

## Call for tender

### Open Call for PhD Research Fellowships Doctoral program BioSYS-2

FCiências.ID - Associação para a Investigação e Desenvolvimento de Ciências, main management institution of BioISI-Biosystems and Integrative Sciences Institute opens a call for 2 (two) PhD fellowships hereinafter designated by PhD Research Fellowships, in the area of Systems Biology and related areas, under the Research Fellowship Regulation (*Regulamento de Bolsas de Investigação da FCT - RBI*) and the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (*Estatuto do Bolseiro de Investigação - EBI*) available [here](#).

The fellowship(s) will be financed by *Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT)* under the Collaboration Protocol for Financing the Multiannual Research Fellowship Plan for Doctoral Students, signed between FCT and the R&D Unit Instituto de Biosistemas e Ciências Integrativas (BioISI), N<sup>o</sup> 4046.

#### 1. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The call is open from January 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 to 11:59pm GMT February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022.

The applications, and all the supporting documents described in this Call for tender must be submitted via [biosysapply@fc.ul.pt](mailto:biosysapply@fc.ul.pt).

Each applicant can only submit one application – failure to fulfil this implies cancelling all applications.

Applicants providing false declarations or committing acts of plagiarism will be excluded from the application without prejudice of taking other corrective and punitive disciplinary measures.

#### 2. TYPE AND DURATION OF THE FELLOWSHIPS

Aiming to support advanced training, PhD Research Fellowships will be granted to applicants that fulfil the requirements to join a study cycle that allows to obtain a PhD degree and that wish to develop research work that allows obtaining that degree.

The research activities leading to the attainment of the PhD degree will take place in at BioISI – FCUL, which will be the host institution of the fellowship holder, without prejudice the work can be carried out in collaboration with more than one institution.

The research activities leading to the attainment of the PhD degree must be integrated in the activities plan and strategy of the BioISI strategic plan on Systems Biology and Integrative Sciences and within the BioSys-2 doctoral program and an appropriate degree at FCUL, in the scope of the projects listed in Appendix I.

The work plan may be developed entirely or partially in a national institution (fellowship in Portugal or both in Portugal and abroad, respectively).

The duration of the fellowships is, as a rule, annual, renewable up to the maximum of four years (48 months) and cannot be granted for a period less than 3 consecutive months. In the case of a fellowship carried out both in Portugal and abroad, the work plan period in a foreign institution cannot exceed 24 months.

#### 3. FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

PhD fellowships are aimed to applicants enrolled or that comply with the requirements to enroll in the Doctoral Programme indicated in point 2 of this call and who wish to carry out research towards the attainment of the Doctor degree at BioISI, or in host institutions associated with it. BioSYS-2 and FCUL PhD students and willing to develop their work at BioISI, FCUL.

## 4. ADMISSIBILITY

### 4.1 Applicants' Admissibility Requirements

The following citizens may apply to this call:

- National citizens or citizens of other member states of the European Union;
- Third-country citizens;
- Stateless individuals;
- Citizens holding a political refugee status.

To apply for the PhD Research Fellowship, it is necessary:

- To have a BSc or MSc in Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Computational Biology, or related areas;
- To be a citizen permanently and usually living in Portugal at the start date of the work plan abroad in case the work plan associated to the fellowship proceeds, entirely or partially, in foreign institutions (in case of both in Portugal and abroad fellowships); this requirement is applicable to both national and foreign citizens;
- Not to have benefited from a PhD or a PhD in industry fellowship directly funded by FCT, regardless of its duration.
- Not to hold a PhD degree.

### 4.2 Application's Admissibility Requirements

It is mandatory, under penalty of non-admissibility to the Call, to enclose the following documents to the application:

- Elements of identity card/citizen card/passport;
- Applicant's *Curriculum vitae* (CV);
- Certificates of academic degrees held by the applicant, compulsorily specifying the final classification and, if possible, the classifications obtained in all subjects taken, or, in alternative, applicant's declaration of honor, confirming that the bachelor's or master's degree was completed by the end of the application deadline;
- Recognition of foreign degrees and official grade conversion to the Portuguese standards;
- Motivation letter (1 A4 page max);
- Two Recommendation letters by people professionally/academically well-acquainted with the candidate;
- To present/prepare and submit the application and all related documents, including motivation and recommendation letters, in Portuguese or in English.

Regarding the above mentioned admissibility requirements, the following should be noted:

- In the case of academic degrees awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and in order to ensure the application of the principle of equal treatment to applicants holding foreign and national academic degrees, it is mandatory to recognize these degrees and convert the respective final classification for the Portuguese rating scale.
- The recognition of foreign academic degrees and diplomas, as well as the conversion of the final

classification to the Portuguese classification scale can be requested at any public higher education institution, or at the Directorate-General for Higher Education (DGES, only in the case of automatic recognition). Regarding this matter, it is suggested to consult the DGES portal at the following address: <http://www.dges.gov.pt>.

- Only applicants who have completed the cycle of studies leading to a Bachelor's or Master's degree by the end of the application period will be admitted. If they do not yet have a certificate of course completion, a declaration of honour from the applicants that they have completed the necessary qualifications for the purposes of the competition will be accepted by the end of the application deadline. The granting of the fellowship is always dependent on the presentation of proof of ownership of the academic qualifications necessary for granting the fellowship.

## 5. WORK PLANS AND SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION OF THE FELLOWSHIPS

The workplan will focus on a research project towards the PhD degree, in the scope of projects and supervisors listed in Appendix I.

The research activities should be aligned with BioISI strategic plan on Systems Biology and Integrative Sciences.

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The applicants will select in the application form the two projects to which they apply and for which they will be evaluated separately.

Evaluation considers the applicant's merit, scientific potential and, for the highest ranked candidates, an interview to assess suitability to the 2 projects selected.

The admitted applications will be evaluated in a range 0 (minimum)-5 (maximum) in each of the following criteria:

- Criterion A – Applicant's merit, counting 70%, and considering:
  - Sub-criterion A1 – Academic merit, counting 60%
  - Sub-criterion A2 – Personal CV/research experience, counting 35%
  - Sub-criterion A3 – Motivation letter, counting 5%
- Criterion B – Scientific potential and adequacy to the project, counting 30%;

Sub-criterion A1 will be evaluated according to the following table:

<u>Graduate + Master degrees</u> (pre- or post-Bologna) or <u>Integrated Master degree</u> (300-360 ECTS)		<u>Graduate degree (180 ECTS)</u> (pre- or post-Bologna)		<u>Master degree (90-120 ECTS)</u> (pre- or post-Bologna)	
Final Grade	A1 Score	Final Grade	A1 Score	Final Grade	A1 Score
≥ 18	5.0	≥ 17	3.5	≥ 17	3.0
17	4.5	16	3.0	16	2.5
16	4.0	15	2.5	15	2.0
15	3.5	14	2.0	14	1.5
14	3.0	<14	1.5	< 14	1.0
<14	2.5				

The first ranking of the candidates will be made according to the above criteria and using the formula

$$\text{Final Grade (1)} = 0,7 \times (0,6 \times A1 + 0,35 \times A2 + 0,05 \times A3) + 0,3 \times B$$

Ties will be solved using the following criteria: criterion B, criterion A.

The 3 best applicants or the best 25% (whichever smaller) to each project will be invited to an interview to assess their scientific quality and adequacy to the project(s). In the second part of the interview, the project supervisors will be present to allow the evaluation panel to better assess the adequacy of the candidate (the supervisor will not be present at any evaluation panel meeting and will not take part in the selection of the best applicant). The interview will also be graded in the range 0-5.

Final classification will be obtained using the following criteria:

Criterion C – Previous grade (65%)

Criterion D – Interview (35%)

Final ranking of the applicants for each project will be obtained using the formula:

$$\text{Final Grade (2)} = 0,65 \times C + 0,35 \times D$$

Ties will be solved using the following criteria: criterion D, criterion C.

#### **Important notice for applicants with degrees from international institutions**

- The same criteria will be used as with applicants with national degrees – requiring thus official recognition and grade conversion granted by a national institution.
- Lack of conversion will correspond to the minimum classification (0) in sub-criterion A1.
- Signing of a contract will only be possible if official recognition and grade conversion documents are provided.

Applicants with a grade lower than 2.5 in criterion A are not eligible to a fellowship.

#### **6.2 Bonus**

Not applicable.

#### **7. EVALUATION**

The applicants' evaluation panel is composed by the following elements:

- Margarida Amaral, Full Professor, BioISI, FC – ULisboa (panel coordinator)
- Andreia Figueiredo, Assistant Professor, FC – ULisboa (member)
- Filipa Mendes, Assistant Researcher, c2TN, IST – ULisboa (member)
- Rui Malhó, Full Professor, BioISI, FC – ULisboa (substitute member)
- Maria José Calhorda, Full Professor, BioISI, FC – ULisboa (substitute member)

The evaluation panel will assess the applications according to the evaluation criteria indicated in this Call, considering the elements of assessment.

All panel members, including the Head coordinator, are committed to respect a set of responsibilities essential to the evaluation process, such as the duties of impartiality, the declaration of any potential

conflict of interest situations and confidentiality. At all times during the evaluation process, confidentiality is fully protected and ensured in order to guarantee the independence of all opinions produced.

For each application, a final evaluation form will be produced by the panel where the arguments that led to the classifications attributed to each of the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria are presented in a clear, coherent and consistent way.

Meeting minutes will be produced from the evaluation panel meetings, under the responsibility of all its members.

The minutes and their attachments must include the following information:

- Name and affiliation of all evaluation panel members;
- Identification of all excluded applications and reasoning respective reasons;
- Methodology adopted by the panel for cases considered to be particular;
- Final Evaluation Sheets for each applicant;
- Provisional ranking list and seriation of applicants, in descending order of the final ranking, of all applications evaluated by the panel;
- Conflict of interest statements by all panel members;
- Possible delegations of vote and competences due to excused absence;

## **8. RESULTS DISCLOSURE**

The evaluation results are communicated via email to the email address(es) provided by the applicants in the application form.

## **9. TERMS AND PROCEDURES FOR PRIOR HEARING, CLAIM AND APPEAL**

Once the provisional ranked list of the evaluation results has been communicated, applicants who have an unfavorable provisional decision may use their right to dispute it during the preliminary hearing phase, which takes place within 10 working days, according to Articles no. 121 and the following of the Administrative Procedure Code (CPA).

The final decision will be disclosed after the analysis of the applicants' arguments presented during the preliminary hearing. Final decision can be claimed within 15 working days or, alternatively, appealed within 30 working days, after the communication of the final results, respectively. Applicants who choose to submit a complaint must address their statement to the member of the Board of Directors of the FCT with delegated competence. Applicants who choose to present an appeal must address it to the FCT Board of Directors.

## **10. FELLOWSHIP GRANTING REQUIREMENTS**

Research fellowship contracts are signed directly with the FCT.

The following documents are of mandatory submission, upon conditional granting of the studentship for purposes of contracting thereof:

- a) Copy of the civil, fiscal and, when applicable, social security identification document(s)<sup>1</sup>;
- b) Copy of the academic degree certificates;
- c) Presentation of the registration of recognition of foreign academic degrees and conversion of the respective final classifications to the Portuguese classification scale, if applicable;
- d) Work Plan
- e) Document proving the acceptance and registration in one of the Doctoral Programs identified in this call;
- f) Supervisor(s) statement declaring to coordinate the work plan, as established in Article no. 5-A of the Statute for Research Fellowships (template will be made available by FCT);
- g) Institutional document supporting the applicant, issued by the institution(s) where the work plan will be carried out, guaranteeing the necessary conditions to its successful development, as well as the fulfilment of the duties established in Article no. 13 of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (template will be made available by FCT);
- h) Updated document proving the exclusivity dedication regime (template will be made available by FCT).

The granting of the fellowship is still dependent on:

- The fulfilment of all the requirements listed in this Opening Call;
- the results of scientific evaluation;
- the absence of unjustified non-compliance with the fellowship holder during previous s directly or indirectly FCT funded fellowships;
- FCT available budget

The lack of any of the necessary documents to complete the contracting procedure implies the expiration of the fellowship granting and conclusion of the process; applicants have up to 6 months after the disclosure of the provisional granting to present all of the listed documents.

## 11. FUNDING

Fellowship's payment will start after returning the signed contract to FCT, which should happen within the 15 working days after its delivery.

The fellowships awarded under this call will be financed by FCT using the State Budget fund and, whenever eligible, using the European Social Fund (ESF), under the PORTUGAL2020 Programme, in particular, under *Programa Operacional Regional do Norte (NORTE 2020)*, *Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (Centro 2020)* and *Programa Operacional Regional do Alentejo (Alentejo 2020)*, or any other funding schemes that might be approved, according to the respective requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> The availability of these documents can be replaced, at the applicant's option, by presentation in person at the funding entity, which will keep the elements contained therein that are relevant to the validity and execution of the contract, including the civil, fiscal and security identification numbers and the validity of the respective documents.

## 12. FELLOWSHIP COMPONENTS

A monthly maintenance allowance is granted to fellowship holders, in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI.

The fellowship may also include additional allowances, according to RBI's Article no. 18 and the values indicated in its Annex II.

All fellowship holders have a personal accident insurance related to the research activities, supported by the FCT.

All fellowship holders who are not beneficiaries of any social protection regime can use the right to social security through the voluntary social insurance regime, under the terms of the Contributory Scheme of the Social Security System. FCT will ensure the charges resulting from contributions under the terms and within the limits provided in Article 10 of the EBI.

## 13. PAYMENT OF THE FELLOWSHIP COMPONENTS

Payments due to the fellowship holder are made by bank transfer to the respective indicated account. The monthly maintenance allowance is paid on the first working day of each month.

Registration, enrolment or tuition fees components are payed directly by FCT to the national institution where the fellowship holder is enrolled in the PhD programme.

## 14. TERMS AND CONDITIONS of PhD FELLOWSHIP RENEWAL

The renewal of the fellowship always depends on the fellowship holder submission, within 60 working days prior to the renewal start date, of the following documents:

- a) declaration issued by the supervisor(s) and by the host institutions(s) attesting the work plan development and the evaluation of the respective activities;
- b) updated document proving compliance with the exclusive dedication regime;
- c) Declaration demonstrating the enrolment renewal in the study cycle leading to the PhD degree.

## 15. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY OF THE GRANTED FUNDING

All the R&D activities carried out by the fellowship holder, directly or indirectly financed by the fellowship, namely communications, publications and scientific creations, as well as thesis, must include the reference to FCT and European Social Fund (ESF) financing. In particular, these references should mention the following operational programs: *Programa Operacional Regional do Norte (NORTE 2020)*, *Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (Centro 2020)* and *Programa Operacional Regional do Alentejo (Alentejo 2020)*, or additional funding schemes that might be approved. Insignia of FCT, MCTES, ESF and EU must therefore be included in the documents referring to these actions, according to the graphic rules of each operational program.

The disclosure of research results funded according to the RBI provisions must comply with the open access guidelines, publications and other research results in accordance with FCT rules. For all the fellowships, in

particular in case of European funded actions, namely the ESF, may be performed monitoring and controlling actions by national or European entities according to the applicable legislation.

Fellowship holders must therefore collaborate and provide all the required information, including answering to surveys and evaluation studies in this area, even though the fellowship might have already ceased.

#### **16. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY**

FCT promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, thus no applicant may be privileged, benefited, damaged or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty. This includes ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, origin or social condition, genetic heritage, reduced work capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnicity or race, land of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs or trade union affiliation.

#### **17. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS**

The present Call is governed by this Opening Notice, the FCT Regulation of Research Fellowships, approved by the Regulation no. 950/2019, published in the Series II of the DR, of 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2019, by the Research Fellowship Holder Statute, approved by Law no. 40/2004, of 18<sup>th</sup> of August, in its current version, and by other applicable national and European legislation.

FCT also recommends the careful reading of all the documentation supporting the application, namely, the Application Guide and the Evaluation Guide, available at FCT website at:

<https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/concursos/individuais2021.phtml.en>

## Anexo I

### Projetos BioSys2 2021

1 - **Link cAMP4CFTR\*** - Title: Linking cyclic AMP to the cytoskeleton to regulate CFTR trafficking, Supervisor: Carlos M Farinha (BioISI, FCUL) | Co-supervisor: Manuela Zacco (University of Oxford, UK)

2 - **DNA MPB\*** - Title: DNA methylation role in the periderm barrier formation, Supervisor: Célia Miguel (BioISI, FCUL) | Co-supervisor: Stéphane Maury (Université d'Orléans) & Vera Inácio (BioISI, FCUL)

- Mixed Fellowship, please see more information about the projects at <http://bioisi.pt/biosys-2-systems-biology-phd-programme/>