



NOTICE OF OPENING OF AN INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR THE SELECTION OF A PhD HOLDER RESEARCHER UNDER DECREE-LAW NO. 57/2016

Internal code: Researcher/FCT/i3S/2711/2025

A call is opened for the position of a PhD holder, for an unfixed term work contract to carry out research duties within the project **“ReGenUTR - Dissecting the function of 3’ untranslated regulatory sequences as new biomedical tools in nerve regeneration”**, with reference 2023.16816.ICDT, funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, I.P.

Scientific Area: Biological Sciences

1. Project summary and work plan

Mature mammalian central nervous system neurons mostly fail to regenerate after trauma with a severe impact on patient’s healthy living. A gene regulatory network that reprograms the extracellular matrix after spinal cord injury was recently identified in the Spiny mouse (*Acomys*) and when one of those genes was overexpressed in *Mus musculus* we observed an increase in neurite length and axon growth. The 3’ UTR contains multiple non-coding sequences that activate gene expression partly by RNA-binding proteins (RBPs), in particular USE/iPLUS (doi: 10/nar/gkaf1340.1093; WO/2020/076174) which is particularly relevant in neurons. Here, we will apply *in vitro* and *in vivo* methodologies in well-established animal models - mammalian cell lines, zebrafish and a mouse model of peripheral nervous system injury - to dissect the molecular mechanisms driven by 3’UTR motifs, in particular USE/iPLUS, and identify new therapeutic targets and tools. We will functionally validate human 3’UTRs containing iPLUS in networks of genes selected from our datasets, *in vitro* and *in vivo* and explore the potential of iPLUS in improving nerve regeneration.

2. Applicable Portuguese legislation

Decree No. 57/2016, of August 29 – Legal Framework for Scientific Employment (RJE) – in its current version.
Portuguese Labor Code, in its current wording.

3. Jury

Chairman: Alexandra Moreira; Other Members: Isabel Pereira Castro; José Carlos Bessa
Substitute: Mónica Sousa; Elsa Logarinho.

4. Workplace

i3S - Rua de Alfredo Allen, 208 Porto, research group Gene Regulation.

5. Professional category and monthly remuneration

Junior Researcher

€ 2.351,53, corresponding to index 33 of the Tabela Remuneratória Única, whose application is intended for PhD holders with reduced post-doctoral experience or without a post-doctoral scientific curriculum.

6. Requirements for admission

Obligatory:

- a) PhD degree in Biological Sciences or a related area;
- b) Motivation Letter in English;
- c) Relevant publication record;
- d) Extensive hands-on expertise in:
 - a. molecular biology including RNA work and gene expression analysis;
 - b. cell culture;
 - c. microscopy techniques;
 - d. zebrafish work;
- e) Completed course in Laboratory Animal Science, meeting the requirements to apply for the respective license issued by DGAV for functions A+D, in accordance with Decree-Law 113/2013, OR holder of a license issued by DGAV to work with laboratory animals for functions A+D, in accordance with Decree-Law 113/2013 Fluency in written and spoken English;
- f) Good teamwork and interpersonal skills;
- g) Contacts of two references;
- h) Immediate availability to start the contract.

Preferential:

- a) Experience in mouse work.

7. Evaluation of the applications and publication of the results

The evaluation of the scientific and curricular background of the candidates should focus on the activity of the last five years that the candidate considers most relevant. The five-year period may be extended by the jury, at the candidate's request, when justified by suspension of scientific activity for socially protected reasons, namely for reasons of parental leave, prolonged serious illness, and other situations of unavailability for work that are legally protected.

Weight of the different curricular valuation criteria:

- a) Detailed Curricula (80%) taking in consideration relevance to the project workplan and requirements established;
- b) Motivation Letter in English (10%);
- c) Interview - *optional* (10%).

If the jury decides to obtain further clarifications and additional information about the curricular elements presented, the 5 (five) best candidates classified on the basis of the curriculum may be called for an interview.

Candidates who submit their application incorrectly or fail to meet the required qualifications for this competition will be excluded from admission.

The jury reserves the right to request any candidate, in case of doubt, to provide supporting documents for their statements.



False statements made by candidates will be sanctioned in accordance with the law.

The jury will draw up minutes of its meetings, which can be consulted at the candidate's request within 10 working days after the selection results are released.

The jury deliberates by means of a reasoned vote according to the evaluation criteria, with no abstentions allowed, and draws up a list of excluded and admitted candidates, ordered by respective classification.

All candidates are notified of the selection results by email. After notification, candidates have 10 working days to comment.

In the 90 days following the deadline for submission of applications, the jury's final decision is communicated to the candidates. Subsequently the institute Director, who is also responsible for the final decision of hiring, will ratify the decision of the jury.

This call is intended exclusively to fill the indicated position on offer and may be canceled before the final ranking list of candidates is ratified by the Director. Accordingly, the position will no longer be available.

8. Submission of applications

Applications must include all the documents proving that they fulfill the admission requirements, namely:

- a) Copy of PhD degree certificate or diploma;
- b) Detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- c) Motivation Letter in English;
- d) Proof of completed course in Laboratory Animal Science, meeting the requirements to apply for the respective license issued by DGAV for functions A+D, in accordance with Decree-Law 113/2013, OR license issued by DGAV to work with laboratory animals for functions A+D, in accordance with Decree-Law 113/2013;
- e) Contacts of two references;
- f) Other documentation relevant for the evaluation of qualifications in a related scientific area.

The submission of applications is digital, in pdf format, from November-27 to December-12, 2025, in the following link:

<https://dozer.i3s.up.pt/applicationmanagement/#/addapplications/d658236cf094b6e9a0e4a9cb405279c0>

9. Start and duration of the contract

The anticipated start date of the contract is 16/01/2026 and is subject to budget availability. The expected duration of the contract will be 12 months, eventually extendable.

10. Non-discrimination and equal access policy

i3S actively promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access. No applicant shall be privileged, benefited, prejudiced, or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty on the basis of ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, origin or social condition, genetic heritage, reduced work capacity, disability, chronic illness, nationality, ethnic origin or race, territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs, or trade union membership.

Within the framework of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, i3S adopts the Open, Transparent and Merit-based (OTM-R) principles for the recruitment of researchers, with the aim of conducting fair and transparent recruitment processes, bringing equal opportunities to all candidates.

11. Applicants with disabilities

Under the terms of Decree-Law 29/2001, of February 3, the candidate with a disability is given preference in equal ranking, which takes precedence over any other legal preference. Candidates must declare under oath their degree of disability, the type of disability and the means of communication/expression to be used in the selection process, under the terms of the aforementioned decree.