

EMBARGO UNTIL Monday 13 September 2021 - 10.00 GMT+1

Research institutes launch first European-wide programme to train physician-scientists

Deadline for applications is 14th November 2021

Oeiras, 13th September - The Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência has joined six other biomedical research institutes to train Europe's next generation of physician-scientists, providing medical doctors with state-of-the-art biomedicine skills and help bridge the gap between laboratory research and clinical practice. The EMERALD project is part of the strategy conducted by the IGC to promote scientific partnerships with different sectors in order to generate new knowledge with an impact on improving society's quality of life.

Despite rapid advances in biomedical research, new discoveries do not always immediately translate into medical innovations that improve diagnostics or result in new and better treatments. Bridging this gap, known as the 'valley of death', is key to tackling global health challenges such as diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and cancer. Physician-scientists, medical doctors with a PhD in research, are uniquely placed to overcome this barrier through their clinical insights, which can help identify where innovative research is most urgently needed and expand that knowledge for the benefit of patients.

"We urgently require scientists with a medical background who will play a crucial role in applying advances in omics, big data, artificial intelligence or high-resolution microscopy to address patient needs in the 21st century", **says Michela Bertero, Head of International and Scientific Affairs at the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG), which is coordinating the training programme.** "However, the fragmentation of healthcare systems in Europe means that European MDPhD programmes have been historically isolated, often lacking in collaboration and cross-border mobility."

For Luís Moita, researcher and programme coordinator at the IGC, this "is a project that stimulates the necessary dialogue between research and clinics and helps to speed up the identification of innovative solutions both in the treatment of diseases and in health promotion."

Now seven biomedical research institutes and thirty associate partners across ten different European countries will overcome this challenge by joining efforts to create EMERALD, the first European-wide physician-scientist training programme of its kind. Funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme, EMERALD will provide medical doctors with unique opportunities to move to a different country to do a cutting-edge PhD research project, to participate in tailored summer schools, peer-mentoring and to explore new collaborations.

EMBARGO UNTIL Monday 13 September 2021 - 10.00 GMT+1

The first call, for a total of 12 positions, opens today. Each position will be based at one of seven host institutes with previous experience running physician-scientist training programmes. Alongside the host institutions, there are more than 30 partners from 10 European countries, including universities, hospitals, patient associations, pharmaceutical companies and publishers, with each partner offering secondment opportunities, collaborations and bespoke training for the medical doctors.

The host institutions are:

- The Centre for Genomic Regulation (**CRG**) in Barcelona, Spain
- The Institut **Curie** in Paris, France
- The Biotech Research & Innovation Centre (**BRIC**) at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- The Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian - Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência (**IGC**) in Lisbon, Portugal
- The Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association (**MDC**) in Berlin, Germany
- The Nederlands Kanker Instituut (**NKI**) in Amsterdam, Netherlands
- The Flanders Institute for Biotechnology (**VIB**) in Ghent, Belgium

Further details on the application process can be found on the [EMERALD project's website](#). The initial deadline for applications is 14th November 2021.

Contact

Ana Morais
Head of Institutional Communication
@: anamorais@igc.gulbenkian.pt
Contact: +351 965 249 488

About EMERALD

The “International PhD Programme for Medical Doctors”, EMERALD, will train and nurture excellent physician- scientists. The programme will recruit medical doctors to carry out a PhD in cutting-edge research in European centres of excellence in life sciences and biomedicine. Coordinated by the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) in Barcelona, EMERALD brings together 7 biomedical research institutes and 37 partner organizations across ten European countries to deliver its international training programme.