



Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee vzw
Flanders Marine Institute

VACANCY

Researcher nearshore and North Sea palaeolandscape exploration

SITUATION

For 20 years, the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) has been strengthening the accumulation of marine knowledge and the excellence of marine scientific research in Flanders. VLIZ is a coordination and information platform, a focal point for marine and coastal research, which also serves as an international contact point for marine science. Important activities are national and international networking, information and data management, scientific communication for policy and industry, education and the general public, and logistical support of marine research. Since 2017, the institute also initiates, promotes and executes innovative and multidisciplinary marine research, and this at the service of, in collaboration with or complementary to Flemish and international marine research groups.

To strengthen its research capacity, VLIZ is hiring 14 new colleagues in its Research Department. Join our multidisciplinary team in Oostende at the Belgian coast and be part of a new wave of marine research in Flanders. You will work in a unique institute in which your science will be supported by state-of-the-art data systems and services, research infrastructure, science communication and an extensive marine library. Moreover, VLIZ is part of a wide network of Belgian and international marine research groups, offering many opportunities for scientific collaboration.

In addition to these open positions, VLIZ sets up a recruitment reserve for potential temporary jobs. Opportunities may arise for the following profiles: ecological modeler, environmental data analyst/modeler with experience in R, marine biologist/taxonomist, molecular ecologist, marine geologist. Candidates with such a profile are encouraged to make a spontaneous application.

For each function, VLIZ considers enthusiastic involvement, open servitude, excellent professionalism and integrity as important characteristics.

RESEARCHER NEARSHORE AND NORTH SEA PALAEOLANDSCAPE EXPLORATION

In recent years there has been a rapidly growing interest in the study of drowned landscapes and geo-archaeology of the continental shelf. This new and challenging research field integrates the study of climate and sea level change, palaeogeography, geological mapping, prehistoric archaeology, and human presence and migration routes in the North Sea- once mainly dry land but now largely buried below the seabed. VLIZ is one of the pioneers in Belgium of this challenging interdisciplinary research field.

Within the new research unit “Seascapes Past and Future” of the Research Department we intend to develop and expand the palaeolandscape and geo-archaeological research over the next years, in close cooperation with national and international research institutes. Following a successful survey to the Brown bank in 2018, two follow-up surveys are planned in the southern/central North Sea in 2019. But also closer to the shore interesting research is waiting regarding the evolution of the (pre)historic coastal landscape, now largely buried below the seafloor, and what remnants still remain of drowned Roman and medieval settlements.

Some of the questions that we would like to answer with this research include:

- 1) How much of these prehistoric landscapes is still there?
- 2) What did the landscapes look like, e.g. the presence of rivers, estuaries, lakes, shorelines, etc. but also vegetation and environmental conditions?
- 3) What was the effect of climate on the evolution of the landscape (drowning due to sea-level rise, impact of growing and shrinking ice sheets on the drainage systems, triggering of extreme events such as megafloods)?
- 4) What landscapes have a high preservation potential of palaeontological/archaeological material (a fine example is the large amount of fossil bones fished up at the Scheur site off Zeebrugge)?
- 5) What is the defining influence of palaeolandscapes on human presence and migration and vice versa: how did human presence affect the landscape?

To develop this research, VLIZ hires a post-doctoral researcher in the Research Department.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- To develop a research line on geo-archaeological and palaeolandscape research in the North Sea, with initial focus on the Belgian Continental Shelf (offshore/nearshore) and the wider Brown Bank area;
- To contribute to surveys at sea (seismic, coring, multibeam);
- To plan and perform research projects with internal funds;
- To write high quality research papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals;
- To write proposals and to prospect for external funding (in collaboration with relevant colleagues within and outside the institute) to initiate new palaeolandscape research projects;
- To potentially contribute to research and innovation projects in collaboration with partners from the Blue Economy;
- To supervise MSc and PhD students;
- To contribute to other research projects in the VLIZ research department, to interact and collaborate with colleagues at VLIZ to increase interdisciplinarity in various projects, to give advice on colleagues' research;
- To network at national and international level with other (marine) scientists;
- To present research at national and international conferences;
- To contribute to events organized by the Department or the Institute, such as the VLIZ Marine Science Day;
- To review research proposals, manuscripts and abstracts.

PROFILE

- PhD in geology or geophysics.
- Expertise in geological mapping and (Quaternary) stratigraphic modeling;
- Expertise in seismic data interpretation (Kingdom or equivalent);
- Expertise in core analysis and integration of seismic and geotechnical/environmental data;
- Expertise in palaeogeographical/palaeolandscape reconstruction;
- Experience with geophysical or geotechnical campaigns at sea;
- Critical and creative;
- Scientifically integer;
- Strong interpersonal skills, a motivated team player;
- Open minded and taking initiative;
- Good written and oral English communication skills;
- Documented strong academic track record;
- Documented project writing skills;
- Willing to learn new skills on a regular basis;
- Willing to work in an international context;
- Good geological knowledge of the Belgian Continental Shelf and southern North Sea is desirable;
- Knowledge of submerged archaeology/palaeontology and preservation potential is a plus;
- Understanding of acoustic data acquisition and processing is a plus;
- Experience with project management is a plus.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information concerning this vacancy, please contact:

- Tine Missiaen, head of the research unit Seascapes Past & Future
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- Michiel Vandegheuchte, Research Director VLIZ
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OUR OFFER

- We offer a challenging job in the dynamic environment of VLIZ
- A contract of three years as post-doc researcher, which can be followed by a tenure track position in case of a positive evaluation, or a contract in a tenure track position, depending on your profile and qualifications. The salary follows the salary scales of scientific personnel in the Flemish Government.
- Fringe benefits: holiday pay, end-of-year bonus, meal vouchers, hospitalization insurance, bike allowance, free public transport for home-work commuting and an attractive holiday arrangement.



DOES THIS VACANCY APPEAL TO YOU?

Send in your cover letter and CV until May 15th 2019 (23:00 CEST):

- By post: Jan Mees, General director VLIZ, InnovOcean site, Wandelaarkaai 7, 8400 Oostende
- By mail: jobs@vliz.be with subject "04 SPF - Vacancy Palaeolandscapes"

Contact us by telephone on +32 (0)59 34 21 30.

VLIZ promotes equality and diversity in the workplace. You will be recruited based on competencies. Qualities of people are decisive, regardless of gender, religion, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation or any disability.

PROCEDURE

Based on the received motivation letters and CVs, a select group of candidates will be invited for a job interview. You will be informed by email. The job interviews take place in the offices of VLIZ.

Employment can start immediately after the selection procedure and ideally not later than 1st October 2019.

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