

RE-UNITA Research for UNITA

Design of a Talent Development Programme

UNITA PhD INTERNATIONAL TALENT CHALLENGE 2023/2024

CONTEST RULES

Article 1

Object and scope

1 – The UNITA PhD International Talent Challenge is an international competition launched under the Re-UNITA - Research for UNITA Project, for PhD students from the six partner Universities of the European Universities Alliance UNITA – Universitas Mountium and the Re-UNITA project, namely, University of Beira Interior - UBI, Università di Torino - UNITO, Universidad de Zaragoza - UNIZAR, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour - UPPA, Université Savoie Mont Blanc - USMB, and Universitatea de Vest din Timisoara - UVT.

2 – The contest will distinguish the best innovative proposal presented by teams of PhD students from each of the universities (UBI, UNITO, UNIZAR, UPPA, USMB, UVT), in each of the three main scientific areas of the UNITA Alliance - Renewable Energy, Circular Economy and Cultural Heritage. The teams of PhD students should propose an innovative solution to the Challenges presented in the competition.

3 – The contest will award a prize in each of the three scientific areas based on the following Challenges:

a) Renewable Energy: *Design a residential system for obtaining energy independence (thermal and electrical) based on renewable energy sources, located in the family garden (solutions that maximize the use of soil and multifunctionality will be additionally appreciated).*

b) Circular Economy: *The Ethiquable cooperative society is located in Fleurance in the Gers (FRANCE), a town of 6800 inhabitants, with a strong industrial zone comprising some fifty companies. Within this industrial area located in a rural zone, it wishes to promote the creation of a socio-economic fabric based on the circular economy, making it possible to meet both the challenges of economic vitalization and the objectives of sustainable development. Taking the example of the pioneering project of the Danish city of Kalundborg and the concept of "Industrial Symbiosis", the PhD students will assess how circular economy relationships can enable socio-economic actors in an industrial basin located in a rural area to better manage and valorise their resources, waste and other secondary productions (heat, cold, energy, water, etc.). As employment is a key issue in these areas, the PhD students will also assess the needs of employees in order to propose solutions for pooling (carpooling, childcare, catering, etc.). The PhD students will propose an action plan and a methodology based on the research*

and experiments already carried out, in order to allow a local implementation of such an approach, considering the technical, legal and political aspects. The roles of the different actors in the territory, and in particular the local authorities, should also be highlighted.

c) Cultural Heritage: How can the heritage of isolated rural areas be integrated into virtuous economic revitalisation and tourism projects? The regions where the Alliance UNITA universities are located include many isolated peripheries: mountain valleys, remote villages where there is no internet, etc. These areas are often in the process of desertification and economic decline. For many local elected representatives, cultural heritage seems to be one of the keys to revalorise their territory. Unfortunately, this is often done unilaterally, without consultation with the inhabitants, who are afraid of denaturing the region by opening it up to mass tourism or are often wary of tourism that is disconnected from their reality. This raises the question of whether there is a happy medium between an unbridled economic opening up (of the Puy du Fou type in France) or the sealing off of a frozen rurality. Can we envisage this revitalisation through a transdisciplinary approach (craft skills, new technologies, services, etc.) while considering the limits inherent in such places (accessibility, mobility, ecological preservation)? The question is also how to involve the local population and propose a participative enhancement of the heritage, so that they can make it their own and contribute to its preservation and transmission (especially in the case of intangible heritage).

Article 2

Contest operation and schedule

1 – This contest starts on July 2023 and will run until July 2024.

2 – The stages of the competition must respect the following schedule:

- a) Submission of the Registration Form: until 30/10/2023.
- b) Analysis of applications, verification of admission requirements and preparation of the list of candidates admitted and excluded from the competition: until 10/11/2023.
- c) Development of proposals by PhD students teams, with the support of mentors chosen by each team: until 31/05/2024.
- d) Delivery of Final Proposals: 31/05/2024.
- e) Presentation of the Final Proposals by each of the PhD students teams, to the International Jury in online format (Pitch Session): mid June 2024.
- f) Announcement of the winning proposals and respective teams in each area and for each Challenge referred to in number 3 of Article 1: beginning of July 2024.

3 – The contest will distinguish three winning teams, one for each of the three scientific areas and Challenges identified in number 3 of Article 1. The prize to be awarded to each winning team will be €5,000 (five thousand euros), with a final amount of €15,000 (fifteen thousand euros) to be allocated to the competition.

Article 3

Disclosure

1 – The opening announcement and the regulation for UNITA PhD International Talent Challenge will be published simultaneously in the six partner Universities of Re-UNITA.

2 – The opening announcement and the regulation of the competition, which must mention the application scope, the admission requirements, the documentation to be submitted and the method, the composition of the jury, the evaluation criteria and the calendar of the applications reception and evaluation phases, will be publicized by each partner University through the appropriate means, namely on the respective web pages and by e-mail to the internal contact list.

3 – The opening announcement of the competition will also be published on the website of the Alliance UNITA – Universitas Montium and in the Newsletters of UNITA and Re-UNITA.

Article 4

Admission requirements

1 – The teams from each of the six partner Universities of the Re-UNITA project (UBI, UNITO, UNIZAR, UPPA, USMB, UVT) must be composed of two to five PhD students.

2 – Teams can be interdisciplinary, including students from different PhD Programs and from different academic years, as long as all team members are from the same University.

3 – It is recommended, whenever possible, the observance of gender parity in the composition of the teams.

Article 5

Application submission

1 – Applications are formalized by filling in the Registration Form ([access here](#)), indicating the choice of scientific area and the respective challenge for which you are applying, and with the data of all members who are part of the team.

2 – Applications received in any other way than through the Registration Form referred to in number 1 are not accepted.

3 – To be admitted to the competition, PhD students teams must send, through the respective Registration Form and in a single pdf file, the document proving enrollment

in a PhD Program in the current academic year at the University where they are applying, for each one of the team members.

4 – Failure to present a valid supporting document under the terms of number 3, by any of the team members, implies the ineligibility of the entire team, and its exclusion from the competition.

5 – Each PhD students team can only submit a single application and compete for a single challenge.

6 – Each PhD student can only belong to one team.

7 – Only applications that meet the conditions and requirements established in this Regulation will be accepted.

8 – Eligible applications admitted to the contest must submit, within the deadlines indicated in Article 2, number 2, c) and d), the innovative proposals in accordance with the Rules for the Development of Proposals, disclosed in Annex 1 of this Regulation.

9 - Innovative proposals, with presentation of original ideas for each of the challenges, must be sent by email to unita@ubi.pt, indicating, in the subject field, the UNITA PHD INTERNATIONAL TALENT CHALLENGE.

Article 6

Mentors

1 – The Mentor will accompany the team members during the period of works development, considering the support from the point of view of the scientific development of the proposed solution and its potential for innovation.

2 – The Mentor must be a Professor and/or Researcher from the University of the respective participating team.

3 – Each team selected to participate in the contest must indicate a Mentor, identifying him/her and attaching the respective Letter of Acceptance when delivering the Final Proposal, in accordance with Article 2 (Contest operation and schedule) and in accordance with the Rules for the Development of Proposals, disclosed in Annex 1 of this Regulation.

Article 7

International Juries – composition and functioning

1 – Three (3) independent International Juries will be constituted for each of the scientific areas and respective challenges within the scope of the UNITA PhD International Talent Challenge.

2 – Each International Jury of each of the scientific areas - Renewable Energy, Cultural Heritage and Circular Economy - will be composed of a total of six (6) professors or researchers specialists in the respective scientific area, with one member representing each one of the partner Universities.

3 – The International Jury will be represented by one of the professors or researchers, chosen from among the six (6) members that compose the respective Jury.

4 – Members of the International Juries cannot perform other functions within the scope of Task 3.3 of WP3 of Re-UNITA Project, nor have any activity or relationship that could constitute the existence of a conflict of interest with any of the teams in the competition. Members of the International Juries cannot have the role of mentor.

5 – During the competition, the International Jury, in each of the scientific areas, will analyze the proposals presented by the PhD students teams and select a work to be distinguished, according to the evaluation and ranking criteria defined in Article 9 of this Regulation.

6 – The International Juries will evaluate the submitted proposals and proceed with their classification and ordering, in accordance with the evaluation and ranking criteria defined in this Regulation (Article 9), with the final classifications being the result of the average of the grades attributed by each member of the International Jury.

7 – The International Juries may request additional information from the PhD students teams, to clarify aspects that are considered necessary in the evaluation.

8 – The meetings of the International Juries will take place in an online format, by videoconference.

9 – After each meeting of the International Juries, minutes will be drawn up, which will be digitally signed by all members of the respective Jury. The signed minutes must contain a summary of the meeting and the main decisions taken, namely:

- a) Date and place of the meeting;
- b) Agenda;
- c) Members of the jury who were present with an indication of the University to which he/she belongs and respective category.

10 – The decisions of the International Juries are not subject to complaint or appeal.

Article 8

Honor Committee

1 – The Honor Committee will be composed of the six (6) members who are part of the External Scientific Board of Re-UNITA (external and independent evaluation body of the Re-UNITA - Research for UNITA, composed of internationally recognized specialists), with two members in each scientific area.

2 – The members of the Honor Committee – two in each scientific area – will act as observers and will accompany the meetings of the respective International Juries during the course of the contest, depending on the scientific area to which they belong, with the aim of assessing the quality of the work done.

3 – Members of the Honor Committee do not have right to vote, but they will be able to evaluate the work developed by the members of the International Juries.

Article 9

Evaluation and ranking criteria

1 – The proposals presented in each of the challenges and the related documents must be written in the English language. In addition to the English version, PhD students teams may also submit a version of the proposal in their mother tongue.

2 – Proposals submitted by PhD students teams will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a) Originality of the proposal and quality of the work plan (40%).
- b) Feasibility of the work plan and adequacy of the research team (30%).
- c) Potential for application (15%).
- d) Performance in the Pitch Session (15%).

3 – Proposals presented by PhD students teams will be classified from 0 to 20 points in each of the evaluation criteria and ranked according to the final classification obtained, rounded to one decimal place.

4 – The International Juries may decide not to award the prize if they consider that the submitted proposals do not meet the merit requirements.

Article 10

Awards and publicity

1 – The final result of the contest and the winning proposals in each of the scientific areas and proposed challenges will be widely disseminated through the appropriate dissemination channels of the UNITA Alliance and the six partner Universities of the Re-UNITA Project.

2 – The Prize will be awarded in a public ceremony, which will be advertised on the website and by other appropriate means of dissemination.

Article 11

Processing of Personal Data

1 – The personal data of the participants, collected through the registration form and during the course of the UNITA PhD International Talent Challenge, are only intended to allow the necessary activities for the organization, realization, management and consequent prize attribution within the scope of the present contest. Additionally, the personal data of the winners may be processed for the purposes of disclosure and promotion in order to disseminate the UNITA PhD International Talent Challenge.

2 – Participants will be responsible for any third-party claims regarding image rights in accordance with applicable law in their respective country.

Article 12

Intellectual Property and Industrial Property Rights

1 – By registering for the contest, participants certify that the proposals submitted are their own authorship, that they do not belong to third parties and are not protected by any copyright.

2 – The activities developed and proposals submitted will be governed by the Intellectual Property regulations in force at the respective Universities of each PhD students teams.

3 – The knowledge and intellectual property rights, whether industrial property rights and copyright, held by each of the participants (students and mentors) before the development of the final proposal and that can be used in this competition, remain the property of their holders.

4 – Any intellectual property rights, industrial property rights and copyrights, resulting from the development of the final proposal are assigned to the Parties in a way that adequately reflects their contribution.

5 – In the event that a result is generated by more than one entity, the co-ownership regime will be applied, in proportion equivalent to the intellectual contribution of the respective authors, inventors or other industrial creators. The percentage of co-ownership is determined based on the effort and dedication of the affiliated inventors to the realization of the invention.

6 – The co-holders of the rights mentioned in the previous number will establish, through an agreement to be drawn up for this purpose, the final terms and conditions for the legal protection, commercialization/exploitation of the mentioned rights.

7 – Participants will be responsible for any third-party claims in relation to intellectual property rights, whether industrial property rights and copyrights, in accordance with the applicable law in their respective country.

Article 13

Omissions

Any situation not covered by this Regulation will be jointly considered and resolved by the members of Work Package 3, Task 3.3 of the Re-UNITA Project.

Article 14

Final dispositions

- 1 – The participation in the contest implies full acceptance of these rules.
- 2 – The University of Beira Interior, as promoter of this contest, does not assume any responsibility for applications that are not in perfect condition or that are lost for reasons beyond the control of this entity.
- 3 – The University of Beira Interior reserves the right to suppress any applications that do not respect the purposes and values of the competition, as well as to exclude, at any time, any application that violates the rule(s) and/or adopts behaviors that are detrimental to the purpose inherent in holding the competition and the institution.
- 4 – The University of Beira Interior, as promoter of this contest, reserves the right not to admit applications that do not meet the requirements specified in this regulation.
- 5 – The University of Beira Interior reserves the right to modify this regulation for reasons of force majeure.

ANNEX I – Rules for the Development of Proposals

1. Title.
2. Description of the research team (including personal identification of all team members, identification of the enrollment on PhD Programs and description of how each team member will collaborate to the proposal).
3. Mentor identification and respective letter of acceptance (full name; Professor or Researcher from the respective University of the PhD students' team; position in the University).
4. Scientific area and respective challenge chosen.
5. Problem contextualization.
6. Description of the solution proposed (identifying the need, objectives and the description of the solution proposed to solve the problem).

7. Rationale and Impact (how the solution proposed will solve the problem and its impact for sustainable development and human well-being).
8. Work plan (tasks description).
9. Viability and potential for commercialization.
10. References.

Informative notes: Times New Roman, Font size minimum 11, margins 2,5 cm, spacing 1,5, maximum 8 pages (excluding references, figures and attachments).