

CALL FOR A RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP
Fellowship Reference IMM/BI/24-2024

Instituto de Medicina Molecular João Lobo Antunes (iMM) opens a call for one research fellowship under the project *“Targeted chronotherapy in T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia”* with the funding support from Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, IP.P. / MCTES through national funds (PIDDAC).

Scientific Area(s): Oncobiology, Signaling in Cancer.

Fellowship recipients / Admission requirements: Any National, foreign and stateless candidate(s) that fulfill the necessary conditions to be enrolled in a non-academic degree course (in a rea related to the work plan) can apply. Are considered “Non-academic degree courses” the ones referred in [paragraph e\) of number 3 of article 4 of Decree-Law nr 74/2006, from 24th March](#), in its current version, as long as they are developed in association and cooperation between a higher education institution and at least one R&D Unit in accordance with the provisions of paragraph e) of Article 3 of FCT Fellowship Regulation.

Applicants must hold the following requirements:

- Master’s degree in biology, biochemistry, biomedical sciences with focus in Oncobiology (highly valued);
- Previous expertise in handling and processing human samples (desirable);
- Previous experience in cell culture (desirable);
- Previous experience in in vivo mouse work and colony management (highly valued);
- Previous experience in molecular biology techniques (DNA and RNA extraction, qPCR, RT-PCR, Western blot) (highly valued);
- High sense of responsibility, organization and method;
- Pro-active personality;
- Ability to work independently but also with team spirit;
- Excellent knowledge of English, spoken and written (highly valued).

Work Plan and Objectives:

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), the most common childhood malignancy, is an aggressive cancer arising from B or T lymphoid progenitors. Although current therapies are highly effective, with 5-year survival rates reaching 80-90%, they associate with substantial short and long-term side effects, and a significant number of cases still relapse and have dismal prognosis. Importantly, therapeutic success in adults lags significantly behind, with only 30-40% of the cases surviving long-term. Thus, the current challenge is to develop novel, more efficient therapeutic strategies that specifically target the leukemic cells and minimize the detrimental side effects associated with conventional therapies.

The administration of chemotherapy at defined times in the day (chronotherapy) has shown potential for cancer treatment 4 . Similarly, targeted therapies against signal transduction players, such as BCR/ABL, EGFR or BRAF have shown different degrees of efficacy. However, whether targeted signaling chronotherapies can improve treatment outcome has not been explored. In this project we propose to explore the idea that T-ALL signaling pathways can be targeted in a chronotherapeutic manner, thereby improving efficacy while decreasing the risk of side effects.

The successful candidate will be a highly organized, motivated and pro-active person and will have as main tasks:

- Maintaining proper lab organization: inventory and reagent database management; ordering and interaction with suppliers;
- Molecular biology techniques (DNA and RNA extraction, PCRs, RT-PCR, cloning, Western blot);
- Preparation of broad-use lab solutions;
- Mouse genotyping (DNA extraction and PCR) and colony management.

Legislation and Applicable Regulation: Estatuto do Bolseiro de Investigação approved by Law nr 40/2004, from 18th August in its current form (altered by Decree Law nr 123/2019, 28th August) and current Regulation of Fellowships of Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia <https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/regulamento.phtml.pt> (approved by Regulation nr 950/2019, from 16th December).

Predicted start date, duration and renewal conditions: The fellowship contract is predicted to start in September 2024, for a period of 10 months on an exclusive basis, eventually renewable until the maximum stipulated in applicable regulations.

Work place and Scientific orientation: The research activities will be developed at Signaling in Cancer Lab, of IMM, under the supervision of professor João Barata.

Non-discrimination and equal access policy: IMM undertakes to ensure compliance with the principles of non-discrimination and equality and to that extent, provides that no candidate can be privileged, benefited, harmed or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty due in particular ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, economic status, education, social origin or condition, genetic heritage, reduced working capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnic origin or race, place of origin, language, religion, political or ideological convictions and trade union membership.

International environment and experience: Diversity is a fundamental aspect of the essence of IMM, where researchers and non-researchers of different nationalities, backgrounds and areas of study work together, promoting the exchange of experiences and interactions, contributing to the personal and professional development of each person and to the existence of an international, inclusive and stimulating environment.

Research Fellows Support Centre: The Research Fellows Support Centre works on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00AM to 6:00PM at Human Resources Office.

Fellowship financial conditions: The fellow will benefit from a monthly stipend in the amount of 1259,64€ € in accordance with the defined in FCT table <https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/valores.phtml.pt>. The amount will be paid by wire transfer at the end of each month. The fellow will also benefit from a personal accident insurance to execute the proposed research activities as well as the right to Social Security through Voluntary Social Insurance regimen, if wanted, under the terms of Código dos Regimes Contributivos do Sistema Previdencial de Segurança Social, and the contributions costs will be supported by the research project.

Application documents: - Motivation Letter; - Detailed CV; - MSc certificate; - Two reference letters and/or reference contacts; - Candidate's declaration of honor indicating previous fellowships, if any, its typology and duration. *The non-compliance with these requirements determines the immediate rejection of the application.*

In case the applicant does not have yet the required degree certificate, a declaration of honor stating the conclusion of the necessary qualifications for the purposes of this process will be accepted and must be sent by the end date of the call.

Jury evaluation and selection: Applications will be evaluated by João Taborda Barata (FMUL/IMM), Rita Fragoso (IMM) e Marta Fernandes (IMM).

Selection methods: Curricular evaluation (50%), Motivation Letter (10%) and Interview (40%). Applicants scoring 40% or higher in the curricular evaluation and motivation letter will be selected for interview. The Curriculum will be analyzed qualitatively, and in what concerns to its content and relevance for the tasks to be performed, with special emphasis on research experience and relevant knowledge in the area of the proposed work plan as described in the candidate profile.

Deadlines and application process: The call will be open **from July 12th until July 25th 2024.** Applications should be submitted through IMM website, by clicking in the “Apply” button below the position job ad. *The non-compliance with these requirements determines the immediate rejection of the application.*

Notification of results: The evaluation results will be announced within 90 days after the termination of the applications submission deadline, by writing and publishing a jury meeting minute at IMM website at <https://imm.medicina.ulisboa.pt/jobs/#results> with all process of recruitment, evaluation and selection including a list of all excluded and admitted candidates and for these last ones, their classification. All admitted candidates will be notified by email.

Preliminary Hearing and Final Decision Deadline: After notification, all candidates have 10 working days to respond. Panel’s final decisions are pronounced within a period of 90 days, from application deadline.

Fellowship contracting: The Fellowship is granted through the signature of a [contract](#) between IMM and the selected fellow and after the fellow send the following mandatory documents: copy of identification document (in case of non-European citizens is mandatory the work visa / valid resident permit), document proving the required academic degree and the document proving the enrollment in a / non-academic degree course. Applicants with academic degrees obtained abroad will be required to present a certificate of recognition in accordance with the applicable regulation. This document is mandatory only in the contracting phase. For each Fellowship period an [Activity Report](#) must be prepared by the fellow as well as the [Report](#) by the supervisor.

Lisbon, 11 July 2024