Gulbenkian Institute *for* Molecular Medicine

OPEN CALL FOR AN INSECTARY TECHNICIAN

Position

GIMM – Gulbenkian Institute for Molecular Medicine is opening a position for an Insectary Technician to support the operation, maintenance, and scientific activities of its mosquito insectary, with a particular focus on *Anopheles* mosquitoes and *Plasmodium* parasite infection models.

The selected candidate will be responsible for ensuring the continuous production, maintenance, infection, and monitoring of *Anopheles* mosquitoes and *Plasmodium* parasite lines, supporting researchers in experimental planning and execution, and contributing to the smooth daily functioning of the insectary.

Main responsibilities

The Insectary Technician will be expected to:

- Produce and maintain *Anopheles* mosquitoes throughout the year, including the handling of all stages of the mosquito life cycle, from egg collection to the selection of adult female mosquitoes, including larval and pupal culture, feeding, and adult mosquito maintenance.
- Prepare larval and mosquito food, approximately three times per week.
- Aspirate and select mosquitoes, approximately four times per week.
- Manage the weekend mosquito feeding rota.
- Infect mosquitoes with *Plasmodium berghei* and *Plasmodium yoelii* on a weekly basis, over two consecutive days, including prior intraperitoneal infection of rodents with infected erythrocytes and animal anaesthesia for mosquito exposure and infection.
- Plan mosquito infections with the required parasite lines at least one month in advance.
- Maintain blood cultures of *Plasmodium falciparum* parasite lines.
- Infect mosquitoes with *Plasmodium falciparum* parasites using feeder systems.
- Maintain appropriate stocks of *P. berghei*, *P. yoelii*, and *P. falciparum* parasite lines, including stock management and expansion whenever required.
- Expand, store, and maintain new parasite lines.
- Prepare blood smears, fix and stain slides, and count parasitaemia by light microscopy.
- Monitor *Plasmodium* parasite exflagellation by light microscopy.
- Dissect mosquito midguts and count oocysts**.**

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- Manage the availability of mosquitoes infected with different parasite lines according to researchers' needs.
- Maintain records of sporozoite yields obtained in each dissection session performed by researchers.
- Order materials required for the insectary, including cages, food, cotton, and other consumables.
- Assemble clean mosquito cages and disassemble cages for washing on a weekly basis.
- Receive and store weekly water deliveries.
- Manage the monthly collection and delivery of lab coats for washing.
- Keep insectary benches and shelves clean and organized.
- Perform weekly cleaning of incubators.
- Conduct visits to the insectary and provide training to students and users.
- Prepare larvae, mosquitoes, and blood smears for external laboratory presentations.
- Support laboratory members in experiments involving animal procedures, including intraperitoneal injections and cardiac punctures, in accordance with applicable rules, training, and ethical approvals.

Candidate profile

The ideal candidate should:

- Hold a BSc/MSc degree in Science;
- Have solid knowledge of the *Anopheles* mosquito life cycle and experience in mosquito maintenance and manipulation;
- Have experience or strong motivation to work with *Plasmodium* parasite models;
- Be highly organized and able to work with well-established routines and strict experimental planning;
- Be highly responsible and attentive to detail, while being able to promptly report any unexpected issues or deviations;
- Be proactive and able to anticipate operational needs;
- Be able to manage requests from different researchers in a professional, fair, and assertive manner;
- Be prepared to work in an environment with high temperature and humidity;
- Be comfortable working with animal models and biological materials, in accordance with institutional procedures and applicable regulations;
- Have good communication skills in English**.**

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Preferred qualifications and experience

- Previous experience in insectary work, particularly with *Anopheles* mosquitoes.
- Previous experience with *Plasmodium* infection models.
- Experience in parasite culture, microscopy, blood smear preparation, oocyst counting, or sporozoite yield monitoring.
- Experience in laboratory stock management and routine facility organization.
- Training or previous experience in animal experimentation procedures.

Working conditions

The selected candidate will join a highly collaborative scientific environment and will work closely with researchers, students, and technical staff. The position requires the ability to follow strict routines, ensure continuity of mosquito and parasite lines, and respond to the operational needs of multiple research groups.
Some activities may require occasional work outside standard working hours, including coordination of weekend feeding rotas, according to the needs of the insectary.

Application process

Applications should include:

- Curriculum Vitae;
- Motivation letter;
- Contact details of at least one reference, if available.

Applications must be submitted by 31 July 2026 to positions@gimm.pt, indicating the reference "Insectary Technician" in the subject line.

Evaluation and selection

Applications will be evaluated according to the candidate's experience, technical skills, motivation, organizational capacity, and suitability for the position. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview.
GIMM is committed to promoting equal opportunities and values diversity, inclusion, and respect in all recruitment processes.

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