

Faculty of Pharmacy Research and Development Association
Call for the award of 1 (one) Research Grant for Masters enrolled in a non-degree seeking course

Notice No. BICNCG/17/FARM-ID/2023

Under the Regulation of Research Grants of the Foundation for Science and Technology, IP, Regulation No. 950/2019, published in *Diário da República*, 2nd Series, No. 241, of 16 December, of the Regulation of Research Grants of the University of Lisbon, Dispatch No. 6238/2020, published in *Diário da República*, 2nd Series, no. 113, of 12 June, republished by Dispatch No. 8061/2022, published in *Diário da República*, 2nd Series, no. 126, of July 1st, and of the Statute of the Research Fellowship (EBI), Decree-Law no. 123/2019, published in *Diário da República*, 1st Series, no. 164, of 28 August, it is made known that a call for the award of 1 (one) Research Grant for Masters enrolled in a non-degree seeking course within the scope of the project 2022.07042.PTDC, titled: "*Engineering antigen switchable CAR T cells to target HIV-1 reservoirs established in follicular helper CD4 T cells*", funded by Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) is open under the following conditions:

- I. **Scientific Area:** Cellular and Molecular Biology or related areas;
- II. **Admission Requirements:**
 - Master's degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Biochemistry, Biology, Biological Engineering, Microbiology or related areas*;
 - Be enrolled in a non-degree seeking course*

*During the application stage, if the candidates do not have in their possession the documents proving that they hold a Master's degree and/or enrolled in a non-degree seeking course, this document may be replaced by a declaration of honour. The proof of the degree and/or enrolment through the presentation of the certificate must be carried out until the hiring, under penalty of annulment of the candidate's assessment due to error on the assumptions of fact, and consequent exclusion from this call.

Preferred Requirements:

- Laboratorial experience in cell culture techniques, including manipulation of PBMCs and primary T cells
- Laboratorial experience in immunophenotyping by flow cytometry and/or immunoassays
- Laboratorial experience in molecular biology techniques
- Laboratorial experience in lentiviral production (BSL-2 and/or BSL-3)

III. **Research Grant Duration:** The research will have a duration of 6 months, eventually renewable up to a maximum of 12 months, starting in October 2023, on an exclusivity regime, in accordance with the terms of the Regulation of Research Grants of the Foundation for Science and Technology, IP.

IV. **Work plan:** The objective of this work is to develop a combinatorial activated Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T system in T cells targeting HIV-latently infected cells. Since follicular helper T cells (Tfh) have been described as key and abundant HIV-1 and HIV-2 reservoirs, we will target specifically this CD4 T cell subset. We will use synthetic Notch (synNotch) receptors with customizable input/output function to activate the CAR. In our NOT-CAR system, synNotch pathways will allow the expression of LRA and CAR against HIV envelope protein upon CD4 sensing. We will generate stable cells expressing our synNotch system and CAR toolbox by transducing primary CD8 T cells. We will assess the feasibility of synNocth-CAR-T cells to target viral reservoirs using primary T cells from chronic HIV-1-infected individuals under ART.

V. **Workplace and Scientific Guidance:** The work will be carried out in Laboratory of Molecular Microbiology and Biotechnology, at the premises of the Faculty of Pharmacy of Universidade de Lisboa, under the scientific guidance of Ana Catarina Taborda Godinho dos Santos, Auxiliary Researcher at the Research Institute for Medicines, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Lisbon.

VI. **Monthly maintenance stipend:** The monthly maintenance stipend (grant) corresponds to € 1.199,64€, according to the table of values directly attributed by FCT, I.P. in Portugal (<https://former.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/valores.phtml.pt>). Payment will be made via bank transfer. In addition to the monthly maintenance stipend the grant holder will also be awarded with the value correspondent to the payment of the first step of Seguro Social Voluntário (voluntary payment of Social Security), in case he/she chooses to be included in this regime.

VII. **Formalization of applications:** Applications must be sent in non-editable format (PDF), to the address concursos@farm-id.pt, containing the identification of the above mentioned notice. Applications in paper format will not be accepted.

VIII. **Application deadline:** The deadline for applications is from September 19th to October 2nd 2023 (10 working days).

IX. **Evaluation and rating criteria:**

Candidate's Merit: Aims to assess compliance with the formal requirements requested in the opening notice, but also to consider the suitability of the scientific area of training and/or specialization, training and professional experience, with a maximum weighting of 100%.

- **Adequacy of the Scientific Training Area (AACF):** Candidates will be ranked on the basis of theoretical and practical knowledge in biological and immunological technologies, with maximum weighting of 20%.

- **Training and Experience (FE):** Candidates will be ranked on the basis of laboratorial experience in cell culture and cellular and molecular biology techniques, with maximum weighting of 30%.
- **Specific competencies for the proposed work plan (CEPTP):** Candidates will be ranked on the basis of laboratorial experience in cell culture assays (cell culture techniques, including manipulation of PBMCs and primary T cells), flow cytometry and immunology (immunophenotyping by flow cytometry and/or immunoassays), and microbiology (lentiviral production and manipulation (BSL-2 and/or BSL-3)), with maximum weighting of 50%.

In the case of necessity, an Interview with the 3 best candidates will be run, with weighting of 25%.

Final Classification: The final classification will result from the sum of the points highlighted with Candidate's Merit (AACF+FE+CEPTP), following the completion of an individual record. In case an interview occurs, the final classification will result from the sum of the points obtained from Candidate's Merit (75%) and from the Interview (25%).

X. Instruction of Application:

- a) Form containing the candidate's identification (available on the FARM-ID's website);
- b) Curriculum Vitae containing the information necessary for the evaluation of the application;
- c) Proof of obtaining a Master's degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Biochemistry, Biology, Biological Engineering, Microbiology or related areas, or substitution by presenting a declaration of honour;
- d) Proof of enrolment in non-degree seeking course or substitution by presenting a declaration of honour;
- e) Declaration on honour stating that there is no professional activity that violates the exclusivity regime (available on the FARM-ID's website);
- f) Letter of motivation indicating their experience and adaptation to the proposed work plan, namely the preferential factors and interest of the grant for their future perspectives, as well as the immediate possibility of joining the project;
- g) Other supporting documents considered relevant.

All the documents necessary for the correct application are available on the institutional website through the link: <https://www.ff.ulisboa.pt/faculdade/recursos-humanos/recrutamento/anuncio-para-atribuicao-de-1-uma-bolsa-de-investigacao-para-mestres-inscritos-num-curso-nao-conferente-de-grau-academico-aviso-n-o-bicnpg-17-farm-id-2023>

The documents that instruct the application must be submitted in Portuguese or English language.

No document that should have been submitted in the application phase can be submitted after the deadline set in the opening notice. Failure to comply with the deadline set for the submission

of the application, as well as the lack or late submission of documents referred to in this point will determine the exclusion from the competition.

- XI. **Composition of the Jury:** The Jury responsible for the selection will be constituted by:
President – Ana Catarina Taborda Godinho dos Santos, Auxiliary Researcher at the Research Institute for Medicines
1st Member of the Jury – João Manuel Braz Gonçalves, Full Professor, FFUL;
2nd Member of the Jury – Jorge Manuel Barreto Vitor, Assistant Professor, FFUL;
1st Alternate Member of the Jury – Adelaide Maria Afonso Fernandes Borralho, Assistant Professor, FFUL;
2nd Alternate Member of the Jury - Rui Eduardo Mota Castro, , Assistant Professor, FFUL.

XII. **Form of notification of results:** All candidates will be notified of the final results of the evaluation by email, and will have 10 working days after the aforementioned notification to say something, in accordance with the terms of the Code of Administrative Procedure.

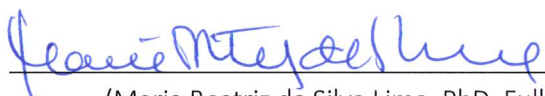
After this notification, and in case there are no claims, the results will become final. In case of claims, and after the allegation is analysed and accepted or rejected, the results will become final after 10 business days.

After the final decision is made, a complaint/appeal can be filed to the Director of the FARM-ID – Faculty of Pharmacy Research and Development Association, Maria Beatriz da Silva Lima, PhD, Full Professor, within 10 working days from the date of notification.

XIII. **Applicable legislation and regulations:** Regulation of Research Grants of the Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P. (FCT, IP), Regulation no. 950/2019, published in the Diário da República, 2nd Series, no. 241, of December 16, 2019, of the Regulation of Research Grants of the University of Lisbon, Order no. 6238/2020, of 12 June, republished by Dispatch no. 8061/2022, published in the Diário da República, 2nd Series, no. 113, of 12 June 2020, and of the Research Fellowship Statute (EBI), Decree-Law no. 123/2019, of 28 August, published in Diário da República, 1st Series, no. 164, of 28 August 2019.

Faculty of Pharmacy Research and Development Association, September 18th 2023.

The Director,



(Maria Beatriz da Silva Lima, PhD, Full Professor)