

NOTICE FOR THE AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF R&D PROJECTS AND INSTITUTIONS

1. Number and type of scholarships to be awarded:

A call for applications is now open for the award of 1 Research Scholarship (BI) under the project “**Insights into microplastics from plastic food packaging**” 2023.11600. PEX (<https://doi.org/10.54499/2023.11600.PEX.>).

2. Scientific Area: **Health Sciences**

3. **Source of Funding:** Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P./MCTES, through national funds (PIDDAC).

4. Admission requirements:

– Students enrolled in a master's degree or integrated master's degree who have already completed 180 credits, corresponding to the first six semesters of the curriculum, in the areas of Toxicology, Health, or related areas.

or

– Holders of an academic degree enrolled in a non-degree course integrated into the educational project of a higher education institution, developed in association or cooperation with one or more R&D units.

NOTE: In the **application**, the scholarship recipient must indicate the name of the course, date of enrollment, and duration of the course. Only courses related to the field of the degree held and with a duration consistent with the duration of the scholarship will be considered.

Proof of enrollment/registration must be provided by the time the contract is signed. Applicants may attach a sworn statement confirming that they meet the requirements for enrollment in an integrated master's, master's, or doctoral program, or in a course that does not lead to an academic degree.

If the qualification was awarded by a foreign higher education institution, it must be recognized by a Portuguese higher education institution, in accordance with the provisions of Article 25 of Decree-Law No. 66/2018, of August 16, which approves the legal regime for the recognition of academic degrees and higher education diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions, and subparagraph e) of paragraph 2 of Article 4 of Decree-Law No. 60/2018, of August 3, and any formalities established therein must be completed by the date of hiring.

5. **Eligibility:** Candidates who comply with the provisions of Article 2(1)(a) of the Research Grant Holder Statute, as amended by Decree-Law No. 65/2024 of October 1, and also paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 6 of the Research Grant Regulations of the Foundation for Science and Technology. The BI awarded to graduates or masters who are enrolled in courses that do not confer an academic degree may only be awarded to those who, upon signing the scholarship contract in question, including possible renewals, do not exceed a cumulative period of two years in this type of scholarship, whether consecutive or interpolated, in accordance with Article 6(5) of the aforementioned Regulations.

6. Work plan and objectives to be achieved:

The project aims to monitor the release of microplastics from plastic food packaging and test their toxicity in vitro:

– Conducting migration tests, based on the regulation applicable to chemical substances, to quantify microplastics released by various types of plastic food packaging.

– Conducting in vitro toxicity tests on cells representative of the digestive system to assess cell viability and oxidative stress caused by different types of microplastics.

7. Applicable legislation and regulations: Scientific Research Grant Holder Statute, as amended by Decree-Law No. 65/2024 of October 1; Regulation No. 950/2019, of November 29, published in the Official Gazette, No. 241, 2nd Series, of December 16 (Regulation on Research Grants from FCT, I.P.); Decree-Law No. 66/2018, of August 16 (Legal regime for the recognition of academic degrees and higher education diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions).

8. Place of work: The work will be carried out in the 1H-TOXRUN laboratories of the University Institute of Health Sciences (IUCS-CESPU), in Gandra, Paredes, under the scientific guidance of Professors Joana Prata and Juliana Faria.

9. Contracting entity: CESPU, Cooperativa de Ensino Superior Politécnico e Universitário, Avenida Central de Gandra, 1317, 4585-116 Gandra – Paredes, Portugal.

10. Duration of the scholarship(s): The scholarship will last for *3 months*, starting in *March 2026*, and may be renewed for additional periods of *3 months*, up to the maximum approved funding limit, which may not exceed the limits set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 6 of Regulation No. 950/2019 of November 29, published in Diário da República, No. 241, 2nd Series, of December 16 (FCT, I.P. Research Grant Regulations).

11. Monthly maintenance allowance: The amount of the grant is *€1,040.98*, in accordance with the table of monthly maintenance allowances set out in Annex I to Regulation No. 950/2019, subject to any applicable updates, pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 18 of Regulation No. 950/2019 of November 29, published in the Official Gazette, No. 241, 2nd Series, of December 16 (FCT, I.P. Research Grant Regulations). The scholarship holder may also be reimbursed for the amount corresponding to Voluntary Social Security, if they join this scheme.

Note: Depending on the case, the grant may also include other components, namely tuition fees for grants associated with obtaining an academic degree or diploma up to the maximum amount provided for in the table in Annex II of Regulation No. 950/2019, provided that it is considered an eligible expense under the terms of the regulations applicable to funding.

12. Selection methods: The following selection methods will be used: curriculum evaluation based on the candidates' merit, taking into account the following factors, with the respective scores:

a) Academic background: bachelor's or integrated master's degree in the health field – 5 points; bachelor's or integrated master's degree in related fields – 3 points;

b) Bachelor's degree classification and/or current integrated master's degree average: equal to or higher than 14 points – 5 points; between 12 and 13 points – 3 points; lower than 12 points – 2 points;

c) Research knowledge and experience: previous experience in the field of work, with scientific publications and/or posters – 4 points; previous experience in the field of work, without scientific publications and/or posters – 3 points; previous research experience – 2 points.

d) Proficiency in English, to be assessed through the letter of motivation (up to 2 points).

e) Motivation to conduct research and interest in the field, to be assessed through the letter of motivation (up to 4 points).

13. Composition of the Selection Committee:

Chair of the Committee – Professor Joana Prata

1st member – Professor Juliana Faria

2nd member – Master Sara Silva

14. Application deadline and submission of applications: The competition is open from *17/02/2026* to *04/03/2026*, and only applications submitted within the established deadline will be accepted.

Note: The application period cannot be less than 10 business days.

Applications must be formalized by sending a letter of application accompanied by the following documents:

- *Letter of motivation, written in English;*
- *Academic qualifications certificate;*
- *Proof of enrolment in a course;*
- *Curriculum Vitae, exported from the CiênciaVitae platform;*
- *Proof of experience in laboratory activities, if applicable;*
- *Declaration of honor (template attached);*
- *Other supporting documents considered relevant.*

You must also indicate the email address to which you agree to be notified for all purposes within the scope of this procedure.

Applications should be sent by email to *joana.prata@iucs.cespu.pt*, with the subject line *"Application for scholarship of the project 2023.11600.PEX."*

15. Publication/notification of results: The final results of the evaluation will be published in the form of a *list ranked by final score* on the CESPU website within a maximum of 90 working days after the final date for submission of applications, and successful candidates will be notified by email. A period of 10 working days will be set for a preliminary hearing of interested parties, as provided for in the Administrative Procedure Code. At the end of the period set for the hearing of interested parties, and in the absence of any response from them, the ranking list of candidates will become final. Candidates may lodge a complaint against the final decision within 15 working days, or appeal to the highest executive body of the funding entity within 30 working days after notification of the final decision, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12 of the Research Grant Regulations of the Foundation for Science and Technology.

16. Mention of support and dissemination of results: The financial support of the FCT and the respective funding program must be expressly mentioned in all R&D activities directly or indirectly funded by the FCT, as well as in all communications, publications, and scientific creations, in accordance with Article 30 of the FCT Research Grant Regulations, I.P.

17. Documentation to be provided for contracting: Selected candidates must express their intention to accept the grant in writing. In case of non-acceptance, the jury may award the grant to the candidate in order of final ranking. In addition to the documents mentioned above, the selected candidate(s) will be contacted by the CESPU Human Resources Department to complete the delivery of the documents necessary for the purposes of contracting the grant.

The scholarship contract and final report templates to be completed by the scholarship recipient and supervisor can be found at <https://toxrun.iucs.cespu.pt/?q=job-opportunities>.

Annex

I, (scholarship recipient identification), holder of Citizen Card / Visa / Residence Permit no. , valid until , hereby declare under oath that I meet the conditions set forth in Article 6(5) of the FCT, I.P. Research Scholarship Regulations. - Regulation No. 950/2019, of December 16. Porto, ____/____/____

_____ (Signature of the Scholarship Holder)