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Plant Biology

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Paula Duque obtained a BSc in plant biology and a PhD in physiology and biochemistry both at the University of Lisbon, having conducted part of her doctoral work at the HortResearch Institute in Auckland, New Zealand. Her postdoctoral studies were conducted at The Rockefeller University in New York, first in Nam-Hai Chua's lab on stress signaling in the plant model *Arabidopsis thaliana* and then with Magda Konarska on the mechanisms of mRNA splicing human cells. After a semester teaching molecular biology at the Queens College of the City University of New York, she returned to Portugal in 2007 to take up her present position as Group Leader at the Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência (IGC). Her research group uses *Arabidopsis* as a model system and combines reverse genetics, physiology and biochemistry to investigate how plants perceive and respond to environmental cues at the molecular level. Her major line of work is addressing the biological relevance of alternative splicing in plant systems and has revealed regulatory circuits that link plant development and environmental responses to this key posttranscriptional regulatory mechanism. In addition to providing the first functional links between alternative splicing and plant responses to abiotic stress, the Duque lab has uncovered several plant alternative splicing events with striking biological impact, as well as multiple roles for the Major Facilitator Superfamily (MFS) of membrane transporters in plant stress tolerance.