

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR THE SELECTION OF A JUNIOR RESEARCHER UNDER DECREE-LAW 57/2016

Reference: IBMC_IJ_NCBio_2204_2026

IBMC – Institute for Molecular and Cell Biology, is opening a call to one, PhD holder, for a Junior Researcher position, in an unfixed term work contract, to carry out research functions within the project “NCBio: Unlocking Excellence in Research and Innovation in Neurobiology and Neurological Disorders”, reference 951923, financed by European Commission under the topic WIDESPREAD-06-2020 - ERA Chairs, at the IBMC Institute, under the following conditions:

1. Scientific Area: Neurosciences (cell biology of synaptic transmission)

2. Project Summary and Workplan: Astrocytes are the major non-neuronal cell type in the mammalian brain and are known to interact with neurons and control synaptic transmission – a concept known as the ‘tripartite synapse’. Recent work from our lab (Batiuk et al., Nat Commun, 2020; Bayraktar et al., Nat Neurosci, 2020) suggests that excitatory and inhibitory tripartite synapse formation and function are differentially regulated. Understanding differences in synapse assembly and function are crucial to our understanding of information flow in the CNS and the causes of human diseases associated with hyperexcitability, such as epilepsy, schizophrenia and fragile X. We are looking to recruit a post-doctoral fellow to study the specific molecular mechanisms of inhibitory synapse formation, using a variety of cutting-edge techniques, including advanced tissue culture systems, proximity labeling and mass-spectrometry, gene ablation and functional assays (including morphological synapse assembly and electrophysiological measures of functionality).

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3. Admission Requirements:

Mandatory:

1. PhD degree in Neuroscience or related areas, and a scientific and professional curriculum whose profile is suited for the activity to be performed can submit their applications;
2. Solid experience in experimental neuroscience, particularly the use tissue culture systems (including primary cultures of astrocytes and neurons).
3. Ability to communicate proficiently in English (spoken and written);
4. Good team work and interpersonal skills.

If the degree has been awarded by a foreign higher education institution, it must comply with the provisions of the Decree-Law no. 66/2018, of august 16th, and must be recognized by a Portuguese higher education institution, which approves the regime legal recognition of academic degrees and diplomas in Higher Education, arising from foreign higher education institutions, and paragraph e) of paragraph 2 of article 4 of Decree-Law No. 60/2018, of August 3, all of which the formalities must be fulfilled there until the time of signing the contract.

Preferential: Preference will be given to candidates with solid experience and knowledge in:

- Mass-spectrometry (including data analysis);
- Fluorescence-activated cell sorting;
- CRISPR/Cas9;
- Basic electrophysiology (e.g. MEAs);
- Western blotting;
- Production and purification of recombinant proteins;
- Immunofluorescence and confocal microscopy.

4. Workplace: Instituto de Biologia Molecular e Celular IBMC /Instituto de Investigação e Inovação em Saúde – i3S, under the group Synapse Biology and scientific supervision of Dr. Matthew Holt.

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5. Start and Duration of the contract: A unfixed term work contract will be signed, under the regime of exclusivity, according to legal terms (articles n.º. 140º, n.º 1 and n.º.2, h); and article n.º. 148º, n.º. 4 – Labour Code).

The estimated start date of the contract is 16 of June of 2026 and is subject to budget availability. The expected duration of the contract will be 6.5 months, and cannot in any case extend beyond the project's end date.

6. Professional category and monthly remuneration: The gross monthly salary corresponds to 2408.11€ (Level 33), according to the Consolidated Table of Allowances (TRU), subject to taxes and other mandatory deductions, whose application is intended for PhD holders with reduced post-doctoral experience or without a post-doctoral scientific curriculum. Plus payment of meal allowance, holiday pay, and Christmas bonus.

7. Legislation and other applicable regulations: Decree-Law no. 57/2016 of August, 29th, which approved Legal Framework for Scientific Employment (RJEC), updated by the Law no. 57/2017 of July 19th. Portuguese Labour Code, approved by Law 7/2009 of February 12, and the respective updates.

8. Jury Composition:

President: Dr. Matthew Holt

Members: Dr. Olga Sin; Dr. Simone Bessa

Substitutes: Dr. Diogo Castro

9. Evaluation Criteria: The evaluation of the CV of the candidates will focus on the adequacy of previous work experience within the scope of the call (point 3). The Selection will be based on:

- a) Curricular evaluation (80%):
 - Research experience relevant for the work plan, as defined in the requirements for admission (40%);
 - Scientific and technological production and impact (20%);

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- Participation in research projects (20%);
- b) Motivation Letter in English indicating interest and motivation for the area in which the application fits (20%);
- c) Candidates achieving a score of 80% or more on initial review will be short-listed for an interview. In this case, the interview will weigh 10% and the final classification system will be expressed on a scale from 0 to 100.

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.

The jury deliberates by means of a reasoned vote according to the evaluation criteria, with no abstentions allowed.

Minutes of the jury meetings will be drawn up, which should contain a summary of what took place, as well as the votes cast by each member and their respective reasons, and will be made available to candidates upon request.

Once the selection criteria have been applied, the jury will draw up a list of excluded and admitted candidates, ranked by the respective classification after the curricular evaluation.

10. Publication/Notification of results: The final results of the evaluation will be publicized through an ordered list by final mark obtained, published on the IBMC website, and notified by e-mail. After notification, as provided in the Administrative Procedure Code, by the preliminary hearing, candidates have 10 working days to comment and, within that period, a complaint may be submitted by email to: rh@ibmc.up.pt.

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

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11. Application deadline and form of presentation of applications: The competition is open from 27th April 2026 to 12th May 2026. Applications must be submitted electronically at: <https://dozer.i3s.up.pt/applicationmanagement/#/addapplications/603456da752bdabed6ec768ca353>

The required documents for the application are:

- Certificate of Qualifications;
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- Motivation letter in English, outlining past research activities and their relevance to the position;
- Names and professional contacts of two references.

Candidates who incorrectly formalize their application or who fail to meet the requirements of this competition will be excluded from admission to the competition.

The selection board has the right to ask any candidate, in case of doubt, to produce documentary evidence of their statements. False statements made by candidates will be sanctioned in accordance with the law.

12. Non-discrimination and equal access policy: IBMC 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, IBMC 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.

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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.

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