

Quick FAQ for potential employers:

Q: What are your research interests?

My interest in neuroscience was sparked by reading “Bright Air, Brilliant Fire” by Gerald Edelman on the physiological basis of consciousness. I am looking to pursue a career in subfields that explore it such as neural representations or computations, sensorimotor integration, or the deconstruction of brain states (sleep and different levels of awareness).

Q: What do you bring to the lab?

Specifically, I bring experimental knowledge in rodent behavior, immunohistochemistry, optogenetics, and recordings. I also bring know-how in setting up automated experimental rigs and some computational methods. I am keen on keeping up with the bibliography and, for me reading interesting papers is a passion in itself. I believe I can also bring a respectful enthusiastic and curious perspective to lab meeting discussions.

Q: Why do you want to pursue a PhD?

I want to pursue a PhD because I want to pursue a career in academia/ research. I believe that the fundamental understanding of the mind is a crucial step in building a society that thrives to be fair, inclusive, and empathetic. We can always relate to physical pain, but it takes extraordinary abstraction to understand what goes behind others’ (and even our own) unique actions, attitudes, and feelings when there is not a comprehensive framework.

Q: What is behind your career break?

I left Champalimaud in Lisbon for ICN2 in Barcelona following my partner who had a job opportunity there. I left Barcelona following the break-up of a long-term relationship. In both events, I fulfilled the ongoing contract and chose not to pursue further renovation. I took the time to reassess my commitment to neuroscience research while taking the opportunity to volunteer abroad and improve my coding skills.

Q: What are you doing currently?

While I am actively pursuing a PhD position, I am currently engaged in an École 42 piscine at Porto (Something similar to a coding bootcamp).

Q: Why are you pursuing a PhD abroad?

The way I envision my career, I hope to ultimately set up a research group in Portugal. However, at this stage, I find it invaluable to experience how research works in different cultures. The relatively small geography of Europe prompts me for a borderless search for specific research groups that deeply resonate with my interests while being a short flight away from my family. I am particularly excited about the neuroscience research landscape in Switzerland, Germany, and the UK. Searching for openings outside my close referral network and institutions is a daunting task. But I am sure the skills acquired during this period will prove useful in future academic transitions.

Q: How do you fit in the lab?

I like to have my autonomy, but I thrive in contexts where regular feedback is present such as weekly “one-on-ones” with a PostDoc or a PI. I am accountable and solution-oriented, so I am ready to ask for help if an issue arises that is outside of my knowledge or competencies. I am cooperative and cohesive so I am also interested in my colleagues’ research and in helping them overcome their challenges. I am driven by curiosity, so I am the most interested person in seeing my work come to fruition.