

FCT – Portuguese Foundation for Science & Technology

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Outline

- ▶ FCT presentation
- ▶ Main action lines
- ▶ Scientific accountability
- ▶ Management accountability
- ▶ Main weaknesses

FCT – Presentation

- ▶ *FCT is the agency responsible for implementing the Portuguese Science and Technology policy*
 - *Commitment for Science of the Portuguese Government*
- ▶ *FCT is a Department of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, responsible for funding all national and international programmes related to Science and Technology*
- ▶ *Staff: 120 employees*

Main action lines

- ▶ Research projects
 - App 6000 active projects
 - Last general call (2006) – 1200 new projects

- ▶ Fellowships and grants
 - 5 years contracts for PhD researchers
 - 1000 (600+400)
 - Post-doc and PhD grants
 - App 8000
 - Others

- ▶ Research units
 - Plurianual funding
 - 390 units
 - 25 Associate Laboratory
 - 10500 researchers with PhD

Scientific Accountability

From Proposal to Project approval

- ▶ Call for proposals and submissions
- ▶ Evaluation
 - International, independent panels organized by scientific area
 - Final report with ranking, recommendation for funding, and scientific recommendations on the workplan and financial allocation
- ▶ Total funding approved by the Minister
- ▶ Decision transmitted to PI

Scientific Accountability

From Proposal to Project approval

- ▶ Decision appeals
- ▶ Analysis of the appeals
 - National panel of experts
 - Identification of gross error or negligence
 - Final report with recommendations
- ▶ All conflicts of interests are stated in the report

Scientific Accountability

Rules for PIs

- ▶ Minimum 25% of time allocated to each project
- ▶ Time allocation in all funded projects $\leq 100\%$
- ▶ Calls for proposals state that
if all obligations towards FCT in previous projects are not fulfilled, PI is not liable to submit a proposal

Scientific Accountability

After conclusion

- ▶ Evaluation of final scientific reports
- ▶ National panels
 - Compliance with the initial workplan
 - Decision: approved / not approved
- ▶ If not approved, funding must be returned to FCT

Financial Accountability

- ▶ Initial Budget (+ approved changes)
 - Human Resources
 - Salaries are not eligible
 - Missions
 - Equipment
 - Consumables
 - Services / Consultancy
 - Overheads (max 20% of direct costs)
- ▶ Payments to project leader according to the schedule defined in the contract
 - One advance payment + reimbursement of expenses

Financial Accountability

- ▶ Project leader submits periodic cost statements
- ▶ FCT assesses
 - eligible and non-eligible expenses
 - fulfillment of financial and scientific management rules
- ▶ FCT organizes auditing by external auditors

Weaknesses

- ▶ Control actions mostly focused on financial/management aspects
- ▶ Weak control of scientific management
- ▶ Weak control on knowledge production and its quality
- ▶ Weak management of research outcomes