

SONAE IM AND FEUP JOIN FORCES TO CREATE RESEARCH LAB THAT MOVES SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION CLOSER TO COMPANIES

Sonae IM LAB@FEUP is the materialization of a strategic investment to create knowledge in the field of IT engineering, promoting innovation and competitiveness in companies while also contributing to foster highly qualified scientific employment.

Porto, 14 January 2019 – Sonae IM and the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto (FEUP) have established a partnership to create a R&D laboratory named Sonae IM LAB@FEUP. The goal is to create conditions to carry out R&D projects in the field of IT engineering, which reflect academic strategic areas while also fulfilling the needs of the corporate world.

For that purpose, Sonae IM LAB@FEUP plans to promote PhD and Master's degrees projects, with a corresponding duration of 4 years and 6 months approximately, based on real challenges put forward by Sonae IM companies. Selected students will be able to develop their projects with guaranteed scholarships, seizing the opportunity to collaborate directly with the company and make use of its training, technical and human resources, access to funding to present results nationally and internationally, among other benefits.

This initiative, launched at the beginning of the current academic semester, is designed to be a platform that will build a community of shared knowledge in the area of IT engineering between FEUP, Sonae IM and associated companies. The purpose is to drive actual innovation within the market, especially in the areas of R&D in Artificial Intelligence & Predictive Systems, Transactional Technologies and Consumer Experience & Solutions, with the onus of being applied to telecom, retail and cybersecurity.

According to Eduardo Piedade, CEO of Sonae IM, "setting up this lab and its contribution to research in Innovation in collaboration with the academy will strengthen Sonae IM strategy of investing in innovative businesses and technologies at a global scale. This partnership, which we predict to be extremely fruitful, fills us with great pride, not only because it will provide opportunities to co-create highly valuable knowledge in the corporate world, but also because of its contribution for the qualification of future expert professionals in the sector."

In the words of Professor João Paiva Cardoso, director of the Informatics Engineering Department at FEUP, "this initiative is extremely important as it will allow to further strengthen the synergies between the industry and the academy, accelerating scientific research projects, funded directly by the industry, and for the industry, in challenges of great scientific, technological and corporate impact."

In accordance with the working process of the research and development laboratory, associated companies of Sonae IM will present challenges related with the R&D areas of the doctoral and master's programmes of the Department of Informatics Engineering (DEI) of FEUP, in articulation with the academic calendar of each school year.

Following the validation by the faculty staff, the challenges will be jointly developed so as to integrate the calls for PhD and Master proposals, namely of the Integrated Master degree in Informatics and Computing Engineering and of the Doctoral Degree in Informatics Engineering. The proposals selected by students will be then evaluated by an appointed jury, and from there students will begin their projects in collaboration with the corresponding company, thus enjoying the benefits established.

About Sonae Investment Management

Sonae IM is the company of Sonae Group dedicated to the investment in tech companies in the areas of cybersecurity, telecom and retail. As of now the company is directly invested in over 17 companies of high technological potential, both in early and growth stages. Additionally, the company has recently invested as limited partner in 3 funds managed by Armilar Venture Partners, which owns participation units in 22 companies, including Outsystems and Feedzai. For further information, please visit: <http://sonaeim.com>

About the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto

With origins dating back to the eighteenth century, the University of Porto (UPORTO) is currently one of the most prestigious Higher Education Institutions in Europe. Close to 32,000 students, 2,400 teachers and researchers along with 1,600 administrative staff attend its 15 schools and 60 scientific research units, spread across 3 university campuses located in the city of Porto.

The Faculty of Engineering (FEUP) is the largest of the 14 Faculties that make up the University of Porto, with nearly 8,000 students, 63 courses and around 600 teachers and researchers in 9 Engineering Departments: Chemical, Civil, Electronical and Computer, Industrial and Management, Informatics, Mechanical, Physics, Metallurgical and Materials and Mining Engineering.

FEUP is located in a true Innovation District, where the strong presence of engineering technologies, health sciences and entrepreneurship lend considerable impetus to the process of innovation. This is where you can also find UPTEC, the University of Porto's Science and Technology Park, a key structure supporting the transfer of knowledge between the university and the market. More information at: www.fe.up.pt

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