

## **ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

Title: Research Fellowship; 1 vacancy

**Reference: BI2/SuberSafe - CBMA/2026**

A call for tenders is now open for the attribution of one Research Scholarship within the scope of the R&D project “SuberSafe - Finding sustainable strategies for protecting cork oak forests from phytopathogens”, reference COMPETE2030-FEDER- 00737100, with support of the Operational Programme for Competitiveness and Internationalisation (COMPETE) through the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER), and by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) through national funds (OE), under the following conditions:

**Scientific Area:** Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Agronomy, Plant Production and Protection)

**Recipient category:** Candidates with a Master degree in Plant Biology/Genetics/Biochemistry and related areas, and enrolled in courses that do not confer an academic degree.

### **Requirement for granting the fellowship:**

- The applicants may apply without prior registration in the course for which the fellowship is open. The requirement to enroll in a non-academic degree course will be verified on the date of contracting the fellowship;
- Only fellowships whose selected applicants present a valid proof of enrollment in a 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 9 of the Research Grant Regulations, No. 950/2019, of 16-12-2019, of FCT I.P. 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:**

- Have a Master degree in the areas indicated above.
- Preference will be given to candidates with experience in biochemical and molecular studies of plants and microorganisms relevant to the proposed research activities. Candidates must demonstrate excellent proficiency in English and in Portuguese, both spoken and written, as well as initiative, the ability to work in a methodical and rigorous manner, and strong teamwork skills. In addition, candidates should be available to travel to Bragança for field and laboratory activities.

### **Workplan and objectives to be achieved:**

The selected candidates will carry out research and development (R&D) activities within the framework of the SuberSafe project, under the supervision of the Principal Investigator and project team members, with the objective of consolidating their scientific training and contributing to the advancement of the project's goals.

The SuberSafe project builds on an existing collection of endophytes and plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria (PGPR) isolated from cork oak (*Quercus suber*) stands. The project aims to integrate existing knowledge and microbial resources to develop effective biocontrol strategies targeting major cork oak pathogens. These activities are aligned with broader objectives of sustainable forest management and plant health.

Throughout the contract period, the candidates will engage in laboratory and field work, data analysis, and dissemination activities. Specific tasks to be undertaken include:

Task 1: Characterization of the nature of antagonistic compounds produced by selected isolates, including the use of biochemical and molecular techniques to determine whether activity is due to volatile, diffusible, or enzymatic compounds.

Task 2: Production and optimization of aqueous extracts enriched in antagonistic compounds, with a view to evaluating their potential use as localized biocontrol agents and minimizing ecological risks.

Task 3: Integration of results and assessment of applicability, including comparative analysis of individual isolates versus consortia, and the preparation of reports and scientific communications.

In addition to these technical tasks, candidates will be expected to:

- Participate in regular project meetings and progress reviews;
- Contribute to scientific publications and dissemination activities;
- Engage in collaborative work with team members and project partners;
- Take part in fieldwork, interacting with cork oak producers.

The work plan is designed to provide advanced scientific training in microbial ecology, plant-microbe interactions, biocontrol strategies, and analytical methods, and to foster the development of transferable skills relevant to academic and professional careers in environmental biotechnology and forest health.

**Applicable legislation and regulations:** Research Fellow Statute (EBI), approved by Law n°. 40/2004 of August 18, in its current wording and FCT Research Fellowship Regulation, approved by Regulation n° 950/2019, published in the Diário da República, 2nd series, of December 16, 2019, in its current wording, and Scientific Research Fellowship Regulation (RBIC) of the University of Minho, approved by order n° 4998/2025, published in the Diário da República, 2nd series, n° 81, of April 28, 2025 Amended and republished through amendment statement no. 634/2025/2, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, no. 132, of July 11.

**Host/Contracting institution and scientific supervision:** The workplan will be carried out in the Centre of Molecular and Environmental Biology, located in the Campus de Gualtar-Braga, under the scientific supervision of Prof. Teresa Lino Neto.

**Fellowship duration:** The grant will take place for a period of 12 months, with a provisional starting date on the November of 2026. The fellowship grant may, eventually, be renewed up to the maximum limit allowed by the project or applicable legislation.

**Amount of the research grant:** The amount of the grant corresponds to 1359,64 €/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 5º of the Research Fellow Statutes and applicable regulations.

**Selection panel:**

President: Rui Manuel Peixoto Tavares, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, School of Sciences, University of Minho;

Effective members:

Maria Teresa Correia Guedes Lino Neto, Associate Professor with Habilitation, Department of Biology, School of Sciences, University of Minho;

Cristina Alexandra Almeida Aguiar, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, School of Sciences, University of Minho.

Substitute members:

Sofia Santos Rocha Costa, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, School of Sciences, University of Minho;

Pedro Miguel Amadeu Costa Santos, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, School of Sciences, 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.

The Jury undertake the commitment to respect a set of responsibilities essential to the evaluation process, such as the duties of impartiality, of stating any potential situations of conflict of interest and confidentiality.

**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 1 (insufficient) to 5 (excellent):

## **A. Merit of the applicant (MC)**

**A.1:** (30%) Academic background of the candidate, assessing their performance in degrees and courses relevant to the field of the call and the work to be developed, as well as previous experience in research projects.

**A.2:** (40%) Experience and interest in the specified areas, highlighting experimental skills and providing access to a representative document (such as an article, thesis, or conference presentation) aligned with the field of the call and the proposed work.

**A.3:** (30%) Motivation letter, which will be evaluated in terms of clarity, relevance, and alignment of the candidate's goals with the project topic.

The classification of the Candidate's Merit (MC) will be determined using the following formula:

$$\text{MC} = (\text{A.1} \times 0.3) + (\text{A.2} \times 0.4) + (\text{A.3} \times 0.3)$$

**The jury may also decide not to award the Scholarship if none of the candidates achieves a final grade above 4.**

**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 [tlneto@bio.uminho.pt](mailto:tlneto@bio.uminho.pt), indicating the reference number of the competition in the subject line: **BI2/SuberSafe - CBMA/2026**. Only applications submitted within the established deadline and accompanied by the following documents will be accepted:

- a) Candidate's updated curriculum vitae (pdf form), including the telephone and email contacts of the candidate;
- b) Detailed list of grades (pdf format);
- c) 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.º 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;

d) Motivation letter explaining the interest in the position and your previous experience relevant to the project (pdf format),

e) A representative document (such as an article, thesis, or conference presentation) aligned with the field of the call and the proposed work.

**Form of publication/notification of results:** The results of the evaluation are published in a single list, 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(nº6) 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 point 2.4 of the Rules for the Award and Management of Scholarships

[https://www.fct.pt/wpcontent/uploads/2022/03/Normas\\_de\\_Atribuicao\\_de\\_Bolsas\\_2021.pdf](https://www.fct.pt/wpcontent/uploads/2022/03/Normas_de_Atribuicao_de_Bolsas_2021.pdf) and the draft contract in Annex II of the University of Minho's Scientific Research Scholarship Regulations.

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. Once received by the scholarship holder, the contract must be returned, duly signed, within 15 working days.

**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 conclusion 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)