

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Title: Research grant for Master's degree holders enrolled in non-degree course - 1 vacancy

Reference: 08/ECUM/CFUM/2026 – AuraProject

A call for applications is now open for the attribution of 1 grant for Master's degree holders enrolled in non-degree course, within the scope of the I&D project “Auraproject-Visual function, retinal activity and choroidal changes with different myopia control ophthalmic lenses in young adults” /Center of Physics (UM/8357), financed by national funds through Zhuhai Fitlens Medical Technology Co., under the following conditions:

Scientific Area: Optometry and Vision Sciences

Recipient category: Masters enrolled in a non-degree course

Requirement for granting the fellowship:

- The applicants may apply without prior registration in the course for which the fellowship is open. The requirement to enrol in a degree course or non-academic degree course will be verified on the date of contracting the fellowship;
- Only fellowships whose selected applicants present a valid proof of enrolment in a degree course or non-academic degree course will be contracted, according to the type of the fellowship, issued by a Higher Education Institution, indicating, respectively, the academic year or its duration (start and term).

Applicants' eligibility:

Candidates who meet the conditions set out in Article 8 of the University of Minho's Scientific Research Grant Regulations are eligible.

Nationals or citizens of other European Union member states, third-country nationals, stateless persons, and citizens with political refugee status are eligible to apply for this competition.

Candidate eligibility requirements:

- a) Master's degree in optometry or similar scientific area;
- b) Demonstrated expertise in visual electrophysiology testing;
- c) Demonstrated expertise in pediatric visual evaluation;
- d) Experience in data management, analysis.
- e) Experience in abstract and manuscript writing, reporting and public presentation of research results.
- f) preferential factors: a), b), c).

Workplan and objectives to be achieved:

The aim of this research project is to enable the grant holder to contribute to the comprehensive evaluation visual function in the paediatric population. The project will focus on the characterization of visual performance, ocular biometric parameters, and retinal function in children, integrating structural and functional assessments within a clinical research framework.

Specifically, the grant holder will be involved in the following activities:

- Preparation and submission of ethics approval documentation, including the development and implementation of informed consent procedures;
- Data collection within paediatric visual screening programs, including assessment of visual function parameters;
- Data collection in visual electrophysiology, including the recording and analysis of retinal electrical activity;
- Measurement and analysis of ocular biometric parameters;
- Data storage, curation, quality control, and statistical analysis according to established research protocols;
- Integration and correlation of changes in visual performance metrics and retinal electrophysiological outcomes
- Preparation of technical and scientific reports;
- Writing and submission of conference abstracts, preparation of oral and poster presentations, and drafting of manuscripts for peer-reviewed publication.

The overarching objective is to generate a comprehensive, multidimensional characterization of visual function in the pediatric population, supporting evidence-based approaches to early detection and management of visual dysfunction.

Applicable legislation and regulations: Research Grant Holder Statute (EBI), approved by Law n°. 40/2004 of August 18, in its current wording, and the University of Minho Scientific Research Grant Regulations (hereinafter referred to as the Regulations (RBIC)), approved by Order n°. 4998/2025, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, n°. 81, of April 28, rectified and republished through Rectification Statement n°. 634/2025/2, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, n°. 132, of July 11.

Host/Contracting institution and scientific supervision: The workplan will be carried out in the Center of Physics, School of Sciences of University of Minho, located in the Campus de Gualtar and INHUB-Famalicão, under the scientific supervision of Professor José Manuel González Méijome, Principal Investigator, and coordination of Professor Paulo Rodrigues B. Fernandes, Co-PI.

Fellowship duration: The grant will take place for a period of 3 months, with a provisional starting date on the march of 2026, non-renewable.

Amount of the research grant: The amount of the grant corresponds to 1309,64€/month, according to the table of values of the Research scholarship of the University of Minho, updated annually, as decided by the Management Board.

Payment is made on the 23rd of each month, through bank transfer to the Bank Identification Number of the fellow identified in the contractualization process.

Other benefits: Reimbursement of Voluntary Social Insurance, if the candidate chooses to receive it, corresponding to the 1st level of discounts (for research grants with a total duration 6 months or higher) and personal accident insurance.

Exclusivity regime: The grantee will perform the activities under exclusivity, as foreseen in article 5° of the Research Fellow Statutes and applicable regulations.

Selection panel:

President: Dr. Paulo Rodrigues Botelho Fernandes, Associate Professor in the Physics Department of the School of Sciences of the University of Minho.

Effective Members: Dr. José Manuel González Méijome, Full Professor in the Physics Department of the School of Sciences of the University of Minho and Dr. António Manuel Marques Queirós Pereira, Associate Professor with Aggregation in the Physics Department of the School of Sciences of the University of Minho.

Substitute members: Dr^a. Maria Madalena Cunha Faria Lira, Associate Professor in the Physics Department of the School of Sciences of the University of Minho and Dr. Jorge Manuel Martins Jorge, Associate Professor in the Physics Department of the School of Sciences of the University of Minho;

The first effective member will substitute the President of the selection panel in case of impediment, being nominate the first substitute member in the place of the first effective member.

Criteria and procedures for applications assessment and selection: The applications assessment will focus on the candidate's Merit, following evaluation criteria, valued on a scale of 0 to 5 values:

Applicant Merit - AM (100%):

A. Curricular Assessment - CA (50%):

A.1: Academic record (reflecting the classifications of academic degrees, according to the reference table), with a weighting of 50%;

A.2: Personal curriculum (reflecting the scientific and professional career), weighted at 50%;

The **Curricular Assessment (CA)** score will be obtained by applying the following formula:

$$AC=(A1\times 0,5) + (A2\times 0,5)$$

B. Research experience in the field of study - EI (40%):

Research experience in the field will be assessed based on the candidate's academic training and prior work, considering its alignment with the proposed research plan. Particular weight will be given to experience in visual assessment in paediatric populations and proficiency in techniques for evaluating visual system parameters, including, but not limited to, ocular biometry, corneal topography, refractive assessment and visual electrophysiology. Scientific output, such as monographs, conference presentations, and peer-reviewed publications, will also be considered.

C. Motivation letter and/or letter of recommendation - CM (10%).

The candidate's **final classification (AM)** will be obtained by applying the following formula:

$$AM = AC \times 0,5 + EI \times 0,4 + CM \times 0,1$$

Application deadline and submission: The call for applications is open for a period of 10 working days from the date of publication on the Euraxess portal.

Applications must be submitted by email to bolsas@ecum.uminho.pt, indicating the reference number of the competition in the subject line: **08/ECUM/CFUM/2026 – AuraProject**. Only applications submitted within the established deadline and accompanied by the following documents will be accepted:

- a) Candidate's updated curriculum vitae;
- b) Certificates of the academic degrees obtained or, if applicable, the candidate's declaration of honor that he/she has completed the degrees required in the notice by the application deadline (not applicable to research initiation grants).

For degrees obtained abroad, the record of recognition of the academic degrees and record of the conversion of the respective final classification to the Portuguese classification scale must be presented, or, alternatively, a declaration of honor from the candidate.

This declaration must attest to facts that occurred prior to the application. In the event of a discrepancy between the information contained in the declaration and the documentation submitted for the purposes of contracting the scholarship, only the information contained in the latter will be considered. If it is found that the documents proving the academic degree and diploma, or their recognition under the terms of Decree-Law n. ° 66/2018, of August 16, do not correspond to the classifications awarded in the assessment of the academic career and may consequently alter the candidate's ranking, the scholarship will not be contracted;

- c) Motivation letter and/or letter of recommendation

Form of publication/notification of results: The results of the evaluation are published in a single list (in alphabetical order or by final score obtained), posted in a visible and public place in the host unit, as well as by

email to all candidates, attaching, for this purpose, the minutes of the jury's deliberations, within a maximum period of 90 working days from the deadline for submission of applications.

Candidates are informed, at a preliminary hearing, in accordance with Articles 121 and 122 of the Administrative Procedure Code, of the likely outcome of the final decision, and may comment within 10 working days of this notification.

An appeal may be lodged against the final decision within 15 working days, or an appeal may be lodged with the highest executive body of the funding entity within 30 days, both after the respective notification (Article 12(n°6) of the FCT Research Grant Regulations).

Within 10 working days of notification of the grant award, the applicant must declare their acceptance in writing. In case of non-acceptance, the next highest ranked applicant will be notified immediately.

Fellowship contractualization: The scholarship is awarded through the signing of a contract between the University of Minho and the scholarship recipient, in accordance with the draft contract in Annex II of the University of Minho Regulations (RBIC).

The contract can only be signed after receipt of all the documentation required for the type of scholarship, which must occur within a maximum period of 6 months, including proof of academic degrees or diplomas, as well as enrollment in non-degree study cycles or courses, as applicable.

Once all the documentation has been received, the contracting entity has 60 working days to sign the scholarship contract, in accordance with n°3 of the Article 14° the University of Minho Regulations (RBIC).

Term and cancellation of fellowship contracts: Without prejudice to the other grounds laid down in the University of Minho's Scientific Research Scholarship Regulation and in the Research Fellow Statute, the scholarship will cease on completion of the contracted work plan, as well as on expiry of the period for which it was granted or renewed.

The **final report** must be submitted to the scientific advisor, in accordance with the defined objectives and evaluation criteria, no later than 60 working days after the end of the scholarship and must be drawn up in accordance with Annex I of the Regulations of the University of Minho.

Non-discrimination and equal access policy: Universidade do Minho actively promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, so that no candidate may be privileged, benefited, harmed or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty due, namely, to ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, economic situation, education, 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 trade union membership.

Declaration of Honor

Academic qualifications

I, (full name), candidate for the vacancy for the award of a (type of scholarship), within the scope of the project (name or reference of the project), published on the Euraxess portal, with the reference (ref. notice), declare on my honor that I have completed the academic degree of (academic degree), qualifying for the type of scholarship in the competition, namely the course (designation), by the (University conferring the degree), on the date XX/XX/XXXX, with a final average of XXXXX values on the YY scale.

As it is not possible for me to present proof of qualifications until the end of the competition, I declare that I undertake to present the aforementioned certificate at the moment of the scholarship contract, in the event that I am selected for the vacancy in the competition.

As this is true, I hereby date and sign this declaration.

(Place), (date).

(full name)

NOTE: The declaration may only attest to facts that occurred prior to the application.

In the event of a discrepancy between the information contained in the declaration and the documentation submitted for the purpose of contracting the scholarship, only the information contained in the latter will be taken into account.

Declaration of Honor

I, (full name), bearer of identification document number (XXXX), candidate for a research grant (type of grant), within the scope of the project (name or reference of the project), published on the Euraxess portal, with the reference (ref. call for proposals), declare on my honor that (I have not received any research grants to date / I have received the following research grants) under the Research Grant Holder Statute.

University	Financing Entity	Project	Type of Grant	Duration	Start	Term

As this is true, I hereby date and sign this declaration.

(Place), (date).

(full name)