



## 2013 Evaluation of FCT Research and Development Units

Review process - Stage 1

Panel: 06

ESF internal Project Ref Number: 14-FCT-119

Reviewer ID: 90677

Title: Center for the Studies in Letters (CEL)

P.I.: Dr. Carlos Costa Assuncao

FCT Ref: 707

**Total Score: 18 / 20**

**A. Productivity and contribution to the National Scientific and Technological System (NSTS): 4 / 5**

- i.) Research outputs; knowledge and technology transfer activities, when applicable, giving particular importance to the registration and value of patents, models or other relevant innovation indicators;
- ii.) Contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results); contribution to the advanced training of researchers; contribution to the promotion and dissemination of scientific and technological research; dissemination of results and actions to promote scientific culture, as well as participation in activities designed to promote public understanding of science, technology, art and culture; relationship between available past funding and output;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

This large research enterprise has clearly been very productive. Their strength is in the production of specialised material to enable further research and scientific understanding. One hopes that in the next phase they will attempt more in the way of promoting public understanding -- for although this is quite a specialised technical area, there is scope for publications of a broader thematic nature that will engage the wider academic community, as well as non-academic readers (and even a broadcast audience) in the work that is being done here. The team might also aim in future to publish more of the specialised work with top international publishers and in journals with the highest rankings. In terms of multidisciplinary, it could hardly be greater: the project combines every subarea of linguistic research with research of a historical, literary, cultural, educational, philosophical, religious, psychological, social and economic nature. The international dimension is already very well established, as can be seen in the spread of the project's publications across the world, from Spain, France and Germany to the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and of course Brazil, which is a major area of interest for the project. The fact that the team is hosting the International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences this coming summer is a further indication of their international reach.

**B. Scientific and technological merit of the research team: 5 / 5**

- i.) Scientific productivity and merit of the results of the Unit's research, taking into account the relevance of both current and planned research, as well as the level of internationalization of scientific activities, including publications and citations of published works or other relevant aspects;
- ii.) Skills and composition of the research team to adequately execute the proposed program;
- iii.) Ability to successfully compete for national and international research grants and contracts, including contracts with companies.

I am unaware of any undertaking anywhere in the world that matches this one in terms of the scope and depth of the research being undertaken into the history of the analysis of language and of the understanding of language. It is fair to say that this project is making the history of Portuguese into the pilot science for the history of linguistics, a field which has been developing around the whole world over the last forty years. The research team appears to have an extraordinarily vast and appropriate range of competencies, and their track record gives every confidence in their ability to carry out the programme of work that is proposed in the present application. I believe that the team will be able to compete successfully for further national and international research grants building on this one. In terms of contracts with companies, this is obviously not work of a commercial nature, except with regard to publishing, and in that regard there is significant scope for further contracts for books, and perhaps also an ongoing journal series. Again, the fact that the team is hosting the International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences this coming summer means that their work is extremely widely known and highly regarded.



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**C. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the strategic programme:**

5 /5

- i.) Relevance, originality and impact of the proposed strategic programme;  
ii.) Contribution of the scientific, technological, artistic or cultural activities of the proposed programme for a smart specialization strategy of the region in which the RD Unit is incorporated;  
iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

\*\* The score must be based on C.i and C.iii only. However, comments on C.ii are welcome.\*\*

The project has a triple aim. The first is compiling Latin-Portuguese medieval manuscripts from the 14th to 15th centuries, essential texts of linguistic, grammatical and pedagogical thinking in Portugal. If this appears to be dry historical work, it is anything but: what is innovative is the recognition of the importance of these writings for the development of the whole European understanding of language and mind, in a humanistic as well as a spiritual and medical context. The work done here has potential for attracting attention and further funding from the major international projects for the History of Medicine. The second aim is publishing grammatical texts in and about the Portuguese language which are epistemologically representative for the studies of the Portuguese language from the 16th century (1536) to the 19th century (1899). Here again, what is innovative is the recognition of the importance of these writings for the development of the European understanding of language and mind, in a humanistic as well as a spiritual and medical context, and this work too should attract attention and further funding from the major international projects for the History of Medicine. The third aim is compiling metalinguistic works written in missionary and colonial contexts under the Portuguese and Spanish, focusing on the description and analysis of non European languages from Africa, America, India and Asia. This of course is the most immediately exciting and obviously innovative dimension of the project, being of massive importance in the context of post-colonial studies. The project is innovative on the technological dimension as well, since 70 of the texts being compiled will be digitalised and published in semi-diplomatic, interpretative and/or critical editions on a website built for the purpose. In this regard it will serve as a model for other textual-historical projects.

**D. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the requested budget:**

4 /5

- i.) Organisation of the programme in terms of the proposed objectives and resources (budget, duration, infrastructures); organisation and work environment, with special focus on the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to perform the proposed objectives and on the management of resources directed to research activities, which includes supervision of postgraduate students and post-doctoral involvement in RD activities;  
ii.) Adequacy of proposed budget to accomplish the proposed strategic programme;  
iii.) Institutional resources (technical, scientific, organisational and managerial) of the participating entities. The commitment of the host institution in providing the manpower and material resources to implement the proposed programme is especially valued.

As you ask me to assess the feasibility of the work plan in terms of the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to achieve the proposed objectives, I can say that it appears to me to be perfectly adequate. In the UK we generally look for a more detailed breakdown of what will be done when, with benchmarks and so on, and in the absence of that it is hard for me to assert that the feasibility is "excellent", but for "very good" I have no hesitation. The proposed budget appears carefully thought out and, so far as I can judge, adequate. The institutional resources are clearly impressive, as can be seen easily from the large amount that has already been achieved.

**Overall Comment:**

Please provide a comment to substantiate the overall grading achieved, specifying key strengths and weaknesses (if any) of the research plan

This large research enterprise has clearly been very productive. I am unaware of any undertaking anywhere in the world that matches this one in terms of the scope and depth of the research being undertaken into the history of the analysis of language and of the understanding of language. It is fair to say that this project is making the history of Portuguese into the pilot science for the history of linguistics, a field which has been developing around the whole world over the last forty years. The research team

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appears to have an extraordinarily vast and appropriate range of competencies, and their track record gives every confidence in their ability to carry out the programme of work that is proposed in the present application. The project combines every subarea of linguistic research with research of a historical, literary, cultural, educational, philosophical, religious, psychological, social and economic nature. The international dimension is already very well established, as can be seen in the spread of the project's publications across the world, from Spain, France and Germany to the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and of course Brazil, which is a major area of interest for the project. In its relevance, originality and impact it will serve as a model for other textual-historical projects.



# 2013 Evaluation of FCT Research and Development Units

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Panel: 06

ESF internal Project Ref Number: 14-FCT-119

Reviewer ID: 90681

Title: Center for the Studies in Letters (CEL)

P.I.: Dr. Carlos Costa Assuncao

FCT Ref: 707

**Total Score: 10 / 20**

**A. Productivity and contribution to the National Scientific and Technological System (NSTS): 2 / 5**

- i.) Research outputs; knowledge and technology transfer activities, when applicable, giving particular importance to the registration and value of patents, models or other relevant innovation indicators;
- ii.) Contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results); contribution to the advanced training of researchers; contribution to the promotion and dissemination of scientific and technological research; dissemination of results and actions to promote scientific culture, as well as participation in activities designed to promote public understanding of science, technology, art and culture; relationship between available past funding and output;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

I would agree that the Corpus of Older Linguistic Texts (COLT), which the CEL Strategic Project proposes, could form a very substantial research output and might contribute significantly to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the NSTS. However, the authors do unfortunately not explore very well the actual gap in research, which leads to doubts not only about the originality of the project but also about the feasibility. While these aspects will be addressed below, it might here be sufficient to single out the proposed '70 semi diplomatic, interpretative and/or critical editions of metalinguistic works of representative texts on the history of the Portuguese language sciences'. Why do we need such a major amount of editions? Which editions are already available, and which ones constitute a major gap in research that this project would like to address?

Finally, the author stresses a high degree of internationalization, but it is not in all cases entirely clear which roles the partner universities are likely to play. For example, it remains unclear why and in how far the Brazilian (e.g. USP, UFF and MPU), German (DLV) and Japanese partners (ILCAA) have to be included. Certainly, the author stresses the need to develop joint PhD programs, but why with those partners and for what purpose exactly remains open. Similarly, it is not clear why the CEL project should be able to profit from recent changes to Portuguese law.

**B. Scientific and technological merit of the research team: 3 / 5**

- i.) Scientific productivity and merit of the results of the Unit's research, taking into account the relevance of both current and planned research, as well as the level of internationalization of scientific activities, including publications and citations of published works or other relevant aspects;
- ii.) Skills and composition of the research team to adequately execute the proposed program;
- iii.) Ability to successfully compete for national and international research grants and contracts, including contracts with companies.

There can be little doubt that CEL has as strong research team. In the last two FCT evaluations (in 2003 and 2007) CEL it was rated as "good", and there are indications that it has evolved since then: While the overall number of outputs (in particular books) seems impressive, indicators of ambition include the nomination of CEL as organizer of the VII Congreso Internacional of the Sociedad Española de Historiografía Lingüística in 2009 and the organization of the 13th International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences this year. Also, the skills and composition of the team to execute the proposed program seem convincing.

On the other hand, the relatively frequent superficial mistakes and stylistic weakness of the English language of the proposal suggest that the ability to compete for international research grants remains limited. Common challenges include word mistakes ('purposes' instead of 'proposes'), the use of upper and lower case ('Historical' instead of 'historical') and numerous repetitions.

Also, there are few indications of the quality of the research outputs. While this is always difficult to measure, precise ideas with regard to the number of citations for selected publications, the overall impact inside and beyond academia, the rating of journals in which the team tends to publish its refereed articles



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and the prestige of key publishers could have been mentioned.

### C. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the strategic programme:

2 /5

- i.) Relevance, originality and impact of the proposed strategic programme;
  - ii.) Contribution of the scientific, technological, artistic or cultural activities of the proposed programme for a smart specialization strategy of the region in which the RD Unit is incorporated;
  - iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.
- \*\* The score must be based on C.i and C.iii only. However, comments on C.ii are welcome.\*\*

Unfortunately, the original contribution to research remains unclear. The authors highlight that some of the CEL researchers have already been working 'on a similar database for texts belonging to the 14th/16th centuries'. While this could be a solid base for the project, it would be important to map out in detail what the team has already achieved and where the gaps in research are that the proposed project is now trying to fill. The authors mention 'new data and the consolidation of previously inserted data' but shed little light on that data.

Regional links are outlined and the authors clearly expect a significant impact of the project on the region. However, it remains unclear in how far exactly the region is likely to contribute to and benefit from the proposed project. For example, regional offices of culture and tourism are mentioned, as well as secondary schools, but can we really expect a substantial increase in tourism because of the development of an online corpus, and are schools likely to become main users of the corpus? If so, why?

A high degree of internationalization can be expected, in particular with French institutions such as the Laboratoire d'Histoire des Théories Linguistiques. However, it is not always clear why and in how far the other partners have to be included (see A).

### D. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the requested budget:

3 /5

- i.) Organisation of the programme in terms of the proposed objectives and resources (budget, duration, infrastructures); organisation and work environment, with special focus on the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to perform the proposed objectives and on the management of resources directed to research activities, which includes supervision of postgraduate students and post-doctoral involvement in RD activities;
- ii.) Adequacy of proposed budget to accomplish the proposed strategic programme;
- iii.) Institutional resources (technical, scientific, organisational and managerial) of the participating entities. The commitment of the host institution in providing the manpower and material resources to implement the proposed programme is especially valued.

While the duration of the project seems very reasonable, the budget appears to be rather low considering the substantial amount of proposed research outputs and the necessary input by senior staff. In particular, I am surprised that no funds have been allocated for the time that senior staff will have to invest (e.g. funds for teaching buy-out in the broadest sense, including sabbaticals).

Considering that CEL has already worked on comparable corpus developments, the team seems to have the key resources and the manpower to implement the project, and there appears to be a very good vision with regard to the technical development of the product. However, other aspects are not always very well elaborated, for example when the authors mention that 'the resulting online documents may have some expenses related to representation, writing, assistance and answering questions posed by persons who access the information'. While the sentence is not entirely clear, it also remains open in how far these aspects have been included in the budget.

### Overall Comment:

Please provide a comment to substantiate the overall grading achieved, specifying key strengths and weaknesses (if any) of the research plan

While the proposal is overall strong with regard to the technical elaboration, and CEL seems to have both the manpower and the institutional infrastructure to develop such a large-scale project, I am not convinced



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that it should be given funding at this stage.

As indicated above, one main problem is the lack of clarity with regard to the original contribution to research. The proposal summarizes that a substantial amount of texts has already been digitized and is at least partially accessible, and this seems to be particularly a result of the work that CEL researchers have done in this area. However, it remains unclear what exactly they have done, what has been done by competing institutions, and what exactly is missing?

Similarly, without a detailed exploration of current work and the remaining gap in research, it is very difficult to assess the feasibility of the project.

On the other hand, it would have been helpful to explore if colonial studies as subject areas in Portuguese universities are on the increase or rather on the decrease due for example to the financial crisis the authors mention repeatedly. Clearly, most users of the online corpus are likely to come from colonial studies research areas at HE level, rather than from secondary schools, at least in the first instance.





# 2013 Evaluation of FCT Research and Development Units

Review process - Stage 1

Panel: 06

ESF internal Project Ref Number: 14-FCT-119

Reviewer ID: 1955

Title: Center for the Studies in Letters (CEL)

P.I.: Dr. Carlos Costa Assuncao

FCT Ref: 707

**Total Score: 7 / 20**

**A. Productivity and contribution to the National Scientific and Technological System (NSTS): 3 / 5**

- i.) Research outputs; knowledge and technology transfer activities, when applicable, giving particular importance to the registration and value of patents, models or other relevant innovation indicators;
- ii.) Contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results); contribution to the advanced training of researchers; contribution to the promotion and dissemination of scientific and technological research; dissemination of results and actions to promote scientific culture, as well as participation in activities designed to promote public understanding of science, technology, art and culture; relationship between available past funding and output;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

This is a broad-ranging centre, primarily in Linguistics, but also encompassing Literary Studies and Cultural Studies. Until 2011 it also had a research strand in Communication Sciences. The documentation starts out with a lengthy account of what looks like a complicated management structure, before moving on to list a set of very general objectives. There are 2 host institutions geographically distinct which further complicates the picture.

The principal output appears to be a corpus of early Portuguese manuscripts, which include C14th and C15th grammatical and pedagogical texts, scholarly editions of early texts and research on texts produced in a missionary context. Emphasis is placed on the choice of CEL to host a major international conference on the history of language in 2009, with another scheduled for later in 2014.

There is a group working on African fiction in Portuguese, specifically on the influence of African oral literature on post-independence and post-colonial fiction, which has resulted in a series of publications. On balance, the publication list for the Centre appears modest and with the exception of one article in German, all the rest are in highly specialised Portuguese publications.

**B. Scientific and technological merit of the research team: 2 / 5**

- i.) Scientific productivity and merit of the results of the Unit's research, taking into account the relevance of both current and planned research, as well as the level of internationalization of scientific activities, including publications and citations of published works or other relevant aspects;
- ii.) Skills and composition of the research team to adequately execute the proposed program;
- iii.) Ability to successfully compete for national and international research grants and contracts, including contracts with companies.

The self-assessment document honestly cites the review of CEL in 2007 which highlighted a lack of international visibility and the absence of a tradition of publishing in peer-reviewed journals. Some effort has been made to rectify this (see for example 9.3.2), though the statements in 5.2 suggest some reluctance. The principal publications of CEI all appear to be produced by the Linguistics group. The output of the literature group is very thin, though commendably there are 4 novels by one person listed under research-based creative writing.

The Cultural Studies group has mainly published on African literature (articles, books, encyclopaedia entries) and, (unusually) promoted seminars in Cultural Management.

The impression from this documentation is that there is a strong cluster of historical linguists, working primarily on early Portuguese texts that has been put together (perhaps for administrative reasons?) with researchers in very different fields, so that there is no sense of cohesion across the centre as a whole. This is not helped by the awkward management structure. The very title of the Centre, and the fact that there are 2 host institutions reinforces the impression of a lack of cohesion.



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FCT Ref: 707

### C. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the strategic programme:

1 /5

- i.) Relevance, originality and impact of the proposed strategic programme;
  - ii.) Contribution of the scientific, technological, artistic or cultural activities of the proposed programme for a smart specialization strategy of the region in which the RD Unit is incorporated;
  - iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.
- \*\* The score must be based on C.i and C.iii only. However, comments on C.ii are welcome.\*\*

The strategic programme consists of more of the same: primarily, the compilation and digitalisation of medieval manuscripts. There is a plan to create a website, and the geographical and temporal range of text production will be increased. There will also be a continuation of linguistic analysis of those texts, which it is hoped will contribute 'to the introduction of innovative aspects in the study of the Portuguese language', though we are not told what or how this may happen.

The Literature group similarly proposes more of the same, ie. textual analysis, and though there is a reference to comparative literature, that is never developed.

The Cultural Studies group plan to study the culture of Tras-os-Montes and the Douro region, and this looks like another data collection and possible subsequent digitalisation project, though no details are provided.

The lack of clarity in the bid reflects the difficulty already noted of having 3 disparate groups loosely bound under a single heading. The objectives listed are mainly vague and hopeful, and though there may be an intention to increase productivity and raise visibility, there is no strategy for doing any of this, so the objectives read like a wish list.

### D. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the requested budget:

1 /5

- i.) Organisation of the programme in terms of the proposed objectives and resources (budget, duration, infrastructures); organisation and work environment, with special focus on the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to perform the proposed objectives and on the management of resources directed to research activities, which includes supervision of postgraduate students and post-doctoral involvement in RD activities;
- ii.) Adequacy of proposed budget to accomplish the proposed strategic programme;
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The Human resources line in the budget bid is for a full-time Assistant researcher in language sciences and for a Research Technical Fellowship to assist with the technical aspects of the corpus of older linguistic texts. There is nothing in the budget for developments in Literature or Cultural Studies and one wonders why there is no bid for postgraduate scholarship funding in any area. It is also pointed out that a new appointment will need to take on a series of administrative tasks, which makes it unclear as to precisely what kind of person is being sought.

The equipment bid is modest and very traditionally framed: the updating and replacement of basic computer equipment.

It is noted that CEL is about to move to a new building on the main campus, though it is unclear quite what the level of institutional assistance actually is.

### Overall Comment:

Please provide a comment to substantiate the overall grading achieved, specifying key strengths and weaknesses (if any) of the research plan

In contemporary management speak, it would be fair to say that this Centre lacks any clear brand image. The very title is so vague as to be almost meaningless. CEL consists of 3 separate clusters of researchers working in very different areas across 2 distinct host institutions, the management structure is cumbersome and awkward and in consequence the Centre lacks a clear sense of direction. This is not to say that some of the individual outputs are not good, and the work in historical linguistics is clearly important, but it is hard to justify its existence as a research centre of any importance.

The budget rationale reinforces this sense of vagueness. There is no strategy for bringing the 3 disparate





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strands together in any way, and the budget appears to privilege one strand over the other two. There is also no strategy for the training a new generation of young researchers, nor of encouraging an increase in the number of PhDs.

Much is made in the budget rationale for travel costs, both for researchers and for the visit by the international advisory board.

**Stage 1 - Proposal for a decision**

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**2013 Evaluation of FCT Research and Development Units****Review process - Stage 1: Final Panel consensus statement****Outcome of Stage 1**

Proceeding to Stage 2?

No

Grade

Fair

Proposal for funding

Annual Core Funding (€)

0.00

**Individual criteria**

Grading Scale for individual criteria:

- 5 - Excellent (All relevant aspects of the assessment criteria successfully addressed. Any shortcomings are minor)
- 4 - Very Good (Assessment criteria very well addressed/met, although certain improvements are still possible)
- 3 - Good (Assessment criteria well addressed/met, although improvements would be necessary)
- 2 - Fair (Assessment criteria broadly addressed, however there are significant weaknesses)
- 1 - Poor (Assessment criteria addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses)

**A. Productivity and contribution to the National Scientific and Technological System (NSTS)**

- i.) Research outputs; knowledge and technology transfer activities, when applicable, giving particular importance to the registration and value of patents, models or other relevant innovation indicators;
- ii.) Contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results); contribution to the advanced training of researchers; contribution to the promotion and dissemination of scientific and technological research; dissemination of results and actions to promote scientific culture, as well as participation in activities designed to promote public understanding of science, technology, art and culture; relationship between available past funding and output;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant

Score

3

Substantiating Comment

This is a broad-ranging centre, primarily in linguistics, but also encompassing literary studies and cultural studies. Until 2011 it also had a research strand in communication sciences. The principal output appears to be an corpus of early Portuguese manuscripts, which includes 14th and 15th century grammatical and pedagogical texts, scholarly editions of early texts and research on texts produced in a missionary context.

The proposal for CEL received grades ranging from excellent to fair and poor. For question A, the disparity between reviewers was slightly less than in other questions, and apart from the reviewer who awarded high grades for all questions, quite a number of criticisms was put forward by the other two reviewers.

The difference in assessing the research output varies from compliments of the highest order to very guarded assessments. Considering the research topics dealt by the Center it is not surprising that the majority of publications appear in Portuguese, some in high ranking national journals. One of the recommendations that

should be seriously taken into consideration is that the team should aim in the future to publish in top international journals or top international publications. Although in the Humanities publishing in national languages can be endorsed, a balance should be attained between publications in national languages and those in English. A fact that should be stressed is that the team is hosting the International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences. This is definitely a move in the right direction as far as internationalization is concerned, and this conference will certainly reflect the two main research strands (linguistically oriented as well as literary and cultural studies oriented).

What is not clear at all are plans for the digital outputs, some very interesting in content, and more specifically it is not indicated whether they are planned on being included in either CLARIN or DARIAH. Namely, internationalization through these pan-European research infrastructures would most certainly be a big step forward in making the said corpora available to a wider international audience.

## B. Scientific and technological merit of the research team

- i.) Scientific productivity and merit of the results of the Unit's research, taking into account the relevance of both current and planned research, as well as the level of internationalization of scientific activities, including publications and citations of published works or other relevant aspects;
- ii.) Skills and composition of the research team to adequately execute the proposed program;
- iii.) Ability to successfully compete for national and international research grants and contracts, including contracts with companies.

Score

3

### Substantiating Comment

The Panel noted a disparity in grades amongst the reviewers. The Panel is, however, of the opinion that it is taking things a bit too far to state that there is no undertaking in the world that could match this one in terms of scope and depth of research into the history of the analysis of language and of the understanding of language. A more realistic assessment is that we are dealing with a good team and that the skills and composition of the team seem to be adequate for the proposed programme.

The basis of the team is a strong cluster of historical linguists working on primarily early Portuguese texts. Other researchers in very different fields are also members of the Center, but it is not at all clear how and in which way they collaborate together or how cohesion is achieved in the Center as a whole, especially considering that there are two host institutions.

The above situation is not made easier by an ungainly management structure and the fact that there are two host institutions.

## C. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the strategic programme

- i.) Relevance, originality and impact of the proposed strategic programme;
- ii.) Contribution of the scientific, technological, artistic or cultural activities of the proposed programme for a smart specialization strategy of the region in which the R&D Unit is incorporated;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

Score

3

### Substantiating Comment

The basis of the strategic programme primarily consists of compilation and digitalization of medieval manuscripts. An increase in text production is planned as well as an extension of the temporal range of the texts themselves. Linguistic analyses of these texts will continue, however it remains unclear as to how these analyses will enhance the study of the Portuguese language, and it is even less clear as to what features of innovativeness they will feature. The literature group also proposes further textual analyses and although there is a reference to comparative literature, this possible strand of research is not further developed in the proposal. It should be noted that the output of the literature group is very thin. Overall, additional clarifications and a more detailed elaboration of objectives should be developed in future proposals.

Regional links are outlined, and the proposers state clearly that they expect significant impact on the region.

However, it remains unclear as to exactly how the region would benefit from the proposed project.

#### D. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the requested budget

- i.) Organisation of the programme in terms of the proposed objectives and resources (budget, duration, infrastructures); organisation and work environment, with special focus on the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to perform the proposed objectives and on the management of resources directed to research activities, which includes supervision of postgraduate students and post-doctoral involvement in R&D activities;
- ii.) Adequacy of proposed budget to accomplish the proposed strategic programme;
- iii.) Institutional resources (technical, scientific, organisational and managerial) of the participating entities. The commitment of the host institution in providing the manpower and material resources to implement the proposed programme is especially valued.

Score

2

Substantiating Comment

The budget, especially as far as human resources is concerned, heavily goes in the direction of linguistics, while there seems to be little or no provisions for the literature or cultural studies envisaged. The equipment bid is very modest and very traditional. One can only wonder why more funds were not asked for the digital agenda for the proposed databases. Going back to CLARIN and DARIAH, the Panel once again states that there seems to be a lack of ambition in the sense of "producing databases" that could be incorporated in these pan-European research infrastructures, or rather, there seems to be no plans for bringing the planned databases to a higher level which would certainly guarantee true internationalization.

### Additional questions

#### 1. Laboratory intensity level

Do you agree with the laboratory intensity level suggested in the application?

Yes

If you recommend a different level, please substantiate

#### 2. Suggested basic and applied research/experimental development share

Do you agree with the suggested basic and applied research/experimental development share suggested in the application?

No

If no, please indicate your recommended basic/applied research share

Indicated in % as XX/xx, with basic share always in first position, i.e. 60/40 = 60 basic research and 40 applied research

50/50

If you recommend a different basic/applied research share, please substantiate

It is very difficult to accept that the basic and applied research share would be expressed as 100% basic research, considering the fact that a high percentage of what has been produced in the Center so far, and what is planned for the future goes more into the realm of applied research. Here the Panel is primarily referring to the strong digital slant and strong plans for digital development during the next funding period. It is true that good work is being done, especially within historical linguistics, but this is only a part of the research agenda and most

certainly does not cover 100% of the R&D Unit.

## **Comments**

### **Overall Comment**

When the Center is viewed in its entirety, it appears to be an amalgamation that has sprung out of two distinct host institutions. So far, the Center has not managed to profile itself into a recognizable and distinct entity. It goes without saying that every country needs researchers in historical linguistics, but even this highly specialized discipline of linguistics needs strategic streamlining and clear objectives. It also needs strong cohesive ties amongst its researchers, and here the Panel refers to the two distinct host institutions. Not to mention that no indication is given as to whether ties with other linguistic centers and departments in Portugal doing research on historical linguistics exist.

The strategy for bringing the three disparate strands together is lacking and the budget most definitely privileges one strand over the other two.

Unfortunately, in the rebuttal, quite a number of the above mentioned questions/remarks/criticisms have not been addressed, and concrete data and arguments have not been provided.

There seems to be quite a number of PhD students, however it is not clear whether again there is a predominance in the number of these students in the historical linguistic framework in comparison to the other strands. Or, in other words, the question arises how the other two strands, in concrete terms, participate in the education of young researchers.

### **Questions and comments**

To be raised by the Panel to the Research Unit if the latter proceeds to the second stage of the evaluation (on site visits by Panel)

## Stage 1 - Final Decision

### 2013 Evaluation of FCT Research and Development Units

#### Review process - Stage 1: Final Decision

#### Stage 1 - Preliminary Hearing

The applicant requested Preliminary Hearing after Stage 1?

Yes

Do you find any grounds (factual errors or shortcomings of scientific nature) to change the initial Panel decision?

No

#### Comments

##### Feedback to applicants

It should be noted that the consensus statement was written very carefully, taking into consideration the exceptionally complimentary review, as well as the other reviews that were less complimentary. It should also be noted that the consensus statement is a balance, not a contradiction between positive and critical statements, which in this case resulted in the final mark of Fair. Consensus does not mean an average of external peer reviews, or the „acceptance“ of only one, but a consensus within the entire Panel based on four peer-reviewers, of which two were external.

- As to the mention of CLARIN and DARIAH, in the appeal it is stated that they are excellent databases, but not specific. Both these European research infrastructures are comprised of specific databases that also include (in different ways) corpora of historical texts of different historical value. Thus, including corpora of exceptional historical value on Portuguese (based on Portuguese texts) would only enhance the visibility and open up possibilities for a wide range of researchers to use these „texts“ in different areas of research.
- The Panel had noted (visible also in the reviews) the connections with international centres and scientific associations in the History of linguistics. However, the reference in the consensus statement to possible links to researchers and institutions within Portugal had the intention of pointing out that with a wider scope of linguists, including historical linguists, as well as researchers from other sub-disciplines, the focus of the project would be enhanced. The Panel was of the opinion that collaboration such as this could provide deeper insights and „possible innovations“ to the current program. It would also help in addressing the criticism that refers to the lack of clarity with regard to original contributions to research.
- Lack of cohesion among the researchers – part of the main criticisms were directed not to the fact that linguistic analyses of the text will continue, but to the fact that it remained unclear through which research topics these analyses would enhance the study of Portuguese language. Another point that was made was the need for a higher level of cohesion between the three major groups, especially the linking up of the literature and the cultural group. The lack of clarity in the proposal is reflected also in the fact that a strategy for bringing the three disparate groups together results in a lack of clarity pertaining to the objectives themselves. Since there is no strategy for bringing the three disparate strands together, the budget also appears to privilege one strand over the other two.

For a higher grade, the Panel would have expected more evidence and a clearer vision on how to integrate the three strands on one hand (and in this sense, also a clearer budget proposal), and how to make the "digital agenda" more accessible to researchers of different profiles in Europe and further abroad.

The appeal does not address the point about the bias towards linguistics in the budget, with apparently no provision for developing literature and cultural studies, nor does it deal with the questions raised about how cohesion is achieved in CEL with researchers working in such disparate areas across 2 host institutions.

#### Outcome of Stage 1

Proceeding to Stage 2?

No



Total Score (0...20)

Total Score (A+B+C+D)

11

Grade

Fair

Proposal for funding

Annual Core Funding (€)

0.00

Eligible for restructuring funding?

All units graded as Good and with an overall score of 14 or 15 (as the sum of scores for the four evaluation criteria), in Stage 1 of the review, are eligible for the Strategic Restructuring Plan / Incentive. Funding is conditional to submission of a plan for strategic restructuring of the research unit.

No

### **Individual criteria**

Grading Scale for individual criteria:

- 5 - Excellent (All relevant aspects of the assessment criteria successfully addressed. Any shortcomings are minor)
- 4 - Very Good (Assessment criteria very well addressed/met, although certain improvements are still possible)
- 3 - Good (Assessment criteria well addressed/met, although improvements would be necessary)
- 2 - Fair (Assessment criteria broadly addressed, however there are significant weaknesses)
- 1 - Poor (Assessment criteria addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses)

#### **A. Productivity and contribution to the National Scientific and Technological System (NSTS)**

- i.) Research outputs; knowledge and technology transfer activities, when applicable, giving particular importance to the registration and value of patents, models or other relevant innovation indicators;
- ii.) Contribution to the accumulation of knowledge and skills of the National Science and Technology System (expected effects and results); contribution to the advanced training of researchers; contribution to the promotion and dissemination of scientific and technological research; dissemination of results and actions to promote scientific culture, as well as participation in activities designed to promote public understanding of science, technology, art and culture; relationship between available past funding and output;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant

Score

3

#### **B. Scientific and technological merit of the research team**

- i.) Scientific productivity and merit of the results of the Unit's research, taking into account the relevance of both current and planned research, as well as the level of internationalization of scientific activities, including publications and citations of published works or other relevant aspects;
- ii.) Skills and composition of the research team to adequately execute the proposed program;
- iii.) Ability to successfully compete for national and international research grants and contracts, including contracts with companies.

Score

3

**C. Scientific merit and innovative nature of the strategic programme**

- i.) Relevance, originality and impact of the proposed strategic programme;
- ii.) Contribution of the scientific, technological, artistic or cultural activities of the proposed programme for a smart specialization strategy of the region in which the R&D Unit is incorporated;
- iii.) Degree of multidisciplinary and of internationalization, when relevant.

Score

**D. Feasibility of the work plan and reasonability of the requested budget**

- i.) Organisation of the programme in terms of the proposed objectives and resources (budget, duration, infrastructures); organisation and work environment, with special focus on the adequacy of the research team's critical mass to perform the proposed objectives and on the management of resources directed to research activities, which includes supervision of postgraduate students and post-doctoral involvement in R&D activities;
- ii.) Adequacy of proposed budget to accomplish the proposed strategic programme;
- iii.) Institutional resources (technical, scientific, organisational and managerial) of the participating entities. The commitment of the host institution in providing the manpower and material resources to implement the proposed programme is especially valued.

Score

**Additional questions****1. Laboratory intensity level**

Do you agree with the laboratory intensity level suggested in the consensus report?

**2. Suggested basic and applied research/experimental development share**

Do you agree with the suggested basic and applied research/experimental development share suggested in the application?

If no, please indicate your recommended basic/applied research share

Indicated in % as XX/xx, with basic share always in first position, i.e. 60/40 = 60 basic research and 40 applied research