UNIWERSYTET WARSZAWSKI

WYDZIAŁ BIOLOGII · UNIWERSYTET WARSZAWSKI

COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENT

The dean of the Faculty of Biology, with the consent of the Rector of the University of Warsaw, announces a competition for the position of Assistant Professor[1] in the ~~programme/~~project~~/undertaking~~ *The impact of mass extinctions on parasite diversity and evolution*

About the programme/project/undertaking:

Title of programme/project/ undertaking	*The impact of mass extinctions on parasite diversity and evolution*	
Type of programme/project/ undertaking	*OPUS-27*	
Funding institution	*National Science Centre Poland*	
Duration of programme/ project/undertaking	*48 months*	
Head of programme/ project/undertaking	*Dr. hab. Kenneth De Baets, Prof. ucz.*	
Description of programme/ project/undertaking	Parasites are some of the most diverse and ecologically important organisms on Earth. Despite their importance for planetary health, their nature and small size have made them unpopular in nature conservation as well as in fossil diversity studies, where the focus lies on their hosts. In the face of current environmental crisis and unprecedented biodiversity loss, understanding past parasite-host associations are crucial for predicting future shifts in parasite diversity and associated zoonotic disease risk. Indeed, current models infer future extinctions and host switching based on the modern distribution of symbiont-host associations only. Fossil vertebrate coprolites (fossilized excrements) provide a unique opportunity to see direct changes in parasite prevalence and distribution through past environmental perturbations and can thus fill this lack of knowledge. *The main aim of the project is to model how changes in the host diversity and diet affect the representation and diversity of parasitic helminth (flatworms, nematodes) propagules from the Permian-Triassic mass extinction event and apply this knowledge to current models.* *The following research tasks are planned for this project:* *• Quantitative sampling of new coprolites from Permian and Triassic outcrops and categorizing them (via morphology, internal structure e.g., obtained by microscopy and computed tomography)* *• Subsampling coprolites for thin sections and retrieving food and parasitic inclusions* *• Assigning coprolite to the host producer and its diet based on content and structure* *• Placing parasite inclusions in phylogeny using machine learning and Total Evidence Approaches* *• Modelling the impact of environmental and host factors on parasite diversity and analysis of cophylogenetic extinction risk*	

[1] The nouns used in the announcement apply to people of all genders.

	The results will improve our understanding of parasite-host co-evolution both in the past and in the present. An unprecedented systematic sampling of coprolites for parasitic helminth propagules across the Permian-Triassic extinction will allow constraining dominant drivers. By combining past extinction data with statistical and co-phylogenetic modeling, we will create new improved models that accurately capture host switching and parasite extinction risk in the future. Obtained data and extinction models will be useful for fields ranging from conservation biology, over climate change and diversity modelling, to disease and health prediction. **The Postdoc will focus on assembling and performing the total evidence analyses and co-phylogenetic analysis of vertebrate hosts and their helminth parasites. Particularly aligning and assembling the phylogenies as well as further development of Bayesian (co-)phylogenetic analysis to accommodate fossil data to estimate macroevolutionary events as well as improve and simulate extinction risk.**	

Position details:

Position title	Assistant Professor
Organisational unit	Faculty of Biology
Employment group	Research
Position profile[2]	R2
Academic discipline[3]	Biological sciences
Number of positions	1
Form of employment and length of working time (proportionally to full-time employment)	Full-time employment contract
Expected date of commencement of work and employment period	Employment starting from February 2027, for 12 months which will be extended for an additional 12 months pending positive evaluation.
Remuneration	Basic remuneration PLN 8700 gross/month plus the additional annual remuneration, allowance for years of service. More information: *link*
Other working conditions	– Workplace: *Institute of Evolutionary Biology* – Career opportunities: More information: *link*
Basic responsibilities and obligations	– Conducting scientific research in biological sciences and publishing findings in international scientific journals. – Securing research funding. – Fulfilling other academic teacher responsibilities as required by employment at the University of Warsaw. *More information: Scope of responsibilities of the academic teacher*
Conditions for entering the competition[4]	– *Fulfill the requirements set out in Article 113 of the Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571, consolidated text)* – Only individuals who obtained their doctoral degree in biological sciences or a related field within 7 years prior to the start of employment are eligible to apply.

[2] Complete only in the case of competition for the position in the research employment group or the research and teaching employment group.
[3] Complete only in the case of competition for the position in the research employment group or the research and teaching employment group.
[4] Required by the Act, the Law on Higher Education and Science, the Statute of the University of Warsaw, as well as necessary for the position.

	– Have significant scientific achievements documented by well-cited publications in renowned international journals, invitations to deliver lectures or seminars, etc. – Have international experience, e.g.: participation in international conferences, engagement in international research projects, international collaborations documented by joint publications. – Submit a research plan outlining personal scientific development. – high proficiency in written and spoken English – Research competencies in the field of: o *first-hand experience with phylogenetic analyses of various organisms (e.g., parasites and/or their vertebrate hosts) including molecular alignment as well as total evidence analyses* *OR* o *broad experience with modeling approaches, building phylogenies and programming applicable in biology in particular ecology* *If hired, we expect the University of Warsaw to be the primary workplace for the successful candidate.*
In addition, we expect[5]	– Experience in individual work with students (e.g., supervising theses) and science popularization activities. – Research mobility, e.g., a fellowship at a reputable foreign research institution. – Experience in securing research funding. – Good organizational skills, a proactive attitude, and the ability to solve problems independently. – Experience in preparing scientific publications in international peer-reviewed journals, including as first author and/or corresponding author, co*mmensurate with career stage* – *Experience to integrate fossil data into phylogenetic analyses (e.g., assembling and performing the total evidence analyses) and co-phylogenetic analysis of symbionts and their hosts* – *Experience aligning and assembling the phylogenies, programming or development of Bayesian (co-)phylogenetic analysis tools and/or simulations (e.g., extinction risk) and/or machine learning approaches*
Criteria for the assessment of candidates in a competition	– Quality of the publication record – Project-relevant skills documented by the publication record, including experience in using morphological as well as molecular data in evolutionary analyses and expertise in (co-)phylogenetic analyses – Competences and skills complementary to the research team
Position ~~related~~/not related[6] to activities covered by the protection of minors.	

Competition rules:

Announcement reference number	**WB-KG-15/2026**
Keywords	paleoparasitology, paleobiology, parasite-host coevolution, extinction, cophylogeny, vertebrate coprolites
Deadline for submitting applications[7]	10/11/2026
Method of submitting an application	Send applications via email to k.de-baets@uw.edu.pl and the Faculty Dean's Office: dziekanat.biol@uw.edu.pl.

[5] Additional conditions to be met; however, not meeting them will not lead to a negative formal assessment.
[6] Delete as appropriate.
[7] Not sooner than 30 days from the date of publication of the announcement.

	Candidates will receive an email confirmation of document submission. If no confirmation is received, please contact the project leader.
Required documents	– Personal questionnaire – *available on the Faculty of Biology UW website*. – Motivation letter including description of scientific interests and research activity plan. *Ensure the completeness of your application and submit it by the deadline. Failure to meet these requirements will result in rejection on formal grounds.* Please, ensure that your application is complete and submitted by the deadline indicated!
The competition is the first stage of the recruitment process, please read the Policy of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment at the University of Warsaw *link*	
Stages of competiton	*The competition consists of the following stages:* – *Stage I - formal evaluation of documents,* – *Stage II - substantive evaluation on the basis of submitted documents,* – *Stage III - interview with selected candidates, during which the candidate will be required to give a short presentation on their previous achievements and career plans, followed by a Q&A session with members of the selection committee,* – *Stage IV - final evaluation of competence, experience and scientific achievements,* – *Stage V - adjudication of the competition and announcement of results.*
Anticipated date and method of notification of the competition outcomes	Interviews will take place 18-20 November. Candidates will be individually notified about their interview schedule with the selection committee. Candidates will be informed of the results via email by 18.12.2026
Contact for any questions relating to the competition	Via email: k.de-baets@uw.edu.pl (please include the announcement reference number). Accessibility needs should be indicated on the Candidate's Questionnaire, in: *Other relevant information from a candidate*

Employing faculty/unit:

Research profile of faculty /unit	The Faculty conducts research across a broad range of biological sciences disciplines. More details are available on the *Faculty website*.
Teaching profile of faculty/ unit	The Faculty offers degree programs in *Biology* and *Biotechnology* and co-organizes programs in *Nature Conservation* and *Bioinformatics & Systems Biology*.
Other information	More details can be found on the *Faculty website*.
The University of Warsaw has implemented the procedure for whistleblowers reporting cases of law violation and for undertaking follow-up actions. For **more information** about this topic and the processing of candidates' personal data please follow the *link*	

The University of Warsaw is a winner of the HR Excellence in Research award granted by the European Commission to institutions adhering to the European Charter for Researchers.

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