

We are looking for motivated candidates to develop a PhD in biology, biomedicine, microbiology or medicine in our research group for the “MSCA-COFUND UAB Program (TOUCH)”

Parc Taulí Research and Innovation Institute (I3PT):

The Parc Taulí Research and Innovation Institute belongs to the Carlos III Health Institute network of Spanish excellence research institutions. In order to ensure and stimulate high quality research studies, we want to enrol talented researchers in our top research groups.

Translational Research Group in the Critically Ill Patient: Prevention, follow-up and management of post-ICU sequelae based on digital health tools (PICS-DHT)

Medical advances have increased the survival rates in Intensive Care Units (ICUs), but have highlighted some consequences after the critical illness. ICU survivors may present cognitive (e.g. memory and attention problems), emotional (e.g. anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress), and/or physical difficulties (e.g. fatigue, pain) known as the Post Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS). Mental health and cognitive problems may also appear in the patients' relative ones. In both, patients and families, PICS has a direct impact on their ability to perform day-to-day activities and on their quality of life. However, the follow-up of the PICS is scarce and limited on the public health systems, in particular the emotional and cognitive sequelae, hindering the early detection of candidates for rehabilitation. During the last years, our group has explored different strategies for prevention, follow-up and management of the PICS-related sequelae, considering the implementation of e-mental health tools as an optimal solution.

The objectives of this prospective randomized multicentre project are:

- 1) To study the impact of a digital health follow-up on the functionality and quality of life of the ICU survivors;
- 2) To investigate the role of demographic (age, sex, etc), clinical (comorbidity, invasive mechanical ventilation, level of cognitive reserve, etc) and biological factors (i.e. transcriptomic signatures) in the development of the PICS sequelae;
- 3) To evaluate the impact of digital e-mental health tools implementation in patient's emotional and cognitive status;
- 4) To characterize the emotional and cognitive status of the ICU patients' relatives during the ICU stay and one year follow-up.

The estimated duration of the project is 3 years and the PhD will participate in all phases of the study

- i) data collection during the ICU,
- ii) e-mental health tools implementation,
- iii) data collection about clinical and neuropsychological outcomes including functionality and quality of life,
- iv) data analysis,
- iv) communication and dissemination of results

TOUCH ("Towards the next generatiOn of excellent yoUng doctoral researchers on mental health by developing an intersectoral & transdisciplinary approaCH"):

The **TOUCH** ("Towards the next generatiOn of excellent yoUng doctoral researchers on mental health by developing an intersectoral & transdisciplinary approaCH") is a new excellent doctoral programme coordinated by the [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona](#) (UAB) and co-funded by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie (MSCA) Actions of the European Commission. Its main goal is the recruitment and training of doctoral candidates in the field of mental health and wellbeing providing a new dimension through highly interdisciplinary and intersectoral research while fulfilling all the principles of Open Science and maintaining the highest research quality standards.

We are looking for candidates with an excellent CV, a high degree of ambition and motivation, and with good personal qualities to join the TOUCH doctoral programme. We offer a three-year full-time contract (37,5 hours / week) starting at the end of 2024 and a gross salary of 28.500 €/year (the salary will be the same for the 3 years). The successful candidates will be enrolled in a doctoral program at the UAB (Clinical and Health Psychology program) and will be involved in the TOUCH training activities, including:

- workshops and practical hands-on schools
- training in scientific and communication skills, research diversity and a personal development retreat, among other activities to bring a holistic approach to the training through a combination of research-oriented and challenging soft skills, and
- international and/or intersectoral secondments at partner laboratories and premises.

Tuition fees will be covered by the project.

The supervision of the thesis will be carried out from the I3PT-UAB in collaboration with the Universitat de les Illes Balears (UIB).

Fellowship Requirements:

The candidates must fulfil the following eligibility criteria from the EC: Mobility rule: candidates must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Spain for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately preceding the deadline for the programme call. Experience rule: researchers must be doctoral candidates at the date of recruitment, that is not already in possession of a doctoral degree at the deadline of the open calls. Researchers who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis but have not yet formally awarded the doctoral degree will not be considered eligible. The candidates must hold a degree that allows admission to the official doctoral programme at UAB. Additional academic and skills requirements for each position can be found in the "offered PhD positions" section on the [TOUCH website](#).

Interested applicants should [apply through the TOUCH online platform](#) by submitting a full CV, a motivation letter, two letters of recommendation and academic and English level certificates. The call will be open from the **1st of April to the 30th of June 2024**. More information about the TOUCH project, the recruitment process, and the application platform are available on the TOUCH website.

Selection criteria:

The pre-doctoral research associate role for the PICS-DH project requires a degree in psychology or a related field, preferably with neuropsychology expertise and foundational knowledge in mental health, along with interest in biostatistics and data science. Strong analytical, research, and communication skills (English and Spanish) are valued for effective collaboration and data analysis in this role.

Knowledge and handling of statistical tools and databases. Proactive, rigorous and meticulous person, with ability to adapt, initiative, organizational and problem-solving skills and ability to work both in a team and individually. Open to work with professionals from different fields (physicians, nurses, biomedical researchers and engineers).