



Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee vzw
Flanders Marine Institute

VACANCY

Researcher marine viruses



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 MARINE VIRUSES

Marine viruses play a key role in the functioning of the global ocean. Viruses are the most abundant biological entity in the ocean, and harbour the single largest pool of unexplored genetic diversity on Earth. In addition to their key role in causing illness or even death in a wide range of marine organisms, viruses also influence the evolutionary dynamics and biogeochemical cycles by infecting and lysing bacteria and protists. There is, however, still limited knowledge about virus community structure and the quantitative influence of viruses on regional ecosystems.

VLIZ will initiate a research project that investigates the presence and diversity of marine viruses in the Southern Bight of the North Sea. Throughout this project, we will seek to answer some of the following research questions:

- 1) What is the viral diversity in the Southern North Sea?
- 2) What is the natural variability on the abundance and diversity of viruses within this ecosystem?
- 3) What are the biotic and abiotic factors that determine the presence of marine viruses; can we find causal links between the diversity of viruses and the diversity of phytoplankton and bacteria?
- 4) Can we get an idea on the importance of viruses in the North Sea ecosystem based on the viral traits (speed of infection, production, lysis and decay) of the most common viruses from the Southern North Sea?

This project will be performed in collaboration with one or more Flemish university research groups and with the NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research. The project will be largely based on field samples taken from the Belgian and Dutch coast. It will focus on metagenomic analysis of the marine virus community and virally induced mortality rate measurements of the marine microbial host community.

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



MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- To plan and perform a research project on the presence and role of marine viruses, involving field sampling at sea, sample and data processing, data analysis (and potentially modelling);
- 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 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 go on board of the RV Simon Stevin on a regular basis;
- To visit the Dutch partner institute on a regular basis;
- To contribute to events organized by the Department or the Institute, such as the VLIZ Marine Science Day.



PROFILE

- MSc in Exact Sciences, e.g., (marine) biology, microbiology, biological oceanography, Health Sciences or Applied Sciences (bioscience engineering), with an interest in genetics;
- Knowledge of marine viruses or (meta)genomics is a plus;
- Critical and creative;
- Scientifically integer;
- Open minded and taking initiative;
- Passionate scientist, willing to learn new skills and develop excellent research;
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, a motivated team player;
- Willing to work in an international context;
- Proficient in English (written and oral);
- Knowledge of statistics;
- Experience with R open software is a plus;
- Flexible with regards to spending work time at collaborating laboratories.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information concerning this vacancy, please contact:

- Maarten De Rijcke, head of the research unit Life's Roots & Rates
 - Mail: maarten.derijcke@vliz.be
 - Telephone: +32 (0)59 34 14 15
- Michiel Vandegehuchte, Research Director VLIZ
 - Mail: michiel.vandegehuchte@vliz.be
 - Telephone: +32 (0)471 61 22 49

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 "10 LRR - Vacancy Marine Viruses" 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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