

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Research Fellowship for Master degree holder – Radio4Breast; 1 vacancy

Reference: RADIO4BREAST – 16134– BI-02/2026-CMEMS (1)

A call for applications is now open for the attribution of 1 (one) Research Fellowship for Master degree holder, within the scope of the R&D project **“Radio4Breast - Mapping the potential of human breast-on-a-chip models for personalized radiation therapy**, reference **16134 - COMPETE2030-FEDER-00728700**, funded by the **Foundation for Science and Technology | FCT, through the Innovation and Digital Transition Program | Compete 2030, Competition for R&D Projects in All Scientific Domains**, under the following conditions:

Scientific Area: Biomedical Engineering, Biological Engineering, Physical Engineering, Materials Engineering, Chemical Engineering, or related fields.

Recipient category: Students enrolled in a PhD programme or Masters students enrolled in a non-degree course integrated into the educational project of a higher education institution, developed in association or cooperation with one or more R&D units.

Requirement for granting the fellowship:

- The applicants may apply without prior registration in the course for which the fellowship is open. The requirement to enroll in a degree course or non-academic degree course will be verified on the date of contracting the fellowship;
- Only fellowships whose selected applicants present a valid proof of enrollment in a degree course or non-academic degree course will be contracted, according to the type of the fellowship, issued by a Higher Education Institution, indicating, respectively, the academic year or its duration (star and term).

Applicants' eligibility: Candidates who meet the conditions set out in Article 9 of the Research Grant Regulations, No. 950/2019, of 16-12-2019, of FCT I.P. are eligible.

Nationals or citizens of other European Union member states, third-country nationals, stateless persons, and citizens with political refugee status are eligible to apply for this competition.

Candidate eligibility requirements:

- a)** Master's degree in a relevant scientific field, namely Biomedical Engineering, Biological Engineering, Biotechnology, Physical Engineering, Materials Engineering, Chemical Engineering, or related areas;
- b)** Experience in the processing of innovative materials for the integration of biomimetic microenvironments, namely scaffolds based on hydrogels or biocompatible polymers, functionalized with biomolecules relevant to the target cells, with particular appreciation for solutions with tunable mechanical properties.
- c)** Experience in physicochemical characterization techniques of materials, encompassing morphological, structural, thermal, mechanical and surface properties (e.g., SEM, DSC, contact angle, FTIR and XRD), as well as in the evaluation of their response to ionizing radiation (X-rays).

d) Preferential factor: Experience in the experimental development of cellular biomimetic environments, namely in the breast cancer context, with non-neoplastic and neoplastic cells, in 2D and 3D culture (spheroids and/or 3D scaffolds), as well as demonstrated competence in assessing the efficacy of anticancer treatments and/or X-ray irradiation in these cellular models (or others), including the evaluation of cell viability, proliferation and cell death.

Workplan and objectives to be achieved: The work plan consists of the development of biomimetic breast-on-a-chip platforms for the study of personalized radiotherapy in breast cancer. The fellow will contribute to: (i) familiarization with the 3D microenvironments developed in the project and the respective cell culture techniques with non-neoplastic and neoplastic breast cells; (ii) the design, fabrication and optimization of 3D systems (scaffolds and/or spheroids); and (iii) the evaluation of the developed environments under the effect of irradiation (and anticancer treatments) and characterization of the cellular response to radiotherapy.

Note: The work plan should aim at consolidating the scientific training of the research fellow in the framework of the course conferring a degree or academic diploma.

Applicable legislation and regulations: Research Fellow Statute (EBI), approved by Law n°. 40/2004 of August 18, in its current wording and FCT Research Fellowship Regulation, approved by Regulation n° 950/2019, published in the Diário da República, 2nd series, of December 16, 2019, in its current wording, and Scientific Research Fellowship Regulation (RBIC) of the University of Minho, approved by order n° 4998/2025, published in the Diário da República, 2nd series, n° 81, of April 28, 2025 Amended and republished through amendment statement no. 634/2025/2, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, no. 132, of July 11.

Host/Contracting institution and scientific supervision: The work plan will be developed at the Center for Biological Engineering, located on the Gualtar Campus, Braga, under the guidance of Dr. Débora Carina Gonçalves de Abreu Ferreira, Junior Researcher at the Center for Biological Engineering of the University of Minho, under the guidance of Dr. Anabela Dias from the Radiotherapy Service of IPO-Porto and her team, and under the scientific guidance of Vanessa Fernandes Cardoso, Assistant Researcher at the Center for Electromechanical Microsystems (CMEMS-UMinho) of the University of Minho, and the coordination of Professor Luís Miguel Valente Gonçalves, Director of the Center for Electromechanical Microsystems of the University of Minho (CMEMS-UMinho).

Fellowship duration: The grant will take place for a period of 12 months, with a provisional starting date on the January 2027. The fellowship grant may, eventually, be renewed up to the maximum limit allowed by the project.

Amount of the research grant: The amount of the grant corresponds to 1 359,64 €/month, according to the table of values of the Research scholarship of the University of Minho, updated annually, as decided by the Management Board.

Payment is made on the 23rd of each month, through bank transfer to the Bank Identification Number of the fellow identified in the contractualization process.

Other components of the research grant: Define other components of the scholarships, as provided for in Article 18° of the FCT Research Scholarship Regulations (RBI).

Other benefits: Reimbursement of Voluntary Social Insurance, if the candidate chooses to receive it, corresponding to the 1st level of discounts (for research grants with a total duration 6 months or higher) and personal accident insurance.

Exclusivity regime: The grantee will perform the activities under exclusivity, as foreseen in article 5° of the Research Fellow Statutes and applicable regulations.

Composition of the Selection Committee: The jury is composed of:

- a) Chair of the Jury:** Dr. Vanessa Fernandes Cardoso, Assistant Researcher at the Centre for MicroElectroMechanical Systems (CMEMS-UMinho), University of Minho;
- b) Permanent Member:** Dr. Margarida Maria Macedo Francesko Fernandes, Assistant Researcher at the Centre for MicroElectroMechanical Systems (CMEMS-UMinho), University of Minho;
- c) Permanent Member:** Dr. Débora Carina Gonçalves de Abreu Ferreira, Junior Researcher at the Centre for Biological Engineering, University of Minho;
- d) Substitute Member:** Dr. Filipe Samuel Correia Pereira Silva, Full Professor at the Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Minho;
- e) Substitute Member:** Dr. Sara Cristina Soares Madeira, Entry-level PhD researcher at the Centre for MicroElectroMechanical Systems (CMEMS-UMinho), University of Minho.

The first effective member will substitute the President of the selection panel in case of impediment, being nominate the first substitute member in the place of the first effective member.

Criteria and procedures for applications assessment and selection: The applications assessment will focus on the candidate's Merit, following evaluation criteria, valued on a scale of 0 to 5 values:

Applicant Merit - AM (100%):

- a) Academic path (considering the classifications of academic degrees), with a weighting of 40%;
- b) Personal curriculum (considering professional and scientific background), with a weighting of 40%;
- c) Motivation letter, with a weighting of 20%.

The final classification of the applicant's merit with the achieved through the following formula:

$$MC=(a*0,40)+(b*0,40)+(c*0,20)$$

A positive evaluation is required for the granting of the scholarship.

Note: Applicants with degrees obtained abroad must present proof of recognition of qualifications in Portugal and conversion of the final classification obtained in them to the Portuguese classification scale or declaration under the terms indicated in the previous point. Candidates who do not comply with one of these provisions, the selection panel will assign "0" in the grade of the graduation and/or master course. Candidates will be evaluated on the remaining parameters.

Application deadline and submission: applications will be accepted for a minimum period of 10 working days after the publication of the notice on the European Scientific Mobility Portal Euraxess.

Applications must be submitted by email to vcardoso@cmems.uminho.pt, indicating the reference number of the competition in the subject line. Only applications submitted within the established deadline and accompanied by the following documents will be accepted:

- a) Candidate's updated curriculum vitae;
- b) Certificates of the academic degrees obtained or, if applicable, the candidate's declaration of honor that he/she has completed the degrees required in the notice by the application deadline.

For degrees obtained abroad, the record of recognition of the academic degrees and record of the conversion of the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale must be presented, or, alternatively, a declaration of honor from the candidate.

This declaration must attest to facts that occurred prior to the application. In the event of a discrepancy between the information contained in the declaration and the documentation submitted for the purposes of contracting the scholarship, only the information contained in the latter will be considered. If it is found that the documents proving the academic degree and diploma, or their recognition under the terms of Decree-Law n. ° 66/2018, of August 16, do not correspond to the classifications awarded in the assessment of the academic career and may consequently alter the candidate's ranking, the scholarship will not be contracted;

- c) Letter of motivation.

Form of publication/notification of results: The results of the evaluation are published in a single list (in alphabetical order or by final score obtained), posted in a visible and public place in the host unit, as well as by email to all candidates, attaching, for this purpose, the minutes of the jury's deliberations, within a maximum period of 90 working days from the deadline for submission of applications.

Candidates are informed, at a preliminary hearing, in accordance with Articles 121 and 122 of the Administrative Procedure Code, of the likely outcome of the final decision, and may comment within 10 working days of this notification.

The waiver of the hearing for interested parties must be justified in accordance with Article 124 of the CPA.

An appeal may be lodged against the final decision within 15 working days, or an appeal may be lodged with the highest executive body of the funding entity within 30 days, both after the respective notification (Article 12(n°6) of the FCT Research Grant Regulations).

Within 10 working days of notification of the grant award, the applicant must declare their acceptance in writing. In case of non-acceptance, the next highest ranked applicant will be notified immediately.

Constitution of a selection reserve list: The applicants ranked in the next positions on the ordered list will be included in a selection reserve list, which can be used until 31/01/2027.

Fellowship contractualization: The scholarship is awarded through the signing of a contract between the University of Minho and the scholarship recipient, in accordance with point 2.4 of the Rules for the Award and Management of Scholarships https://www.fct.pt/wpcontent/uploads/2022/03/Normas_de_Atribuicao_de_Bolsas_2021.pdf and the draft contract in Annex II of the University of Minho's Scientific Research Scholarship Regulations.

The contract can only be signed after receipt of all the documentation required for the type of scholarship, which must occur within a maximum period of 6 months, including proof of academic degrees or diplomas, as well as enrollment in non-degree study cycles or courses, as applicable.

Once all the documentation has been received, the contracting entity has 60 working days to sign the scholarship contract. Once received by the scholarship holder, the contract must be returned, duly signed, within 15 working days.

Term and cancellation of fellowship contracts: Without prejudice to the other grounds laid down in the University of Minho's Scientific Research Scholarship Regulation and in the Research Fellow Statute, the scholarship

will cease on completion of the contracted work plan, as well as on expiry of the period for which it was granted or renewed.

The **final report** must be submitted to the scientific advisor, in accordance with the defined objectives and evaluation criteria, no later than 60 working days after the end of the scholarship and must be drawn up in accordance with Annex I of the Regulations of the University of Minho.

Non-discrimination and equal access policy: Universidade do Minho actively promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, so that no candidate may be privileged, benefited, harmed or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty due, namely, to ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, economic situation, education, social origin or condition, genetic heritage, reduced working capacity, disability, chronic illness, nationality, ethnic origin or race, territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological convictions and trade union membership.

Declaration of Honor

Academic qualifications

I, (full name), candidate for the vacancy for the award of a (type of scholarship), within the scope of the project (name or reference of the project), published on the Euraxess portal, with the reference (ref. notice), declare on my honor that I have completed the academic degree of (academic degree), qualifying for the type of scholarship in the competition, namely the course (designation), by the (University conferring the degree), on the date XX/XX/XXXX, with a final average of XXXXX values on the YY scale.

As it is not possible for me to present proof of qualifications until the end of the competition, I declare that I undertake to present the aforementioned certificate at the conclusion of the scholarship contract, in the event that I am selected for the vacancy in the competition.

As this is true, I hereby date and sign this declaration.

(Place), (date).

(full name)

NOTE: The declaration may only attest to facts that occurred prior to the application.

In the event of a discrepancy between the information contained in the declaration and the documentation submitted for the purpose of contracting the scholarship, only the information contained in the latter will be taken into account.

Declaration of Honor

I, (full name), bearer of identification document number (XXXX), candidate for a research grant (type of grant), within the scope of the project (name or reference of the project), published on the Euraxess portal, with the reference (ref. call for proposals), declare on my honor that (I have not received any research grants to date / I have received the following research grants) under the Research Grant Holder Statute.

University	Financing Entity	Project	Type of Grant	Duration	Start	Term

As this is true, I hereby date and sign this declaration.

(Place), (date)

(full name)