

## Evaluation Panel: ARTS AND HUMANITIES – Philosophy

---

**R&D Unit:** Centro de Filosofia das Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa (CFCUL)

**Coordinator:** Rui António Nobre Moreira

**Integrated PhD Researchers:** 47

---

**Overall Quality Grade:** VERY GOOD

### Evaluation Criteria Ratings

- (A) Quality, merit, relevance and internationalization of the R&D activities of the Integrated Researchers in the R&D Unit Application: 4
- (B) Merit of the team of Integrated Researchers: 4
- (C) Appropriateness of objectives, strategy, plan of activities and organization: 4

**Base Funding for (2020-2023):** 570 K€

### Recommended Programmatic Support

PhD Fellowships: 6

Programmatic Funding: 335 K€, including for 1 (Junior) New PhD Researcher Contract.

### Justification, Comments and Recommendations

The Unit is unique in at least two aspects: it is the only Centre for philosophy of science in Portugal, and it is located within the faculty of science. The performance of the Unit is very good: corresponding to its mission, it covers the whole area of philosophy of science, that is, (a) its main fields (philosophy of logic and mathematics, formal epistemology, philosophy of physics, philosophy of biology, metaphysics of science, philosophy of technology, etc.), (b) the history as well as the current systematic issues. The Unit pursues a plurality of methods (formal as well as conceptual) and it considers also the relationship between science and arts as well as the one between science and ethics. It runs a PhD programme in philosophy. The number of defended PhD theses (19 in 2013-17) and master diploma (62 in 2013-17) is very good.

The Centre also pursues an internationalization strategy that has many very good aspects: it is internationally well connected, hosts a recognized journal (Kairos, published open access with de Gruyter) and obtained international funding, including a Templeton grant in the past. Nearly half of the researchers in the Centre who hold a PhD did their PhD abroad, which is evidence of the attractiveness of the Centre on an international level. There is an excellent publication output of individual researchers in the Centre: there are papers published in leading international journals such as *Synthese*, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, *Foundations of Science*, *Axiomathes*, *Topoi*, *Philosophia Mathematica*, *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*. There are also books, edited books and contributions to books published by leading international publishing houses such as Springer and Brill.

To maintain its level of very good performance or even improve it in the next funding period, we think that the Centre can undertake measures to further increase its international visibility. We are convinced that the researchers in the Centre have the potential to continue to produce very good or even excellent publications in leading journals and that the Centre provides the necessary environment for that. However, these research outputs are often not perceived as outputs of the Centre as such in distinction to outputs of the individual researchers only. The Centre clearly is visible at the national level as the Unit for research in philosophy of science in Portugal. It also profits from a number of very valuable international contacts. To increase its visibility as a Centre outside Portugal, one suggestion is to establish institutional links with the leading Centres for philosophy of science in Europe as the Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy, the Center for Philosophy of Science at the London School of Economics, or the Institut d'histoire et philosophie des sciences et technologies in Paris. In that respect, researchers from these institutions could be invited to join in the external advisory board of CFCUL.

We think that the division of the Centre into three research groups – philosophy of formal sciences, philosophy of natural sciences and philosophy of technology – is convincing. We also see the point of the transversal research pole of interdisciplinarity in order to bring these research groups together, for instance in a common weekly seminar of the Centre. We strongly encourage the Centre to continue to pursue the idea of the unity of science, both in its philosophical research as well as in its organization. In that respect, it is important that the philosophy of all the natural sciences, from the formal ones via physics and chemistry to biology and environmental sciences is pursued by the Centre and that the link between these sciences is kept in view, for instance by the project on an overarching theme such as emergentism, by creating new interdisciplinary links such as the link between the formal science of game theory

and evolutionary biology, etc. We also think that the Centre can in that respect profit more from its unique position as being hosted by the faculty of science (instead of the faculty of humanities, where philosophy is located), for instance by trying to bring in more active, working scientists as co-supervisors of PhD theses and the like. In that sense, we consider the strategy to pursue the research as structured in the three groups with the transversal research pole of interdisciplinarity to link them up as providing a very good organizational framework.

However, we are less convinced of extending research group 3 to science and art. On the one hand, outreach to society up to linking science with artistic performances is important. On the other hand, however, if the Centre is to strengthen its internationalization and to become visible in Europe as a Centre for philosophy of science like the Centres existing in Britain, France, Germany, etc., it has to concentrate on sharpening its profile as a Centre for research in philosophy of science as the field is conceived today in Europe and worldwide. In that respect, pursuing the link with science and art on the same level as research in philosophy of science gives the impression of too much of a diversification that hinders in the end the Centre from gaining a clear profile. It is obvious that the Centre cannot and should not pursue a strategy of focusing only on a specific field and a specific methodology. Its unique position in the faculty of science and its mission in favour of the unity of science require it to pursue research in the whole field of the philosophy of natural science including the link with philosophy of technology. However, the profile should then be centred on this mission and also be implemented in a PhD programme that is focused on this mission. Also for the PhD programme, further strengthening the international links of the Centre by establishing for instance institutional links with similar Centres in Europe is very important, so that an exchange is established, e.g. by PhD students going abroad for a stage in other such Centres in Europe, distinguished researchers of the Centres coming in as co-supervisors for PhD theses, etc.

As regards the funding, we recommend to attribute to this Unit 6 grants for PhD students and 1 new Junior Researcher as well some additional Programmatic Funding.