

Call for Applications for the Award of 1 Research Initiation Grant (BII) for Undergraduate Students

Summary

A call is now open for the award of one (1) Research Initiation Grant (BII), reference **SCENTBOND/08/BII/2026**, within the scope of the project “Scent Bonding: Examining Emotional Olfactory Cues of Human Interaction” (Ref. 2024.16838.PEX - <https://doi.org/10.54499/2024.16838.PEX>), funded by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under the 2024 call for exploratory research projects in all scientific domains. The grant will be carried out at the William James Center for Research, at ISPA – Instituto Universitário.

1. Scientific Area(s): Psychology

2. Funding:

Funded by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under the 2024 call for exploratory research projects in all scientific domains.

3. Candidate Profile:

Mandatory requirements:

- i. Applicants must be enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology or a related scientific field at the time of application.

Preferred factors:

- i. Previous experience in data collection in laboratory settings;
- ii. Previous experience in research using psychophysiological measures (e.g., electrocardiogram, electromyography, skin conductance response);
- iii. Proficiency in Portuguese and English, both written and spoken.

4. Mandatory Requirements for Admission

To be eligible, applicants must submit the following documents (failure to do so will result in exclusion):

- a) Proof of enrollment in a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology or a related field;
- b) Detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- c) Motivation letter.

Only applicants who can prove they are enrolled in an undergraduate program at the application deadline will be admitted.

If proof of enrollment is not yet available at the time of application, applicants may submit a declaration of honor stating that they are enrolled in a Bachelor's program, committing to provide official proof before the grant contract is signed.

The award of the grant is conditional upon verification of the legally required conditions and submission of all supporting documents.

Applicants enrolled in foreign higher education institutions must provide an official document issued by that institution. Additional documentation may be requested if necessary to assess eligibility.

Failure to submit required documents, or submission of incomplete, incorrect, or illegible documents, will result in exclusion.

False statements will lead to exclusion, without prejudice to further legal measures.

5. Requirements for Grant Contracting

The selected candidate must, at the time of contract signature, provide proof of enrollment and compliance with all eligibility requirements.

Additional documents required include a Personal data form, Ciência ID, Copy of identification document, and a Declaration of honor regarding compliance with the legal framework of research grants

False statements may lead to cancellation of the application or grant.

6. Work Plan

The project "Scent Bonding: Examining Emotional Olfactory Cues of Human Interaction" aims to investigate the role of emotional body odors in modulating human interaction, integrating olfactory and visual cues in experimental paradigms.

The grant holder will collaborate, under supervision, in:

- Implementation of experimental protocols to induce emotional states (happiness, anger, neutral) and collection of axillary sweat samples;
- Collection, processing, and monitoring of psychophysiological measures (e.g., electrodermal activity, ECG, facial EMG) and self-report measures;
- Organization, storage, and preparation of olfactory stimuli;
- Programming and implementation of behavioral paradigms with synchronized presentation of facial and olfactory stimuli;
- Operation and management of olfactometers;
- Recruitment and testing of participants;
- Data processing, organization, and statistical analysis;
- Preparation of preregistrations and adoption of open science practices.

7. Applicable Legislation and Regulations

Law no. 40/2004, of August 18, as amended by Decree-Law no. 123/2019, of August 28 (Research Fellowship Holder Statute – EBI); Regulation no. 950/2019, of November 29, published in the Portuguese Official Gazette (Diário da República), no. 241, Series II, of December 16 (Regulation of Research Grants of the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia – RFI); Decree-Law no. 66/2018, of August 16 (Legal framework for the recognition of academic degrees and higher education diplomas awarded by foreign higher education institutions); ISPA – Instituto Universitário Research Grant Regulations; and other applicable legislation.

8. Workplace and Supervision

The grant contract will be signed with ISPA, CRL (contracting entity). The work will be carried out at the William James Center for Research (host institution), at ISPA – Instituto Universitário, and, if necessary, at other locations required for the implementation of the work plan.

Scientific supervision will be ensured by the Principal Investigator of the project, Dr. Nuno Gomes, with the collaboration of Dr. Inês Mares (member of the research team).

9. Duration

The grant is expected to last 6 months and may be renewed for additional periods up to the maximum duration of the project, subject to the project budget and limited by the maximum period established for this type of grant under Article 6, paragraphs 4 and 5, of the FCT Research Grant Regulations.

The grant is expected to start on May 2, 2026.

10. Financial Conditions and Other Grant Components

The monthly grant amount, corresponding to full-time dedication, is €651.12, in accordance with the grant value table established by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia for grants awarded in Portugal (https://www.fct.pt/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Tabela_valores_SMM_2025.pdf). This amount may be subject to applicable updates and will be paid monthly by bank transfer to the grant holder.

The grant holder will benefit from personal accident insurance and, if not covered by any social protection scheme, may exercise the right to social security by adhering to the voluntary social insurance scheme (Decree-Law no. 40/89, of February 1; Article 10 of the Research Fellowship Holder Statute).

11. Application Submission

Applications are open from April 1, 2026, to April 15, 2026, at 11:00 PM (Lisbon time). Only applications submitted and received within the established deadline will be considered.

Applications must be submitted by email to candidaturas.investigadores@ispa.pt, with wjrc@ispa.pt in copy and must include the reference **SCENTBOND/08/BII/2026** in the subject line.

Applications must be accompanied by the following documents (as indicated in point 4):

- a) Proof of enrollment in a Bachelor's degree in Psychology or a related scientific field;
- b) Detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- c) Motivation letter.

All documents must be submitted in PDF format.

Applicants who incorrectly submit their application or fail to provide proof of the required eligibility criteria, as defined in this call, may be excluded from the selection process.

12. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

The evaluation and selection process will be conducted based on the assessment of the candidate's merit, according to the following criteria and weightings:

A) Scientific and curricular merit, including academic background (50%), considering:

- Experience in experimental research in Psychology;
- Experience in experimental methodologies and/or psychophysiological techniques;

B) Motivation letter (50%), considering:

- Alignment of the academic background with the project's objectives;
- Demonstrated interest and motivation for the tasks outlined in the work plan;
- Potential for integration into the research team.

Applications will be evaluated and scored on a scale from 0.00 to 20.00 for each criterion. The final classification will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Final Score} = (A \times 50\%) + (B \times 50\%)$$

In the event of a tie, candidates will be ranked based on the score obtained in criterion A). If the tie persists, the jury will decide by majority.

13. Jury Composition

The evaluation jury will be composed of:

- Dr. Nuno Gomes (Assistant Professor at ISPA – Instituto Universitário; Integrated Researcher at the William James Center for Research; President);
- Dr. Inês Mares (Assistant Professor at ISPA – Instituto Universitário; Integrated Researcher at the William James Center for Research; Full Member);
- Miguel F. Benrós, MSc (PhD Candidate at ISPA – Instituto Universitário; William James Center for Research; Full Member);
- Dr. Lénia Amaral (Assistant Professor at ISPA – Instituto Universitário; Integrated Researcher at the William James Center for Research; Alternate Member);
- Dr. Magda Saraiva (Assistant Professor at ISPA – Instituto Universitário; Integrated Researcher at the William James Center for Research; Alternate Member).

14. Communication of Results

All applicants will be notified of the minutes of the evaluation process by email, sent to the address provided for this purpose, with a delivery receipt.

Notifications will be made by email, in accordance with Articles 112(1)(c) and 113(5) of the Portuguese Code of Administrative Procedure.

15. Deadlines and Procedures for Prior Hearing, Complaints, and Appeals

After the provisional results list is communicated, candidates have a period of 10 working days to submit comments as part of a prior hearing, in accordance with Articles 121 et seq. of the Portuguese Code of Administrative Procedure. The final decision will be issued after considering the comments submitted during the prior hearing. Once this decision is communicated, the selected candidate has 10 working days to formally accept the awarded grant in writing. Failure to provide a valid justification within this period will be considered as a renunciation or withdrawal of the grant.

Following the final decision, candidates may submit a complaint within 15 working days, or appeal to the highest executive body of the funding institution within 30 working days, both counted from the date of notification.

If the selected candidate renounces the grant or withdraws their intention to accept it, the jury may notify and award the grant to the next-ranked candidate, if applicable, according to the final ranking list.

16. Grant Contract and Final Report Templates

The template for the grant contract, as well as the template for the final report to be prepared by the grant holder and the supervisor, together with the corresponding evaluation criteria, can be consulted in the ISPA – Instituto Universitário Research Grant Regulations (Annexes 2, 3, 4, and 5) at:
https://intranet.ispa.pt/sites/default/files/users/531/rg102_bols_invest_cient_v4.0.pdf

17. Publication of the Call Notice

This notice is published:

- a) On the EURAXESS platform, in both Portuguese and English;
- b) On the ISPA website, in both Portuguese and English;
- c) On ISPA's social media channels.

18. Non-Discrimination and Equal Access Policy

ISPA actively promotes a policy of gender equality, diversity, and inclusion, taking careful measures to prevent any form of discrimination. In this context, terms such as “candidate,”

“researcher,” “PhD holder,” and similar are used in this document without reference to the gender of individuals.

In accordance with Decree-Law No. 29/2001 of February 3, candidates with disabilities have priority in cases of equal ranking, which prevails over any other legal preference. Applicants must declare, under a declaration of honor, their degree of disability, type of impairment, and the means of communication/expression to be used during the selection process, as provided in the aforementioned law.

19. Personal Data Protection

By applying, the candidate provides the necessary information and consent for the processing of personal data, solely for the purpose of collection and integration into the database of the selection procedure, and for the duration of the process, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Documents submitted as part of this procedure constitute administrative records and will be accessed in compliance with Law No. 26/2016 of August 22, as amended.