GENERAL REGULATION FOR THE BEST DOCTORAL THESIS AWARD

1st Edition: 2026

Article 1
(Object and Purpose)

1. This regulation defines the nature and procedures for awarding the Best Doctoral Thesis award by scientific domain.
2. The Best Doctoral Thesis Award aims to distinguish the author of the most outstanding doctoral thesis completed at Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), recognising exceptional scientific quality and innovation within a given scientific domain.
3. The award consists of a monetary award and a diploma granted annually to the author of the winning thesis in each scientific domain.
4. The award is considered an academic distinction and treated as such for all purposes, including taxation. It cannot involve the temporary or permanent transfer of copyright or industrial property rights.
5. IST will disseminate information about the award and its scientific domains through its usual communication channels.

Article 2
(Eligibility)

1. Doctoral theses eligible for the award must cumulatively meet the following conditions:
    a. The author obtained the doctoral degree from IST, University of Lisbon.
    b. The public defence of the thesis took place no more than two years before the application deadline.
    c. The thesis received the final classification of “Approved with Distinction and Honour” in the public defence.
2. The thesis has not been submitted for evaluation in previous editions of the award, regardless of the scientific domain.

Article 3
(Scientific Domains)

1. The award is given in the following scientific domains:
    a. Molecular, Health and Environmental Sciences and Engineering
    b. Computer, Mathematical and Management Sciences and Engineering
    c. Physics and Electrical Sciences and Engineering
    d. Mechanical and Built Environment Engineering, and Architecture

2. The scientific domains of the award are defined for each edition and may be amended by the Scientific Council.
3. The description of the scientific domains is provided in Annex I to this Regulation.

Article 4
(Application Procedure)

1. Applications are submitted annually and announced on the IST website, in accordance with the rules, conditions, and deadlines published there.
2. Applications must be submitted by the thesis author to a single scientific domain and must include:
    a. Application form indicating the chosen scientific domain.
    b. Doctoral thesis.
    c. Extended abstract of the thesis (up to 1500 words, in English).
    d. Summary of the thesis for a non-specialized audience (up to 1500 words, in English).
    e. Candidate's Curriculum Vitae (in English).
    f. Recommendation letter(s) from the thesis supervisor(s) (in English).
3. Applicants may optionally submit up to two recommendation letters from external and independent experts who did not participate in the supervision team.
4. Recommendation letters must address the originality and significance of the thesis's main contributions, its innovative character and scientific impact, and the quality of the scientific output associated with the thesis at the time of its defence, in comparison with peers.

Article 5
(Evaluation Criteria)

1. The award will be given, in each scientific domain, to the author whose thesis the Jury considers to demonstrate:
    a. Scientific and methodological rigour.
    b. Originality and scientific innovation.
    c. Potential theoretical and/or practical impact of research contributions.
2. The Jury may request interviews with a selected group of candidates.
3. The Jury may reject a thesis if it considers that it does not fall within the scientific domain to which it was submitted.
4. The Jury may decide not to give the award.
5. Results will be communicated by email to the institutional addresses of the winning candidates.
6. The Jury's decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Article 6
(Appointment and Composition of the Jury)

1. The Jury for each scientific domain is appointed annually by the President of IST, following a favourable opinion from the Scientific Council and upon proposal from the Técnico Doctoral School (see Annex II).
2. The Jury is chaired by the Coordinator of the Técnico Doctoral School, or a designated representative.
3. The Jury is composed of a maximum of five members:
    a. At least, one external member from outside IST.

b. Additional IST members appointed for this purpose.

4. The appointment of Jury members will be announced on the IST website.
5. Jury members must maintain confidentiality regarding personal and academic information accessed during the selection process and may use it solely for that purpose.
6. Jury members may not have supervised any candidates eligible for the award in that edition.
7. The President of the Jury only votes in the case of an equality of votes of the other members.

Article 7
(Award Value)

1. The monetary value of the Best Doctoral Thesis Award, awarded annually by IST to the winner in each scientific domain, is determined by IST's Management Board.
2. The value of the award is set annually and announced on the IST website.

Article 8
(General Provisions)

IST reserves the right to cancel the award, temporarily or permanently, at any time.

Annex I – Scientific Domains of the Award

Molecular, Health and Environmental Sciences and Engineering

This domain includes chemistry, biochemistry, nanotechnology, materials science, and molecular and cellular biology, as well as their applications in health and engineering. It also includes research into the development of engineering tools to overcome the challenges and complexity of accessing mineral and energy resources in a sustainable and responsible manner. It recognises work addressing climate change challenges and promoting policies and solutions for sustainable development.

Computer, Mathematical and Management Sciences and Engineering

This domain includes mathematics, statistics, stochastic processes, computer science and engineering, digital media, and management. It values research that integrates digital technologies with management and decision-making approaches applied to complex systems, including information security. It highlights work at the interface of engineering, data science, management, and public policy with societal impact.

Physics and Electrical Sciences and Engineering

This domain covers physics, physical engineering, electrical engineering, electrical, electronic, and electromagnetic systems, as well as technologies related to energy conversion, transmission, and use, and nuclear science and technology. It values research exploring advanced technologies and the application of fundamental principles to engineering.

Mechanical and Built Environment Engineering, and Architecture

This domain includes civil, mechanical, aerospace, chemical and materials engineering. It also covers the development of new materials and advanced processes, as well as applications in naval and ocean engineering. It encompasses the planning, design, and construction of structures, infrastructures, and transport systems, as well as architecture and territorial engineering.

Annex II – Jury Members *per* Scientific Domain

Molecular, Health and Environmental Sciences and Engineering

Jury Chair: Coordinator of the Doctoral School

Jury members:

Eduardo Rocha (Institut Pasteur)
Maria João Pereira (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Maria Teresa Duarte (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Nuno Maulide (University of Vienna)
Raquel Aires Barros (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)

Reserve members:

Arsénio Fialho, Isabel Marrucho, João Pedro Conde, José Marques, José Nuno Lopes, Leonardo Azevedo, Patrícia Figueiredo

Computer, Mathematical and Management Sciences and Engineering

Jury Chair: Coordinator of the Doctoral School

Jury members:

Ana Póvoa (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Arlindo Oliveira (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Manuela Veloso (Carnegie Mellon University)
Miguel Abreu (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Rui Loja Fernandes (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

Reserve members:

Ana Paiva, Filipe Mena, Gabriel Cardoso, Joana Mendonça, José Mourão, Miguel Pupo Correia, Mónica Oliveira, Nuno Nunes, Rui Baptista

Physics and Electrical Sciences and Engineering

Jury Chair: Coordinator of the Doctoral School

Jury members:

José Carlos Príncipe (University of Florida)
Katharina Lorenz (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Luis Oliveira e Silva (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Mário Figueiredo (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Pedro Gil Ferreira (University of Oxford)

Reserve members:

Fernando Pereira, Frederico Fiúza, José Marques, José Santos-Victor, Pedro Carvalho, Luis Lemos Alves, Luis Miguel Silveira, Marta Almeida, José Marques, Vitor Cardoso

Mechanical and Built Environment Engineering, and Architecture

Jury Chair: Coordinator of the Doctoral School

Jury members:

Bruno Brunone (University of Perugia)
Jorge de Brito (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Manuel Doblaré (University of Zaragoza)
Manuel Heitor (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)
Miguel Amado (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)

Reserve members:

Ana Tostões, Eduardo Júlio, Fátima Vaz, João Ramôa Correia, Nuno Silvestre, Paulo Ferrão, Pedro Coelho, Rita Bento, Teresa Heitor