

Jury Meeting Minute

Research Fellowship

CoLAB-AccelBio/BI/1-2025

Associação AccelBio – Collaborative Laboratory to foster translation and drug discovery - opened a call to hire a Researcher under a fellowship within the project “PregnancySAFE: A human placenta-heart microfluidic device for drug safety validation during pregnancy” with the funding support from Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT), project n.º 2023.11807.PEX

The job advert was published in AccelBio website, LinkedIn and Euraxess. The call was open from January 6th to January 20th 2025, having applied the candidates indicated in the Annex I.

On the 21st of January of 2025, the jury composed by Bárbara Gomes (President of the Jury), Silvia Almeida and Mariana Branco analyze the application documents (- Detailed CV; - Motivation letter in English; - Degree Certificate).

The admitted applications were analyzed according to the following selection method, which was also indicated in the job advert:

- A) Curriculum Evaluation and Motivation Letter (60%) based on the following criteria:
- Absolute merit of the Curriculum Vitae in the frame of the Institute's broader interdisciplinary project (50%);
 - Suitability of the candidate's profile to the work plan (30%);
 - Additional characteristics, such as the implicit motivation shown for the work to be carried out and availability to start the scholarship (20%)
- B) Interview (40%) based on the following criteria:
- Communication skills (40%);
 - Motivation and Interest for the workplan (60%):

All the candidates were invited to the interview:

- Mafalda Vicente
- Paola Pirela

- Yiming Dong

The candidate, Yiming Dong, cancelled the interview following his decision of not moving to Portugal.

To decide the granting of the Research Fellowship, applicants were ranked according to the weighted average of the score obtained in each of the two criteria, according to the following formula:

$$\text{Final classification} = (0,6 * A) + (0,4 * B)$$

The analysis and discrimination of the admitted candidate's classification, as well as the total classification, are presented in the tables of Annex I attached to this minute.

Cantanhede, 28th of January of 2025

Bárbara Gomes, AccelBio's CEO
(President of the Jury)

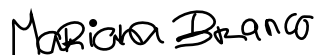


Assinado por: Bárbara Sofia
Lopes Gomes
Identificação: B113355018
Data: 2025-01-29 às 09:40:31

Members of the Jury

Assinado por: **SÍLVIA CRISTINA DE PAIVA E
ALMEIDA**
Num. de Identificação: 10255997
Data: 2025.01.29 09:05:39+00'00'

Silvia Almeida
AccelBio's CSO



Mariana Branco
AccelBio's Scientist and
Principal Investigator

Annex I

EVALUATION - Research Fellow - CoLAB-AccelBio/BI/1-2025											
Criteria	Criterion A - (0-60)									Criterion A Final Score (0-60)	
	A1- Merit of CV (0-50)			A2 - Adequacy of the candidate (0-30)			A3 - Motivation and Availability (0-20)				
Jury	MB	SA	BG	MB	SA	BG	MB	SA	BG		
Candidates	Mafalda Vicente	45	45	50	25	25	25	20	20	20	
	Justification	Strong experience working with hiPSCs and heart organoid models (Master Thesis); Currently working at Hovione: implementation and monitoring of supply chain (management and processes optimization skills)	MV holds an MSc/BSc on Biological Engineering. She has relevant experience handling hiPSCs and differentiating them into 3D in vitro cardiac models. No experience in bioprinting or relevant in vitro assays. She is currently working on implementation and monitoring of Supply Chain KPIs at Hovione (since Sep 2024).	Excellent CV, featuring a BSc and MSc in Biological Engineering, with academic merits at both levels. The candidate's Master's thesis, developed in the Netherlands, is closely related to the topic of the advertised position. Currently employed at Hovione, where the candidate is developing management skills that will be highly relevant to the role	Experience with: 1) hiPSCs culture; generation of hiPSC-derived bioengineered 3D heart organoids; 3) heart-on-chip micro-engineered heart tissues	MV has experience in 1. hiPSC culture; 2. differentiation of hiPSCs into 3D cardiac organoids; 3. heart-on-chip micro-engineered heart tissues. No experience in 3D (bio)printing or in vitro assays (ELISA, IF, cytotoxic assays, IF).	The candidate possesses strong experience and expertise in key techniques required for the position, including hiPSC culture, differentiation of hiPSCs into 3D cardiac organoids, and the development of heart-on-chip micro-engineered heart tissues. However, there is no mention of experience with 3D bioprinting or ELISA. Additionally, the candidate has demonstrated effective collaboration with multidisciplinary teams, including international experience, having	Fully motivated; Currently working at Hovione	MV is clearly very motivated about the field and the position, and demonstrates a good understanding of AccelBio's mission and alignment with project goals. MV is currently employed at Hovione.	The candidate is clearly highly motivated by the field and the position, and shows a strong understanding of AccelBio's mission and alignment with the project goals.	55
	Paola Pirela	48	48	50	28	28	28	20	18	20	
	Justification	Experience working with Biomaterials; 3D printing and hiPSCs. Multidisciplinary work experience: hiPSCs-derived liver models; 3D epidemics models; clinical trials	MV holds an MSc on Bioengineering: regenerative and precision medicine and a BSc on Molecular Biology and Genetics. She has relevant experience handling hiPSCs and differentiating them into 3D in vitro hepatic models and 3D bioprinting via microextrusion. Performed cell viability assays, ELISA and IF.	Excellent CV, featuring a BSc in Molecular Biology and Genetics and an MSc in Bioengineering with a focus on regenerative and precision medicine. The candidate's Master's thesis focused on 3D bioprinting of a liver lobule based on human induced pluripotent stem cells. Additionally, the candidate has experience in clinical trial monitoring and	Experience with: 1) hiPSCs culture; 2) 3D bioprinting via microextrusion; 3) Synthesis of natural biomaterials; 4) Analysis of synthesized hydrogels; 5) cell viability tests using calcein/ethidium staining	PP has experience in 1. hiPSC culture; 2. 3D bioprinting via microextrusion; 3. Synthesis of natural biomaterials; 4. Analysis of synthesized hydrogels; 5. cell viability assays using calcein/ethidium staining; 6. ELISA assays 7. IF assays	Strong experience and expertise in nearly all the techniques required for the position.	Fully motivated and aligned with project mission	PP is clearly very motivated about the field and the position, and demonstrates a good understanding of AccelBio's mission and alignment with project goals. It is not possible to ascertain if PP is immediately available.	The candidate is clearly highly motivated by the field and the position, and shows a strong understanding of AccelBio's mission and alignment with the project goals.	57.6
Yiming Dong	47	43	45	30	25	23	20	15	15		
Justification	Very strong Biomaterial and Bioprinting background and experience. Lack of experience with cell culture (Non-experience with hiPSC culture)	YD holds an MSc on Materials Engineering and a BSc on Biological Engineering. He has relevant experience on 3D (bio)printing, lacking experience handling hiPSCs. YD has only handled UMR-106 cells.	very good CV, featuring a BSc in Macromolecular Materials and Engineering and an MSc in Materials Engineering and Nanotechnology. The candidate's Master's thesis focused on 3D printing using photo-click gelatin hydrogels.	Experience with: 1) Bioprinting using a CELLINK extrusion printer; 2) Prepare bioinks; 3) 3D printing using photo-click gelatin hydrogels; 4) Design of microfluidic chip models with Fusion 360	YD has experience in: 1. Bioprinting using a CELLINK extrusion printer; 2. Preparation of bioinks; 3. 3D printing using photo-click gelatin hydrogels; 4. Design of microfluidic chip models with Fusion 360. No experience in in vitro assays (ELISA, IF, cytotoxic assays, IF) and in handling hiPSCs.	The candidate has a strong experience in bioprinting and in the design of chip models, but lacks experience in hiPSC culture and other in vitro assays.	Fully motivated and aligned with project mission	YD is very motivated about the field. He does not elaborate on AccelBio's mission and alignment with project goals, and uses the letter as an extension of his CV to further dwell on his expertise. It is not possible to ascertain if YD is immediately available. The letter would have benefited from a linguistic review.	The candidate seems to be highly motivated by the field but does not elaborate on AccelBio's mission or alignment with the project goals.	52.6	

				EVALUATION - Research Fellow - CoLAB-AccelBio/BI/1-2025							
		Criteria	Criterium B- (0-40)						Criterium B Final Score	Criterium A Final Score	A+B Final Score
			B1 - Communication skills (0-40)			B2 - Motivation and adequacy for the WP (0-60)					
Jury	Jury	MB	SA	BG	MB	SA	BG				
Candidates	Mafalda Vicente	40	40	40	55	58	58	38.8	55.0	93.8	
	Justification	The candidate demonstrated strong communication skills by clearly and professionally answering all questions about her career path and future motivations. She also asked pertinent and insightful scientific questions related to the project, as well as the potential for future integration with AccelBio, showcasing her ability to engage in meaningful dialogue and address key topics effectively.	MV participated in the interview in a very professional, structured, clear and calm manner. She engaged in the process in a very articulate and productive way, and was able to deploy well thought responses and to pose pertinent questions, related to the role, the project and AccelBio also.. She was able to clearly present her career intentions and aspirations in the near future.	The candidate demonstrated excellent communication skills throughout the interview, answering questions about her career path and future aspirations in a clear, professional, and structured manner. She engaged thoughtfully in the discussion, providing well-considered responses and posing insightful, relevant questions about the project and the potential for future collaboration with AccelBio.	The candidate, despite having some technical gaps in expertise, demonstrated strong motivation to integrate the project and was confident that she will be able to overcome them. She also expressed a clear willingness to travel abroad and spend a few months working at KUL with our collaborator, highlighting her flexibility and commitment to the project's success.	MV was able to very clearly show her motivation and her intention to engage in research and to move on into a PhD in her near future. MV was quite enthusiastic about spending a considerable part of the fellowship at KUL, something she has already done during her MSc. She has valuable learnings from her current role at Hovione, which would be a good addition and complement in a position such as this, bridging Academia and the Market. She understands the challenges entailed in the role, while also confident she will be able to overcome them.	The candidate demonstrated strong motivation and a clear intention to pursue a PhD while engaging in the research project. She expressed enthusiasm about spending a significant portion of the fellowship at KUL, having previously gained experience there during her MSc. With valuable insights from her current role at Hovione, she would be well-equipped to bridge academia and industry.				
	Paola Pirela	25	28	25	50	50	52				30.7
Justification	The candidate demonstrated during the interview some moments of unprofessional behavior, and her answers regarding past educational and professional experiences were occasionally incoherent and difficult to follow. Nevertheless, she was able to clearly articulate her future aspirations and posed insightful, pertinent questions related to both the scientific aspects of the project and AccelBio's mission.	PP participated in the interview in a manner that disclosed a posture not always professional. Even though it is understandable a job interview can be quite stressful, PP started laughing on more than one occasion, which created some uncomfortableness for the interviewer involved in the process. Maybe due to what PP described as nervousness, she was not always able to articulate her responses in a clear and logical way. It must be noted PP did pose pertinent questions, related to the role, the project and AccelBio also. She presented some of her career intentions and aspirations in the near future.	During the interview, the candidate displayed moments of inappropriate behavior. Although the interview was understandably stressful, the candidate occasionally laughed, creating discomfort for the interviewer. Despite this, she was able to clearly express her future aspirations and asked insightful and relevant questions concerning the scientific aspects of the project and AccelBio's mission. Nevertheless, her answers were not always presented in a coherent and logical manner.	The candidate demonstrated technical skills and scientific know-how that align well with the scientific requirements of the fellowship. She also expressed her intention to pursue a PhD in the near future but more focused on a fundamental research, which may not fully align with AccelBio's vision. She raised some concerns about spending a significant portion of the fellowship at KUL, as she has no prior studying/working experience outside Portugal.	PP was able to show her motivation and her intention to engage in research and to move on to a PhD in her near future. PP expressed some concerns about spending a considerable part of the fellowship at KUL, and she verbalised she has never spent such an extensive period outside of Portugal. This remark raised some concerns for the interviewer. She has interesting learnings from a previous role at PhD Trials as a Clinical Trial Technician, which might be a good addition in a position such as this, bridging Academia and the Market. She displayed good understanding of the challenges entailed in the role.	The candidate demonstrated strong technical skills and scientific knowledge relevant to the fellowship. She expressed a desire to pursue a PhD focused on fundamental research, which may not fully align with AccelBio's vision. However, her previous role as a Clinical Trial Technician at PhD Trials could provide valuable insights for bridging academia and industry.					