

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the ESHG for the invaluable opportunity to take part in the Observership Programme. I had the privilege to spend four-weeks at the Center for Human Genetics at the KU Leuven, Belgium, under the supervision of Professor Joris Vermeesch, PhD.

As a PhD student at the University of Porto working on the role of DNA repair genes in female fertility, I was particularly drawn to the host institution's internationally recognised expertise in methylome analysis. During the observership, I was introduced to the laboratory's approach to genome-wide DNA methylation profiling and had the opportunity to observe and actively participate in the protocol. In addition, I participated in lab meetings, seminars, and group discussions.

This observership broadened my scientific perspective and inspired new ideas for my ongoing research, particularly regarding the development of non-invasive biomarkers for reproductive medicine.

I would like to sincerely thank Professor Vermeesch and his team for their warm welcome and continuous support throughout my stay, and the ESHG for making this unique experience possible.

This observership was a truly enriching and motivating step in my academic journey, and I highly recommend the programme to other young researchers seeking to expand their expertise in a dynamic and collaborative environment.

Yours sincerely,
Vanessa Sousa