

Professor Saúl Neves de Jesus
Coordenador do Centro Universitário de Investigação em Psicologia (CUIP)
University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal

8 April 2024

Dear Professor Saúl Neves de Jesus,

Report on Centro Universitário de Investigação em Psicologia (CUIP; University Research Center in Psychology)

I am writing to comment on the proposal for the University Research Center in Psychology (CUIP) you presented on 4 April 2024 to the committee of external consultants, including myself.

I am very happy to say that find CUIP to be a very good initiative given the maturity of psychology as a scientific discipline in Portugal. The amalgamation of multiple research centers of unique specializations in psychology into one centralized entity is a very progressive move towards advancing the field in many aspects, including research, applied practice, capacity building, community development and industrial impact.

The combined strengths and existing mode of development of the respective component centers provide a promising outlook for CUIP as they consist of various activities that promote internationalization of impact due to increased focus on quality outputs that contribute to scientific literature, academic capacity building, community development and national policies.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no existing model of such a conglomerate of psychology research centers in the world. I am very impressed by this very progressive idea and the advancements of the component centers given their activities from the past years to date. I can see that the seriousness of this initiative from how collaborative work has been done between all entities in a united way, while being coordinated by top national scholars in the field.

The combination of the research centers puts CUIP in a good position to inform and coordinate capacity-building among academics and postgraduate scholars through the alignment of research areas as laid out in the 2025-2029 plans. This would place researchers in a very enriching environment of resources and valuable expertise. Students would be exposed to a diverse range of instructors who are constantly updated with new knowledge from integrated research. Academics would get better opportunities to develop their scholarship of teaching and learning that is informed by research, while also growing in their track record for future career advancement.

I find the idea of CUIP as an initiative that is much more focused on long term return on values (ROV) than short term return on investment (ROI). I believe CUIP would make an impact that is beyond monetary importance because it is structured to promote capacity building that is not just for the field of psychology, but also for the betterment of the entire communities, as well as CUIP's global partners.

Based on CUIP's 2018-2023 combined activities of its members, it is clear that they have built a good base towards their trajectory of being focused on scientific excellence, international reach, quality advanced training and impacting scientific and nonscientific communities using knowledge transfer and applied practices for the betterment of life. These activities that were reported demonstrate and impressive collection of impactful initiatives for not just academic exchanges but also science communication for the masses.

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CUIP's 2025-2029 plans for community and industry outreach demonstrates its seriousness in impacting the nation, scientific literature as well as its own sustainability. I find these plans to be an embodiment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 17 – Partnership for the Goals. I say that such plans for partnerships are sustainable because they would strengthen university reputations, and therefore, rankings. The strategic selection of the member universities is a strong point, whereby their closeness to international airports would conveniently facilitate internationalization.

Hopefully, this would lead to more collaborations with industry and community, such as development of entrepreneurship initiatives and start-up companies that can also help contribute to bringing in revenue for CUIP. Such plans in place would help address whatever weaknesses and threats laid out in the proposal's SWOT analysis. Capacity building would address the lack of human resources and revenue generation would address the lack of facilities, equipment and other resources. Science communication to the community would improve the relevance of CUIP and its members, promoting its sustainability. Such is the return on value of CUIP.

Within CUIP, the sharing of best practices and resources can maximize capacity for research and development while also contributing to global societal and industrial impact through internationalization of knowledge transfer and science communication. All these would inform an evolving curriculum of psychological science in Portugal from the wealth of new knowledge obtained from CUIP's initiatives. This is expected given the strong track-record of its leaders within each component centers, e.g., CinTurs, and CIP. Together, internationalization activities would become more prominent where knowledge sharing initiatives such as conferences and symposia would benefit from the collective wealth of individual networks of scholars. External consultants from diverse backgrounds and regions of the world is also an advantage to have.

I believe research grants can be consolidated within CUIP to maximize research gains and output, widening the web of knowledge transfer. Combining the achievements of members make CUIP stand out as a global player in psychological science. Member universities would also benefit from such a platform with regards to institutional reputation, international exposure, capacity building and commercialization of ideas.

Overall, CUIP is a very laudable and inspirational initiative. It is something I feel is very rarely seen in any country, if at all. Such an effort to unite psychological research deserves to be supported as a national entity. I wish CUIP the very best in its efforts to be acknowledged and supported by the FCT. I also thank you for the opportunity to review your proposal. It has inspired me to work towards a similar initiative in my country.

Kind regards,



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