

PARSUK- FCT Bilateral Research Fund (BRF)

2026

Announcement of Selected Projects

We are pleased to announce the outcome of the 2026 PARSUK BRF call. This year, we received **17 applications**, and the Selection Committee has approved **5 projects** for funding in the 2026 cycle. Applications were ranked based on three independent reviewer scores. Following a thorough review process, PARSUK is pleased to share the full ranking of all submitted applications and to announce the **projects selected to receive a grant of €3,000 each**:

1. Early-life adiposity dynamics as determinants of cardiometabolic risk in young adulthood: a UK–Portugal collaborative study
2. Engineering the mechanical niche to understand brain organoid morphogenesis
3. Decoding DNA replication across the cancer epigenome
4. In vivo imaging of glioblastoma microstructure (GBscope)
5. SAFE-CYCLE UK-PT: Benchmarking Bikeable and CycleRAP for Proactive Cycling Safety in London

Full details of each project, rating criteria, and conflict of interest policy are set out in the following pages.

BRF 2026 Results				
R	Project	PT Institution	UK Institution	Score (0-5)
1	Early-life adiposity dynamics as determinants of cardiometabolic risk in young adulthood: a UK-Portugal collaborative study	Institute of Public Health of the University of Porto (ISPUP)	Medical Research Council (MRC) Integrative Epidemiology Unit (IEU) at the University of Bristol	4.38
2	Engineering the mechanical niche to understand brain organoid morphogenesis	ST-ID - Associação do Instituto Superior Técnico para a Investigação e Desenvolvimento	UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health	4.07
3	Decoding DNA replication across the cancer epigenome	UCIBIO, Departamento Ciências da Vida, NOVA School of Science and Technology,	University of Cambridge	4.07
4	In vivo imaging of glioblastoma microstructure (GBscope)	i3S - Institute for Research and Innovation in Health	King's College London	4.05
5	SAFE-CYCLE UK-PT: Benchmarking Bikeable and CycleRAP for Proactive Cycling Safety in London	Department of Civil Engineering Rua Luís Reis Santos Pólo II da Universidade de Coimbra	London School of Economics and Political Science	4.05
6	The pre-resistance mobilome: transposons, defence systems, and gene flux in environmental Pseudomonas megaplasmids	CBQF Centre for Biotechnology and Fine Chemistry	University of Liverpool	3.98
7	Precision Quantitative CT Phenotyping of Vascular and Airway Structures to Predict ILD Progression	INESC TEC	University College London	3.98
8	Digital Literacy Among Nursing Students: A UK-Portugal Collaborative Research Initiative	Universidade de Lisboa/Escola Superior de Enfermagem	Robert Gordon University, School of Law and Social Sciences	3.31

BRF 2026 Results				
R	Project	PT Institution	UK Institution	Score (0-5)
9	WAR IMAGES: Photographic Histories of Conflict	Instituto de História da Arte (IHA-NOVA FCSH) – Colégio Almada Negreiros – Universidade Nova de Lisboa	De Montfort University / School of Creative Industries and Culture / Photographic History Research Centre (PHRC)	3.17
10	Warming rewires trophic webs in ponds from Northern and Southern Europe	Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa	School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences/Queen Mary University of London	3.14
11	Accelerating Railway Overhead Line Simulations through Parallel Computing	IDMEC - Instituto de Engenharia Mecânica	IRR - Institute of Railway Research, University of Huddersfield	3.10
12	Heat stress and kelp resilience: comparative thermal tolerance of <i>Laminaria hyperborea</i> populations under contrasting environmental conditions across the northeastern Atlantic	Centro Interdisciplinar de Investigação Marinha e Ambiental	The Marine Biological Association of the UK	3.02
13	Aftershocks – Electoral reactions to disasters in multilevel political settings	Departamento de Estudos Políticos, NOVA University Lisbon	London School of Economics and Political Science	2.95
14	AI-Enhanced Adaptive Modeling of On-Body Wireless Propagation for Smart Wearable Systems	Instituto de Telecomunicações Universidade de Aveiro	Durham University	2.6
15	Explainable longitudinal multi-modal fusion model for women’s cancers	Instituto Superior Tecnico	University of Cambridge	1.8
16	Improving Biogas Production from Waste: Molecular Insights into Micro-Aeration Strategies	University of Minho	Imperial College London	1.6
17	Reliability-Aware Federated Learning for Intrusion Detection in IoT Systems: A UK-Portugal Collaboration	ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa	ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa	1.5

Rating Criteria

Each application was independently scored by three reviewers on a scale of 0 to 5 across the evaluation criteria, as follows:

- 0** – The proposal fails to address the criteria, or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- 1** – Poor. The criteria are inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2** – Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criteria, but significant weaknesses are present.
- 3** – Good. The proposal addresses the criteria well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- 4** – Very Good. The proposal addresses the criteria very well, with only minor shortcomings.
- 5** – Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criteria. Any shortcomings are minor.

Conflict of Interest Policy

All members of the Selection Committee declared any potential conflicts of interest prior to the review process. Where a conflict of interest was identified, the relevant committee member was recused from the evaluation of the application in question, ensuring the integrity and impartiality of the selection process throughout.

Lisbon, 19 June 2026



Dr Catarina M. Liberato

President of the Executive Board

PARSUK