

Regulations for the Técnico Nightjar Annotatiathon powered by DAEDALUS

1. Name of the event

The event shall be known as the Técnico Nightjar Annotatiathon powered by DAEDALUS, hereafter referred to as the "Annotatiathon" or the "event".

2. Date and venue

The event will take place during the night of 13 to 14 November 2026, beginning on 13 November and ending on the morning of 14 November, at TIC, Técnico, Arco do Cego, Lisbon.

The detailed timetable, including registration, briefing, the annotation period, quality assessment and the closing session, will be communicated by the Organiser before the event.

Preliminary timetable:

- 17:00 - check-in
- 17:30 - briefing, computer setup and an explanatory preliminary annotation round
- 19:00 - beginning of the annotation period
- Hourly quality-control checkpoints throughout the annotation period
- 07:00 on 14 November - end of the annotation period
- 07:15 - closing session, delivery of participation declarations and recognition of the three highest-scoring teams

3. Purpose of the event

The event invites participants to contribute voluntarily and directly to scientific research by helping to create high-quality annotations of bird images.

The task is simple to understand, yet scientifically important. Participants will manually identify key anatomical points on birds, such as the eyes, beak and crown, and draw bounding boxes around birds in photographs. These annotations will become part of a carefully validated ground-truth dataset.

Ground-truth annotations are the foundation of modern artificial intelligence. Before a computer can learn to recognise an eye, a beak, a head movement or a bird posture, humans must first show it what and where those features are. The quality of human annotation determines the quality of the science that follows.

The event is connected to research on bird head movement but also lays foundations for understanding movement in all animals, including humans. It will

provide insights into anatomy, behaviour and the evolution of the inner ear. Birds move their heads with extraordinary precision. Understanding these movements can help researchers explore how living animals perceive the world, how their vestibular systems work and how head motion relates to balance, vision and behaviour.

This knowledge is relevant not only to biology and palaeontology, but also to fields such as robotics, gaming, animation, artificial intelligence, biomechanics and sensory-systems research. A better understanding of how birds move and stabilise their heads may inspire new approaches to visual tracking, movement control, bio-inspired robots and realistic digital animals.

The Annotatiathon is therefore a scientific public-participation event based on voluntary collaboration. It demonstrates how careful observation, even without previous programming experience, can contribute to advanced research.

4. Organiser

The event is organised by Instituto Superior Técnico through the DAEDALUS research project. Instituto Superior Técnico, acting through that project, is hereafter referred to as the "Organiser".

The Organiser is responsible for preparing the dataset, providing access to the annotation platform, appointing the jury and overall referee, defining the final scoring procedure and ensuring that the event is conducted fairly and in accordance with these regulations.

5. Who can participate

Participation is open to registered participants accepted by the Organiser. Anyone may apply, provided that they have access to a laptop and an internet connection and comply with the registration requirements.

Registration will open upon publication of the registration form and will close at 23:59 on 2 November 2026, Lisbon time, or earlier if all available places are filled. The Organiser may extend the registration period if places remain available.

Participants under 18 years of age may participate only with written authorisation from a holder of parental responsibility, in accordance with section 26.

No prior knowledge of programming is required. Annotations will be performed manually using **Supervisely**, and precise instructions will be provided before the event. Participants must create a Supervisely account in advance at <https://supervisely.com/>. Participants will be briefed before the annotation period begins.

Participants do not need to be specialists in birds, anatomy, artificial intelligence or computer vision. Attention to detail, patience, consistency, and the ability to follow the official annotation protocol are the principal requirements.

6. Team composition

Each team shall consist of exactly two registered participants. No additional, substitute or reserve members are permitted, unless a substitution is expressly authorised by the Organiser before the annotation period begins.

Only the two registered members may annotate or otherwise participate on behalf of the team. Both members may work simultaneously or rotate during the event. Two computers are permitted.

Each team is responsible for the quality, accuracy and consistency of its own annotations.

7. Platform and technical requirements

The event will be conducted using **Supervisely**.

The Organiser will provide the information required to access the annotation project, including login details, instructions and relevant technical guidance.

Participants must not change project settings, export data, delete files, modify another team's work or use unauthorised tools.

8. Annotation task

Each team will annotate bird photographs in Supervisely.

For each image, the required annotations may include:

1. A bounding box around the bird.
2. Four anatomical landmarks on the bird's head:
 1. Centre of the left eye.
 2. Centre of the right eye.
 3. Tip of the beak.
 4. Top of the crown.

Landmarks may already be pre-positioned. Participants must verify them and correct their positions whenever necessary.

The objective is to annotate as many images as possible, but only scientifically valid annotations will count towards the final score.

9. Definition of a valid annotation

An image will be considered valid only if all required annotation elements are present and correctly positioned.

A valid annotation must include:

1. A correctly placed bounding box around the bird.
2. Correct placement of all required landmarks.
3. For an annotation to be valid, no required landmarks may be missing, including in cases of occlusion, except where the official uncertainty rules provide otherwise.
4. No duplicated or obviously misplaced landmarks.
5. Anatomical consistency with the examples and instructions provided by the Organiser.
6. Compliance with the Supervisely project structure and the official annotation rules.

Images that are incomplete, careless, anatomically incorrect or inconsistent may be excluded from the final score.

10. Annotation protocol

Before the annotation period begins, the Organiser will provide a briefing and demonstration.

Participants must follow the official annotation protocol. In particular:

1. Eye landmarks must be placed at the centre of each visible eye.
2. The beak landmark must be placed at the anatomical tip of the beak, as shown in the explanatory images included in the official annotation guide.
3. The crown landmark must be placed at the highest anatomical point of the head, according to the examples provided.
4. The bounding box must include the bird in accordance with the criteria defined by the Organiser.
5. Where a feature is partly hidden, unclear or not visible, participants must follow the uncertainty rules explained during the briefing.

The official annotation guide and briefing materials will include explanatory images showing correct and incorrect annotations, including the correct placement of the beak landmark.

11. Scoring

The final ranking of teams will be determined by the number of validly annotated images.

The basic scoring principle is:

One validly completed image equals one point.

Speed alone is not sufficient. Only annotations accepted following quality control will count.

An image may receive no score if:

1. The bounding box is missing or clearly incorrect.
2. One or more required landmarks are missing.
3. One or more landmarks are anatomically misplaced.
4. The annotation does not follow the official protocol.
5. The annotation appears random, rushed, duplicated or careless.
6. The team violates these regulations.

Each team's final score will be calculated following quality control by the jury and validation by the overall referee.

12. Quality control, errors and warnings

A jury will evaluate the annotations assigned to each team.

The jury may inspect all annotations or a representative sample of annotations from each team. If systematic errors are detected, the jury may expand the inspection and reject individual images or larger sets of annotations.

Quality control is essential because the final dataset must be scientifically useful. An annotation that is fast but inaccurate does not assist the research. The final ranking therefore reflects both productivity and reliability.

The jury may assess:

1. Correct anatomical placement of landmarks.
2. Accuracy of bounding boxes.
3. Consistency across images.
4. Compliance with the official annotation protocol.
5. Frequency and severity of errors.

For the purposes of these regulations, a "confirmed annotation error" is an incorrect or inconsistent annotation, or a breach of the official annotation

protocol, identified by the jury or the overall referee during the event and communicated to the team.

The first and second confirmed annotation errors committed by a team shall each result in a formal warning. Each warning shall be recorded and communicated to both members of the team.

A team that commits a third confirmed annotation error during the event shall be automatically excluded from the event and from the final ranking. Its annotations may be retained and used for scientific purposes in accordance with section 21, but they shall not count towards the final score.

13. Jury

The jury shall be appointed by the Organiser.

The jury is responsible for evaluating the anatomical correctness, consistency and scientific usefulness of the annotations.

The jury may reject annotations that do not meet the required standard, even if they were completed within the event period.

The jury's evaluation shall be final, subject only to review by the overall referee in exceptional cases.

14. Overall referee

An overall referee shall be appointed by the Organiser.

The overall referee is responsible for ensuring that the event is fair, consistent and scientifically robust.

The overall referee may intervene in cases involving:

1. Disputes between teams.
2. Technical problems affecting scoring.
3. Questions about annotation validity.
4. Suspected misconduct.
5. Inconsistent application of these regulations.
6. The recording of confirmed annotation errors and warnings.
7. Final validation of results.

The decision of the overall referee shall be final.

15. Tie-break rules

If two or more teams have the same final score, the following criteria shall be applied in order:

1. Highest annotation quality, as evaluated by the jury.
2. Lowest number of rejected annotations.
3. Greatest consistency of landmark placement.
4. Earliest time at which the team reached its final score by completing its last valid annotation.
5. Final decision by the overall referee.

16. Certification of voluntary collaboration and amounts allocated

Voluntary collaboration in the development of the DAEDALUS research project, promoted by Instituto Superior Técnico through the Técnico Nightjar Annotatiathon, will be certified by a declaration of participation delivered to each participant.

The execution report of the DAEDALUS project will also include a reference to this voluntary participation.

In addition to the declaration of participation, the following amounts will be allocated to the three participating teams that accumulate the highest number of points under these regulations:

1. First-ranked team: €1,000 (EUR) in total, paid in equal shares of €500 (EUR) to each team member.
2. Second-ranked team: €500 (EUR) in total, paid in equal shares of €250 (EUR) to each team member.
3. Third-ranked team: €250 (EUR) in total, paid in equal shares of €125 (EUR) to each team member.

The amounts shall be paid directly and in equal shares to the two registered members of each team.

The Organiser may request identification, tax, banking or other administrative information required to process these amounts in accordance with the applicable rules.

17. Food and drinks

Food and non-alcoholic drinks will be served during the event.

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted at the event.

Participants are expected to consume food and drinks responsibly and to protect computers, equipment and venue facilities.

The Organiser may define specific areas in which food and drinks may be consumed.

18. Technical problems

Participants must immediately inform the Organiser or technical support team if they experience any technical problem, including:

1. Login problems.
2. Supervisely access problems.
3. Internet connection problems.
4. Computer malfunction.
5. Annotation-saving errors.
6. Dataset-access problems.

The Organiser will make reasonable efforts to resolve technical issues. The overall referee may determine whether a technical problem justifies a score adjustment, additional time or another corrective measure.

19. Conduct and integrity

Participants must behave respectfully towards other participants, organisers, jury members, the overall referee and venue staff.

The following conduct is prohibited:

1. Tampering with another team's annotations.
2. Attempting to manipulate the score or final ranking.
3. Sharing login credentials with unauthorised persons.
4. Deliberately producing false or meaningless annotations.
5. Harassing, intimidating or distracting other participants or members of the organising team.
6. Damaging equipment or venue property.
7. Copying, exporting, publishing or sharing event data without permission.

A breach of these rules may result in penalties or exclusion, without prejudice to the automatic exclusion rule in sections 12 and 24.

20. Use of automation

The event is based on manual annotation.

Participants must not use scripts, bots, automated annotation systems, browser extensions or artificial-intelligence tools to generate or modify annotations unless the specific tool has been expressly authorised in advance by the Organiser.

Pre-positioned landmarks provided by the Organiser are permitted and form part of the official event setup.

Any additional software or tool must be explicitly authorised by the Organiser before use.

21. Data ownership and use

All annotations produced during the event shall be owned by Instituto Superior Técnico within the DAEDALUS research project, unless otherwise stated in writing by the Organiser.

By participating, participants agree that their annotations may be used for scientific research, dataset development, artificial-intelligence training, validation, publications, presentations, educational activities, outreach and related project outputs.

Participants shall not copy, distribute, publish, download, transfer or reuse the images or annotations outside the event unless authorised in writing by the Organiser.

22. Confidentiality

Participants may have access to unpublished images, research data or project materials.

Participants agree not to share, publish, download, transfer or disclose event data without permission from the Organiser.

This obligation includes screenshots, raw images, annotation files, dataset links, login credentials and any other restricted material.

23. Health, safety and accessibility

Participants must follow all safety rules applicable at the venue.

The Organiser will make reasonable efforts to provide a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment.

Participants requiring accessibility accommodations should inform the Organiser before the event whenever possible.

24. Exclusion

A team shall be automatically excluded if it commits a third confirmed annotation error after receiving two formal warnings, in accordance with section 12.

A team may also be excluded if it:

1. Seriously or repeatedly violates the official annotation protocol.
2. Uses unauthorised automation.
3. Manipulates or attempts to manipulate results.
4. Produces intentionally false annotations.
5. Interferes with another team's work.
6. Breaches confidentiality.
7. Engages in misconduct.
8. Refuses to follow the instructions of the Organiser, jury or overall referee.

Except in the case of automatic exclusion following a third confirmed annotation error, a decision to exclude a team shall be made by the Organiser after consultation with the overall referee.

Exclusion from the event or final ranking does not affect the ownership or permitted scientific use of annotations under section 21.

25. Changes to the regulations

The Organiser reserves the right to amend these regulations before or during the event where necessary for scientific, technical, logistical, legal or fairness reasons.

Any relevant amendment shall be communicated to participants as clearly and promptly as possible.

26. Personal data and participation declarations

As a condition of participation, each participant must provide, through the registration form, express consent to the collection and processing of the personal data strictly necessary to identify the participant and administer their participation in the event, in accordance with the applicable data-protection rules.

The following declaration shall be included in the registration form and must be expressly accepted by each adult participant:

"I authorise the organisation of the Técnico Nightjar Annotatiathon to collect and process my personal data exclusively for the purposes of my participation in this event."

For a participant under 18 years of age, the registration form shall identify the holder of parental responsibility who authorised participation and shall refer to the attached written authorisation, using the following wording or wording of equivalent effect:

"My participation in this event was authorised by [name of the holder of parental responsibility], as evidenced by the declaration attached to this authorisation."

The following declaration shall also be included in the registration form and must be expressly accepted by each adult participant or, in the case of a minor, by the holder of parental responsibility on the participant's behalf:

"I further declare that I have full knowledge of the regulations governing this event, which I accept in their entirety, in particular section 21 concerning ownership of the data and its use for the development of the DAEDALUS research project promoted by Instituto Superior Técnico, including through this event."

27. Acceptance of the regulations

By registering for and participating in the event, each participant confirms that they have read, understood and accepted these regulations.

Participation is conditional upon submission of the declarations and, where applicable, the parental authorisation referred to in section 26.

Participation implies acceptance of the decisions of the Organiser, jury and overall referee, subject to the provisions of these regulations.

28. Contact

Questions about the event should be addressed to:

Ricardo Araújo and Paulo Correia

ricardo.araujo@tecnico.ulisboa.pt; paulo.lobato.correia@tecnico.ulisboa.pt

Instituto Superior Técnico