



THE CASSIRER CENTER

The Cassirer Center for International Scholarship and Cooperation

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Dear Members of the FCT Evaluation Panel,

In my capacity as a member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Global Studies at Universidade Aberta in Lisbon, I have had the privilege of closely observing the Center's sustained and strategic efforts toward internationalization, particularly in anticipation of the current FCT evaluation cycle. Drawing upon my own academic experience across international institutions—including appointments and collaborations in Poland, the United States, and beyond—I can affirm with confidence the Center's exceptional competence in research development, project management, and international academic engagement. The growing recognition it enjoys on the global stage is a direct result of the scholarly rigor and relevance that characterize its research output.

Notably, I have been directly involved in the FCT-funded project *Mapping Philosophy as a Way of Life* (2023–2025), an internationally recognized and methodologically innovative initiative hosted by IFILNOVA–FCSH at Universidade Nova de Lisboa (<https://pwl.fcsh.unl.pt/partners>). The Center for Global Studies has been an active institutional partner in this project, particularly through its research line *Utopias and Alternative Futures*, which has significantly contributed to the project's conceptual and interdisciplinary development (<https://ceg.uab.pt/research/projects/participant-institution>).

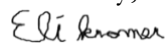
I have also been actively involved in the major ongoing research initiative *Global History of Utopias* (<https://ceg.uab.pt/historia-global-das-utopias>), a flagship project in the field of Utopian Studies. Within this framework, the Center for Global Studies has unequivocally established itself as a leading international reference point, assuming a pivotal role in advancing critical, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural inquiry into utopian imaginaries and their historical evolution.

In light of these achievements and collaborations—accomplished over the past two years through the Center's own ability to secure both public and private funding, in the absence of any direct FCT support—I find the Panel's remarks concerning an alleged lack of international visibility truly disconcerting. Quite the opposite: one could argue that FCT funding would serve to reinforce and sustain initiatives already well under way, and appropriately acknowledge the substantial work already accomplished by the Center for Global Studies. Without such support—however modest, as clearly outlined in the submitted proposal, and always conceived in complementarity with other national and international funding sources—

the Center risks having to interrupt a highly productive cycle of research and training, along with many of the international collaborations that have been established over the past year. Interdisciplinarity today represents one of the most innovative vectors of academic research—particularly when, as in this case, it is grounded in a robust epistemological and methodological framework capable of illuminating, in coherent yet original ways, fields as diverse as the natural sciences and the humanities, by bringing researchers together in pursuit of shared intellectual goals.

I therefore remain confident in your willingness not to interrupt a research trajectory so promising and widely recognized—both within Portugal and internationally—and from which so much has already emerged in the relatively short time of preparation for this evaluation. It is to be hoped, dear colleagues, that in a time of institutional crisis, a center that brings together researchers around a living and concrete utopia of scholarship—and that, as you yourselves have acknowledged, already demonstrates academic excellence—will not be left to face an uncertain future alone, but instead recognized as a cornerstone of Portugal's contribution to the global academic community.

Sincerely,



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