



Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee vzw
Flanders Marine Institute

VACANCY

Researcher Blue Psychology: role of sensory perception and behaviour for health and wellbeing

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 BLUE PSYCHOLOGY: ROLE OF SENSORY PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOUR FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Our society evolves towards a sedentary lifestyle disconnected from nature and living in (sub)urban areas. To date, adults spend about 20% of their time outdoors. For children this figure shrinks to only 9%. Research suggests that exposing people to a natural environment reactivates them. This element in combination with the sensory perception of natural environments contributes to a better mental health, less illness and longer life expectancy. Most studies currently available in this field of research are related to green environments. The coast as natural environment though, provides excellent opportunities to change our behaviour in a sustainable way. The Flemish coast with its sandy beaches stimulates people to be more physically active and increases social interactions amongst its users. In this research, we aim to assess the interaction between human health and wellbeing, the sensory perception of the coast as well as the behavioural aspect of users of the Belgian coast. We will make use of cross-sectional, longitudinal and experimental intervening studies.

This project will be performed in collaboration with Flemish university research groups. The main focus of the research will be on the indirect, subtle, sensory and behaviour related effects of the blue environment on human health and wellbeing.

To develop this research, VLIZ hires researcher in the Research Department.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- To plan and perform a research project on the indirect and behaviour related effects of the Belgian coastal environment on human health and wellbeing. This involves the planning and organization of experiments, sample and data processing, data analysis and interpretation;
- To take initiative to discuss planning and report progress to the head of the research unit and collaborating scientists;
- To write high quality research manuscripts for submitting to peer-reviewed scientific journals;
- To supervise BSc and MSc students for job student, internship or thesis work;
- To interact and collaborate with colleagues at VLIZ to increase interdisciplinarity in various research projects;
- To possibly contribute to research and innovation projects in collaboration with partners from the Blue Economy;
- To present research at national and international conferences;
- To network at national and international level with other (marine) scientists;
- To contribute to events organized by the Department or the Institute, such as the VLIZ Marine Science Day.



PROFILE

- MSc in Psychological or Social Sciences or equivalent, with an interest in experimental design and analysis of large datasets;
- Experience with the analysis of large datasets and with R open software is a plus;
- Experience with research on the (marine) environment and human health or wellbeing is a plus;
- Knowledge of scientific method and of the marine environment are a plus
- Critical and creative;
- Scientifically integer;
- Open minded and taking initiative;
- Passionate scientist, keen to learn new skills and develop excellent research;
- Strong interpersonal skills, a motivated team player;
- Willing to work in an international context;
- Good oral and written English communication skills;
- Academic writing skills are a plus;
- Knowledge of Dutch is recommended, willingness to learn Dutch is necessary to work with surveys;
- Knowledge of statistics.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information concerning this vacancy, please contact:

- Gert Everaert, head of the research unit Ocean & Human Health
 - Mail: gert.everaert@vliz.be
 - Telephone: +32 (0)477 44 55 83
- Michiel Vandegehuchte, Research Director VLIZ
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OUR OFFER

- We offer a challenging job in the dynamic environment of VLIZ
- A contract of two years as researcher, which will be followed by a new two-year contract in case of a positive evaluation. The salary follows the salary scales of scientific personnel in the Flemish Government. Through collaboration with academic research groups, the research may lead to a PhD at a Flemish University.
- 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 "08 OHH - Vacancy Blue Psychology" 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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