

## RESEARCH ASSISTANT (MA) – One vacancy

The Centre for Social Studies (CES) – Associate Laboratory - University of Coimbra (Portugal), calls for applications for **one position for Research Assistant** (CES/09/2024-BioTRACES) within the project "BIOTraCes - BIODIVERSITY AND TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE FOR PLURAL AND NATURE-POSITIVE SOCIETIES" (Grant Agreement 101081923), funded by the European Research Executive Agency (REA) of the European Commission under the framework programme Horizon Europe 2021-2027 (HORIZON-CL6-2022-Biodiv-01-09), and coordinated at CES by the Principal Investigator (PI) Luciane Lucas dos Santos.

### A. Project Description:

BIOTraCes develop knowledge, tools and novel approaches that enable transformative changes (TC), necessary for achieving a nature-positive society. We aim to contribute to more inclusive, effective and just public policies, local strategies and corporate concerns on biodiversity aligned with the European Green Deal and SDGs.

To this end, we will engage with diverse stakeholder networks around 9 transformative biodiversity innovations in high-impact sectors - agriculture & food, forestry, water, and urbanisation. These local case studies across Europe will help understand in context how plural and often marginalized values, identities, and knowledge systems, concerning living with and caring for nature, can shape behaviour. The case studies will create a portfolio of good and failed examples by discerning power lock-ins, leverage opportunities and enabling actors and testing co-produced interventions. Also, we will analyse indirect drivers of biodiversity loss: structural factors and lock-ins that constitute barriers to sustainable decisions and behaviour. A Theory of Transformative Change (ToTC) will synthesise our findings, showing steps on the path to biodiversity recovery and informing public and private strategies and approaches for initiating, accelerating and (up)scaling TC.

BIOTraCes' originality is threefold: 1) An approach of transdisciplinary collaboration, based on action research, co-production and co-learning. 2) Operationalising in research and action principles of pluralising (acknowledging variety in values), empowering (enhancing the agency of marginalised groups), politicising (unveiling the political dimension of obstacles towards TC) and embedding (bringing TC into the economy, social practices and policy). 3) A focus on achieving impact through a ToTC approach, which led us to establish an Influencer & Stakeholder Board. Close alliance with the science-policy interfaces and interproject collaboration suit our vision well. For more information, see the project website: <https://www.biotraces.eu/>

Expected duration of project execution: 48 months, starting December 1, 2022

**B. Scientific Field:** Social Sciences

## C. Candidates' Profiles:

The candidate must have a Master's degree in social sciences, environmental science, sustainability studies, communications or a related field. The selected researcher is expected to demonstrate strong research skills with experience in qualitative methods, particularly in participatory research methodologies, knowledge of biodiversity issues, sustainable development, and transformative change theories, and experience in stakeholder engagement in tandem with intersectionality theories and their applicability in community-based social movements. It is desirable to have proficiency in project management and coordination, also in communication skills. Fluency in English and Portuguese, spoken and written, is a fundamental condition. Open-minded and able to work with diverse perspectives and knowledge systems, highly organized, with attention to detail, and ability to manage multiple tasks will be considered a must.

## D. Work plan, tasks:

The selected researcher is expected to contribute to implementing the project's scientific tasks and support any activities associated with the project's general goals. The selected candidate must have a profile that guarantees monitoring the scientific execution of the project, responding directly to the PI.

More specifically, s/he will work directly with the Principal Investigator, supporting the team in the following tasks:

- a) Carry out research, including conducting interviews, developing transcripts, document analysis, comparison and synthesis of findings, applying intersectional approach and principles of pluralizing, empowering, politicizing, and embedding in research practices;
- b) Engage in action research and co-learning activities. Analyze indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and structural barriers to sustainable behaviors. Support the development of reports, academic papers, and policy briefs. Contribute to the synthesis of findings into a comprehensive Theory of Transformative Change;
- b) Facilitate communication and collaboration with various stakeholders, including marginalized groups, policymakers, and other actors. Organize and participate in stakeholder meetings, workshops, and co-production sessions;
- c) Assist in coordinating activities across different case studies and work packages. Ensure timely delivery of project milestones and outputs;
- d) Contribute to the dissemination of project results through various channels, including the project website, social media, and conferences;
- e) Contribute to drafting the project reports to be submitted to the EC;
- f) Contribute to the project's daily management tasks.

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## E. Applicable Legislation and Regulations:

Labour Code Law No. 7/2009, of February 12th (and subsequent amendments).

## F. Workplace:

Research will be performed at the Centre for Social Studies facilities in Coimbra, Portugal. Researchers will occasionally need to travel to other locations to perform research tasks. Successful candidates are expected to move to Coimbra for the duration of the contract.

## G. Duration of the Contract:

A full-time temporary contract (termo certo) will be signed starting preferably on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. The total duration of the contract is 12 months, in exclusive dedication.

## H. Application Deadline:

Call opens on: November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Call closes on: November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

## I. Application process:

Applications must include:

- Presentation/Motivation letter in English (max. 2 pages);
- Curriculum Vitae of max. 5 pages, highlighting the items most relevant to the topic of the call;
- Sample of published writing in English;
- Copy of qualification certificates and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes. If, for the application, the applicant does not have proof of recognition of their academic degree by the Portuguese Higher Education System (Decree-Law 66/2018), they must submit a declaration of honour committing themselves to deliver the recognition of the degree within 30 days after the communication of the application results (cf. point L.).

Applications must be sent by email to [concursos@ces.uc.pt](mailto:concursos@ces.uc.pt) until the final deadline.

Applications must be addressed to the President of the Jury, with the email Subject: Application to CES call CES/09/2024-BioTraces.

## J. Preferred selection criteria and their weighing:

1. Demonstrated academic interest and experience in carrying out research on intersectionality, sustainability, sustainable education, transformative change and biodiversity issues (15%);
2. Experience in conducting research using qualitative methodologies, such as interviews, and experience in analyzing and synthesizing policy documents and reports (20%);
3. Experience in mediation and collaborative research practices with stakeholders (15%)
4. Excellent language skills in both oral and written English, including ability to independently write in this language, and experience publishing and presenting research findings for academic and other audiences (25%);
5. Experience in research management; previous experience in academic and intervention projects related with intersectionality, transformative change, sustainability and biodiversity loss c (20%);
6. Autonomy, critical thinking and availability for national and international travel (5%).

## K. Monthly Allowance:

The gross monthly salary will be 1778,34 euros, with the right to holiday and Christmas allowance and food allowance, in accordance with the Labour Code.

## L. Mandatory requirements:

1. Hold a master's degree in Social Sciences or related fields (see associated conditions in a) (defence process finalised);

a) Applicants with an academic degree and diploma issued by a foreign Higher Education Institution must present proof of recognition of the academic degree by the Portuguese Higher Education System, (law DL66/2018). Any candidate without the recognition of the degree(s) will be admitted to the competition, but during the evaluation process the selection panel, cannot:

- 1) recognize the candidate's grades and assess according to the possession of such grades;
- 2) give equivalence to, or validate, the grade of her/his degree;
- 3) use that note or its conversion as an evaluation parameter.

The selection of a candidate in such a situation can only proceed to the contract signature after the candidate provides the recognition of the academic degree made by the Portuguese authorities. The selected candidate will have to deliver the recognition of the degree within 30 days after the communication of the results. After 30 days, the jury may decide to 1. either extend the deadline for the candidate to prove the recognition; 2. assign the contract to the applicant classified in the next position; 3. or not award the position.

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## Selection process

### M. Selection process:

The selection of the candidate will be made based on the curricular evaluation and, in case of a tie among the best candidates, interviews will be carried out in person or remotely. When applying the two methods of selection, curricular evaluation and interview, each will have a valuation of 50% in the final classification. In the interview, in order to clarify aspects related to the curriculum and previous experience, the candidate's ability to integrate the project, analysis and critical thinking, motivation and interest, and communication and verbal expression in English will be evaluated.

The jury reserves the right to not select any applicants for the positions, if applications do not meet the necessary standards and/or profiles in terms of absolute merit.

### N. Selection Panel:

- Luciane Lucas dos Santos (president)
- Gabriela Rocha (permanent member)
- Sheila Holz (permanent member)
- Eber Quiñonez (permanent member)
- Rita Campos (substitute member)

### O. Communication of Results:

All candidates will receive the results of the selection process by email. The minutes of the selection process will be made available for public consultation in the facilities of the Centre for Social Studies.

## Additional comments

### P. Other complementary information:

#### *Equality of opportunities:*

CES abides by the national law that regulates the prevention, prohibition and fighting against discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic identity, colour, nationality, family background, and territory of origin (Law nº 93/2017, 23 August).

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## *Data protection:*

By submitting your application, you are agreeing with the use of your personal data by CES administrative services for the sole purpose of the current call, namely to be contacted directly by CES services and allow the communication of results as in point n. of this call. CES abides by the principles of GDPR.

## **Contact:**

Centro de Estudos Sociais  
Colégio S. Jerónimo, Apartado 3087  
3000-995 Coimbra, Portugal  
[concursos@ces.uc.pt](mailto:concursos@ces.uc.pt)

## **Website for additional job details**

<https://www.ces.uc.pt/pt/agenda-noticias/emprego-bolsas-estagios>