, podcasts, blog posts, and scientific publications.

d. Applicable Legislation and Regulations:

Portuguese Law nº 40/2004, of August 18 (Scientific Research Fellow Statute) and the following amendments; FCT's (National Agency for Science and Technology) Regulations for Advanced Training and Qualification of Human Resources, and Regulations for Fellowships at the Centre for Social Studies.

Template of the fellowship contract:

https://ces.uc.pt/oportunidades/bolsasemprego/Minuta_Contrato_Bolsa_CES.pdf

Template of the final activities report:

https://ces.uc.pt/oportunidades/bolsasemprego/E_Relatorio_actividades.pdf

e. Work place:

The workplace is the Centre for Social Studies' facilities in Coimbra or in other locations when necessary for the good implementation of the work plan, under the scientific supervision of the Project's Principal Investigator, Rita Calvário.

f. Duration of the contract:

The fellowship will last 12 months, starting in middle November 2026, if all administrative conditions meet. The fellowship contract may be extended for equal or different periods, for a maximum of 30 months, depending on the evaluation of the work carried out, the project's financial provisions, and scientific needs.

g. Application dates:

Opens on: October 8th, 2026

Closes on: October 21st, 2026

After the 23h59 of October 21st, no applications will be considered.

h. Application process:

Applications must include the following documents:

a) Motivation Letter (maximum 2 pages, in English), clearly indicating the reference of the present call (CES/27/2026-BI-URGE). The letter should address, at a minimum, the following aspects:

(i) The candidate's motivation for joining the URGE Project and for developing a PhD research project aligned with its thematic focus on rural women, agroecology, gender relations, social justice, and rural transformations;

(ii) The candidate's proposed contribution to the project and their understanding of how they would undertake the research, fieldwork, dissemination, and other activities foreseen under the scholarship;

(iii) The extent to which the candidate's academic background, research experience, professional practice, activist engagement, and/or community work relate to the selection criteria and the project's objectives;

(iv) Evidence of written and oral proficiency in Portuguese and, preferably, Spanish, together with a good command of English. Knowledge of Galician and/or Basque (Euskera) will be considered an asset. Candidates should briefly describe their level of proficiency in each language, indicate how and where these competencies were acquired and developed, and specify whether any of these languages are their native language(s).

b) Detailed Curriculum Vitae, including academic qualifications, research experience, publications, participation in research projects, relevant professional experience, community engagement, language skills, and other information considered pertinent to the application.

c) Copies of academic degree certificates and transcripts. Candidates must hold the academic qualifications required for admission to a PhD programme and must be enrolled in a PhD programme at CES by the date of commencement of the scholarship. Applicants must meet all eligibility conditions specified in Section K. Mandatory Requirements.

d) Proof of enrolment in a PhD programme (if already available) or a declaration of commitment to obtain enrolment before the start date of the scholarship.

e) Additional supporting documents, including publications, writing samples, certificates of training, proof of language proficiency, recommendation letters, or other documents deemed relevant to the assessment of the application and verification of eligibility.

Applications should be sent by email to concursos@ces.uc.pt until the final deadline. Applications must include a clear indication of the reference of this call (CES/27/2026-BI-URGE) and the applicant's name.

SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS

i. Preferred selection criteria and their weighing:

1. Academic background and qualifications (25%)

(a) Academic training in Sociology, Anthropology, Gender Studies, Rural Studies, Geography, Agrarian Studies, Development Studies, Environmental Studies, Political Ecology, or related fields.

(b) Academic performance and relevance of previous training to the themes of the project.

2. Research experience and scientific potential (25%)

(c) Previous experience in research projects, research assistance, publications, conference presentations, or other research-related activities.

(d) Demonstrated capacity to conduct independent and collaborative research.

(e) Quality and relevance of previous work to the scholarship and PhD project.

3. Motivation and alignment with the project (25%)

(f) Quality of the motivation letter.

(g) Understanding of the project's objectives, theoretical approaches, and methodological challenges.

(h) Demonstrated interest in rural women, agroecology, gender relations, social movements, food systems, and/or rural development.

4. Professional, community, or activist experience (10%)

(i) Experience working with rural communities, women's organizations, cooperatives, social movements, NGOs, public institutions, or community-based initiatives.

(j) Engagement in activities related to gender equality, agroecology, food sovereignty, environmental justice, or rural development.

5. Methodological and Language Skills (15%)

(l) Experience with qualitative, participatory, ethnographic, mixed-methods, or community-based research.

(m) Excellent oral and written proficiency in English and Portuguese.

(n) Knowledge of Spanish will be considered an asset.

(p) Knowledge of Galician and/or Euskera will be considered an additional asset.

The jury reserves the right not to select any candidate.

BENEFITS

j. Monthly Allowance

The monthly stipend is 1359,64 euros according with the Regulations for Fellowships at the Centre for Social Studies and at FCT (<https://www.fct.pt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Tabela-de-Valores-SMM-2026.pdf>).

The payment of the Voluntary Social Insurance and the Personal Accident Insurance adds up to this amount.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

k. Mandatory requirements

1. Be a doctoral student **or**

1.1 have a master's degree **and** be enrolled in a course that does not confer an academic degree but is part of the educational project of a higher education institution (see associated conditions in a);

2. Academic degree in Sociology, Anthropology, Gender Studies, Rural Studies, Geography, Agrarian Studies, Development Studies, Environmental Studies, Political Ecology, or related fields.

a) Applicants must provide proof of enrolment in a doctoral or non-academic degree course, in the current academic year. If, at the time of application, the applicant does not have a valid document proving their enrolment, they must send a **declaration of honour** in which they state to undertake the enrolment within a maximum period of 30 days after the communication of the results, under the penalty of not contracting the scholarship.

b) 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:

- i. recognise the candidate's grades and assess according to the possession of such grades;
- ii. give equivalence to, or validate, the grade of her/his degree;

- iii. use that note or its conversion as an evaluation parameter.

In case of selection, the fellowship contract can only be signed after the recognition of the academic degree by the Portuguese authorities, under the terms of the Law-decree n66/2018, August 16. The selected candidate must 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 fellowship to the second place; 3. or not award the fellowship.

3. Be fluent in Portuguese and English.

SELECTION PROCESS

I. Selection process

The selection of the candidate will be made based on the curricular evaluation and, if the jury decides to be necessary, the best-positioned applicants can be short-listed for an interview. The interviews can be carried out in person or remotely. The interview is meant to clarify aspects related to the curriculum and previous experience, the candidate's ability to integrate into the project, motivation and interest, and communication. When applying the two methods of selection, curricular evaluation and interview, each will have a valuation of 50% in the final classification.

The jury reserves the right to not select applicants for the vacancy, if the applicants do not have the adequate quality and profile in terms of absolute merit.

m. Selection panel:

- Rita Calvário (President)
- Cristina Amaro da Costa (Permanent member)
- Joana Vaz de Sousa (Permanent member)
- Gustavo García Lopez (Substitute member)
- Luciane Lucas (Substitute member)

n. Communication of Results:

All candidates will receive the results by email. The meeting minutes of the selection panel will become available publicly. After the communication of results, applicants have 10 working days to present a redress to the evaluation and the result by email.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Equality of opportunities:

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, territory of origin, and disability. (Law nº 93/2017, 23 August; Law nº 4/2019, 10 January).

Data protection:

「Edital」



Centro de Estudos Sociais
Universidade de Coimbra

ces.uc.pt

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:

Centro de Estudos Sociais
Colégio S. Jerónimo, Apartado 3087
3000-995 Coimbra, Portugal
concursos@ces.uc.pt

Cofinanciado por:



Cofinanciado pela
União Europeia



Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

