



May 24, 2023

Dear Dr. Pedro Ferraz de Abreu,

This letter provides details regarding our invitation to host you at MIT as a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning for the Fall 2023 semester. I have attached below a letter from my Department Head, Prof. P. Christopher Zegras, confirming the invitation.

Your on-campus presence during the Fall will greatly facilitate our ability to collaborate on the seminar series and academic symposium that my Department is hosting for the 20th anniversary of our 2003 e-Planning symposium. The Fall semester begins in September but you should arrive on or soon after August 25, 2023, so that we have a week on campus to finalize plans for the seminar class and academic symposium before the semester starts. We will provide office space, MIT internet access, and the like. My Department will also provide student assistance with seminar and symposium logistics and with summaries of key presentations and discussion that can help us with subsequent curriculum development.

Fall, 2023, will be the 20th anniversary of the first ‘e-Planning’ Symposium that you and I organized, the "International Conference on Information Technologies and Public Participation" (ICPPIT03). That symposium was linked to the semester-long seminar series that you moderated with guest presentations and panel discussion by MIT faculty and external experts. I have discussed your proposal with my MIT colleagues Prof. Lawrence Vale and Prof. Bish Sanyal, who participated in the symposium 20 years ago. Both are enthusiastic about your visit and will participate in the Fall 2023 events. We will have a unique opportunity to reflect on changes over the twenty years in perspectives on ‘e-Planning’ and ‘urban science,’ and to anticipate, and debate, where the future is headed and our curricula need to adapt.

As a faculty member in Portugal, you have been quite active over the past two decades in organizing a cross-university e-Planning program that engages social science as well as technology and data science in efforts (primarily in Portugal and Brazil) to improve community life and governance through technology. Your own teaching and research experience nicely complements my own. You bring more of a political science and community engagement dimension to ‘technology and the city’ issues. You also have experience in Portugal and Brazil in addressing the methodological and institutional hurdles of building a joint PhD program with several universities that have different scientific cultures and administrative procedures. During the past two decades, I have continued to head our Urban Information Systems group, which had been called, Planning Support Systems, when you were at MIT. More recently, I have been involved in the development of MIT’s new undergraduate major, “Urban Science and Planning with Computer Science.”

Collaborating with us at MIT for the Fall 2023 events would be a unique opportunity to build on our complementary academic development paths, allow a younger generation of faculty and advanced students in both of our countries to make the most of this 20 year joint legacy,

and foster a broader discussion of e-Planning going forward. I am now aged 76 and have begun reducing my time commitment at MIT, and you have begun a similar transition. We cannot count on many future opportunities to join forces on such matters in a manner that can have as strong a long-term academic impact."

I am pleased to confirm that our Department has committed funding for the MIT-side of expenses, up to \$15000, that include logistics for the fall term course (September through December 2023), guest speaker lunch seminar, international conference event, advertising, and book publication resulting from the Seminar teaching. Unfortunately, Department rules for these allocated funds do not allow us to cover your expenses, other than providing you with what is required for you to obtain a Visiting Scholar VISA, and special health insurance rates.

To help you, here is an estimate of basic expenses here, for the 3-month course duration: rent for a simple, plain single room (averaging \$2000/month), \$ 6000; health insurance, for which you will be eligible at the MIT community special rates (averaging \$400/month), \$1200; and a minimal food budget (averaging \$300/week), \$3600 for a total of \$10,800. You will, of course, need to add travel costs for a round trip flight and other transportation.

Given past collaboration with the Luso-American Foundation (FLAD), with clear interest in e-Planning, and expressed at several events, like the "Jornadas e-Planning" event that FLAD hosted with kind opening words by Mr. Buchanan, we fully support your application to FLAD for full or partial funding of your core expenses, or as a stipend.

We will assist you in every step in your funding quest, and provide any additional letters you may need for such purpose. My colleagues Bish Sanyal and Larry Vale, who are, as you know, former DUSP Department Heads, co-signed with me the request for obtaining the MIT-side funding. We all have, including our current Department Head, Chris Zegras, very high expectations on what we will be able to accomplish this Fall with your visit and teaching, given your past performance and your proven achievements. In particular, we will be happy to interact again with Universities in Portugal, and their students, thus multiplying the benefits of your teaching this course at MIT also in Portugal.

Please let me know if you need any further information about the arrangements at MIT, and I hope that you will be able to secure sufficient travel funds to be able to join us in person for the Fall events.

Sincerely,



Prof. Joseph Ferreira, Jr.

Enclosure:

Visiting Scholar invitation from Dept. Head (Prof. Zegras)

P. Christopher Zegras

Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning
Department Head

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24 May 2023

Dear Dr. Pedro Ferraz de Abreu,

This letter confirms our invitation to you to join the MIT community as a Visiting Scholar for the Fall 2023 semester. This will provide a good opportunity to carry out your proposal, "Digital Transition and Urban Planning: e-Planning twenty years later." Prof. Joseph Ferreira will serve as your MIT Faculty host and your visit will enable collaboration with Prof. Ferreira on a seminar series examining the impact of information technologies on community life and governance. This will be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the MIT e-Planning symposium that both of you organized twenty years ago and the events will provide a welcome opportunity to engage a cross-section of our on-campus community in further discussion and debate about next steps in the digital transformation of urban planning and local governance.

Sincerely,



P. Christopher Zegras, Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning
Head, Dept of Urban Studies and Planning