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CALL FOR APPLICATION FOR A RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Ref^a Pep2Coat BI_1

[Portuguese version](#)

A call for tenders is now open for the attribution of one Research Scholarship within the scope of the Project “Pep2Coat - Bifunctional edible coatings for food preservation: antimicrobial peptides-producing probiotics as a sustainable strategy to enhance food safety and human health (COMPETE2030-FEDER-00850800)” financed by the FEDER, PITD - Innovation and Digital Transition Program, under the following conditions, set out below.

Scientific area: Biological sciences; Biotechnology

Admission requirements:

General requirements:

Candidates for the Research grant must, at the date of application, be enrolled, or present a commitment to enroll in a study cycle conferring an (PhD) degree in the field of Biotechnology or related areas. In fact, candidates for the Research scholarship, after selection, in order to begin the scholarship contracting procedure, must enroll in the doctoral program in Biotechnology of Escola Superior de Biotecnologia, according to the theme and the scholarship work plan proposed within the scope of the project identified above. This doctoral program should be carried out at Escola Superior de Biotecnologia of Universidade Católica Portuguesa and guided by the team identified for the implementation of the work plan.

Candidates must have a master’s degree in Biotechnology, Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Biological Sciences, or a related field.

Specific requirements:

Candidates must also have knowledge/research experience in the following areas:

a) Academic qualifications at the level of master’s degree in biotechnology, Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Biological Sciences or related areas.



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- b) Previous experience in scientific research, in at least one of the following areas: microbiology and molecular biology, particularly for bacterial bioengineering purposes; or natural antimicrobial peptides isolation and characterization; food safety, namely in the development and evaluation of preservation strategies.
- c) Good knowledge of English, spoken and written, and strong motivation to integrate multidisciplinary teams in an applied research environment.

Preferred Factors:

Will be considered preferred factors:

- a) Experience with anaerobic or probiotic bacteria handling;
- b) Familiarity with bioinformatics tools for genome mining or omics data analysis;
- c) Knowledge of heterologous expression systems (e. g. E. coli)
- d) Experience in microbiological and/or cell culture assays for bioactivity characterization (mainly antimicrobial, but also eventual antiretroviral, antitumor, and/or anti-inflammatory activities);
- e) Experience in the development of protective films, in particular for food related applications;
- f) Previous participation in applied research projects and/or experience in scholarly communication, including publications, presentations at congresses or dissemination actions to the public.

In addition, preference will be given to candidates which are familiar with chromatography and mass spectrometry methods.

Work Plan:

The scholarship holder will carry out research activities within the Pep2Coat project, which aims to develop innovative bifunctional edible coatings incorporating antimicrobial peptides (AMP) and/or next-generation probiotics (NGP) for food preservation and health promotion. Tasks will include (i) in silico screening to identify antimicrobial peptide candidates from gut microbiota and probiotic strains; (ii) sample collection and nucleic acids extraction from stool samples, for further identification of novel candidates; (iii) heterologous expression of selected AMP candidates in a suitable host, and proceed with the purification of produced peptides; (iv) peptide characterization in terms of functionality, bioactivity and toxicity; production of an edible coating containing the produced peptides, and its characterization on a selected food model, in terms of shelf life, microbial safety, sensory quality.



Applicable legislation and regulations:

- Statute of the Scientific Research Fellow: <https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/58216179/view?w=2019-08-28>;
- Regulation of Research Scholarships of the Science and Technology Foundation, I.P.: <https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/127238533>;
- Regulation of Research Scholarships of the Portuguese Catholic University: http://www.porto.ucp.pt/sites/default/files/files/DRH/RegBolsasInvestigacao_Cientifica_UCP2_020.pdf

Workplace:

The work will be developed at the CBQF - Centro de Biotecnologia e Química Fina. of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Portugal, in Porto, under the scientific supervision of Joana Cristina Barbosa, Ana Maria Gomes e Adma Melo.

Duration of the scholarship:

The scholarship granted on an exclusivity basis, shall have an initial duration of 12 months, with an expected start date of May 1, 2026. Any renewals may not exceed the maximum duration limit of 32.5 months, nor go beyond the project's completion date (scheduled for August 30, 2028) The scholarship will automatically terminate upon the effective closure of the project, should this occur before the maximum duration period has elapsed.

Monthly maintenance allowance amount:

The amount of the scholarship corresponds to €1 309,64. according to the research scholarship values awarded directly by FCT, I.P. in the Country (https://www.fct.pt/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Tabela_valores_SMM_2025.pdf) and will be paid by bank transfer.

Selection methods:

The selection methods to be used will be the following: i) curriculum evaluation (50%); ii) previous experience (50%). If necessary, the 3 best positioned candidates may be interviewed, and in this



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situation, the weighting will be curricular evaluation (40%); ii) previous experience (45%) and selection interview (15%).

Only candidates with a final classification equal to or greater than 75 points, on a scale of 0 to 100, will be selected for this position.

Applications that do not meet the admission requirements, delivered on time and incomplete applications will be considered ineligible.

Composition of the Selection Jury: President of the Jury: Maria Manuela Pintado, Effective Members: Joana Cristina Barbosa, Ana Maria Gomes and Adma Melo. Substitute Jury: Joana Bastos Barbosa.

Form of advertising/notification of results: The jury deliberates in accordance with the selection criteria adopted and disclosed. The jury meetings minutes will contain a summary of the meeting content. After completing the application of the selection criteria, the jury proceeds with the elaboration of the ordered list, with the ranking of the approved candidates. The ranking list of eligible candidates will be published on the premises of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, in Porto, located at Rua de Diogo Botelho, 1327, 4169-005 Porto - Portugal, with each candidate being notified of his/her position on the list ranking of candidates via email. Ineligible applicants will be notified by email, with details of the missing eligibility elements.

Complaint and appeal procedures: Candidates have a period of ten working days, after the disclosure referred to in the previous number, to give their opinion at a prior hearing.

Deadline for acceptance of the scholarship: Within ten working days following notification of the grant award, the selected candidate must confirm in writing his/her availability to start the scholarship on the proposed date. Failing to do so or not having availability, the candidate placed in the next position will be called.



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Application deadline and form of submission:

Candidates submit their application from March 18, 2026 until April 1, 2026. (until 5 pm, Lisbon time).

Applications are formalized by completing the **Application Form**: <https://hr-ucpporto.inqueritos.porto.ucp.pt/781575?lang=en>

It will be necessary to submit the following documents:

- 1) Cover letter, identifying the title and reference of the project, describe the motivation and professional objectives of the candidate.
- 2) Detailed Curriculum Vitae (should contain all the elements to assess the admission requirements, including language knowledge and research experience).
- 3) Copy of the certificate(s) of qualifications conferring academic degree in the terms requested in the notice, which contain the final classifications.
- 4) Registration of recognition of the academic degree awarded by a foreign higher education institution, preferably with the registration of the conversion of the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale to guarantee eligibility in this call for application¹.
- 5) Proof of registration or letter with the commitment to register/enroll in a degree-awarding study cycle under the terms already described in this notice ².

Only applications received during the opening period of the above-mentioned call shall be considered. Candidates who incorrectly formalize their application or who do not prove the requirements of this call are excluded. False statements made by applicants will be punished under the law.

Privacy Policy:

Universidade Católica Portuguesa is the controller responsible for the processing of Personal Data in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 – General Regulation on Data Protection.

¹If the required academic degree has been conferred by a foreign higher education institution, it must comply with the Portuguese legislation on the recognition of foreign degrees, regulated by DL no. 66/2018 of 16 August.

Applicants are advised to consult the website of the Directorate-General for Higher Education (DGES) for additional information on this matter: <https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/reconhecimento>

² The contracting of the research scholarship requires the candidate to provide enrollment in the degree-awarding course required in this notice. If the document is not presented within a maximum period of 30 days (in a row), counting from the date of communication of the selection to the candidate, the Jury Panel will have the power to disqualify the application due to failure to present the registration within the aforementioned period.



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The personal data processed in the scope of this tender procedure is processed within the framework of said tender procedure only and will be processed by Universidade Católica Portuguesa with the purpose of verifying the fulfilment, by the candidates, of the assumptions established in the applicable legislation for their contracting. Opposition to the processing of data by the candidates will make it impossible to accept the application and, therefore, to analyse and evaluate it.

The personal data of the Data Subject, if it be indispensable for the fulfilment of the obligations of Universidade Católica Portuguesa, may be conveyed to third parties, namely to the Financing Entities identified in this announcement.

The data retention period shall correspond to the legally defined period of five years.

The Data Subject is entitled to oppose to the collection and processing of data, has the right to verification, the right to rectification, the right to deletion, and the right to restriction of processing of the data collected. However, the exercise of such rights may be excluded when the personal data is used to protect public interest, namely in the detection and prevention of crimes or when subject to professional rules of confidentiality.

The Data Subject has the right of access and portability of the data.

Rights of Personal Data Subjects: <https://www.ucp.pt/rights-data-subjects>.

For purposes of exercising the respective rights, contact the University through the e-mail address compliance.rgpd@ucp.pt or by using the address found at the end of this announcement, through the means set out in "Contacts for clarification".

The Data Subject is always entitled to contact and file a complaint with the Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados (Portuguese Supervisory Authority for Personal Data).

Non-discrimination and equal access policy:

Universidade Católica Portuguesa actively promotes a non-discrimination and equal access policy, wherefore no candidate can be privileged, benefited, impaired or deprived of any rights whatsoever, or be exempt of any duties based on their ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, family and economic conditions, instruction, 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 union membership.



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If you have any questions about this position, please contact:

Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Centro Regional do Porto

Rua de Diogo Botelho, 1327

4169-005 Porto, Portugal

Direção de Recursos Humanos

drh.recrutamento.porto@ucp.pt