

Call for 3 Post-Doctoral Researcher Positions (2 years) at IPHES-CERCA

After having been awarded the Maria de Maeztu Unit of Excellence (CEX2019-000945-M), the *Institut Català de Paleoeologia Humana i Evolució Social* (IPHES-CERCA) is offering 3 postdoctoral positions for a duration of 2 years. The best candidates will be selected according to a pre-established evaluation process in accordance with three of the IPHES' strategic research goals (see the Annex 1). One researcher will be chosen for each thematic area.

No restrictions on gender, age, ethnic groups, national or social origin, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion, social or economic conditions apply in our choice for the positions. Following its endorsement to the principles of the HR4SR (<http://www.iphes.cat/hr-excellence-research>), the IPHES-CERCA is committed to pro-active policies permitting equal opportunities and resolving gender issues.

The successful candidates will commence their employment on January 2022.

1.- Benefits

According to the PhD salary scales of the IPHES-CERCA, the gross salary will be 30,250€/year. Vacation days, parental leave and medical coverage are included in agreement with the Spanish employment regulation and Social Security system.

2.- Eligibility criteria and application requirements

Eligibility criteria. Researchers of any nationality are eligible to apply. Candidate's profiles should fit within the R2 or R3 stages of the European Framework for Research Careers. Candidates can consult information concerning this criterion in IPHES-CERCA' Career Development Guide at www.iphes.cat/career-development-guide.

Applications must be submitted to the following e-mail account that is specifically created for this purpose: **jobsmaeztu@iphes.cat**

The submission period for the applications will remain open from **18 October 2021 to 31 October 2021**.

In order to be taken into consideration for evaluation, applications must include the following documents (in English):

- 1) **Application form**, following the template that can be download from the **IPHES-CERCA** web page.
- 2) A **motivation letter** no longer than 2 pages in length (written using Times New Roman/Arial or similar font, in size 11 and with spacing of 1). The motivation letter must address:
 - The candidate's professional background.
 - The interest of developing their project at the IPHES-CERCA in relation to her or his previous work.
 - The potential of the candidate's proposal to impact the IPHES-CERCA' strategic goals.

- 3) **Curriculum Vitae** completed using the template available on the **IPHES-CERCA** web page.
- 4) A **research project** no longer than 5 pages in length (written using Times New Roman/Arial or similar font, in size 11 and with spacing of 1). The project must include:
- An introduction and the state-of-the-art of the topic
 - The objectives of the research proposal
 - Research methodology and approach
 - Implementation and feasibility of the project
 - Gantt chart (activities & schedule)
 - Expected Scientific impact of the project regarding the topic applied for and the impact on the professional career of the researcher aligned with the IPHES-CERCA' strategic goals.

3.- Organization of the selection process

The recruitment and selection of researchers is based on the **OMT-R** (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment) defined by the European Union, which represents the main pillar of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment, under which the candidates will be hired.

3.1.- Evaluation process

The evaluation process will consist of 3 steps based on the quantitative scores detailed in section 4.

Step 1: First screening and evaluation of the research projects (process duration 2-3 weeks).

1a.- Checking of the documentation.

1b.- Evaluation of the CVs (accomplished by the Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee).

1c.- Evaluation of motivation letters and Research Projects by 3 experts of the Selection Committee.

Step 2: Interview of the proposed candidates (process duration 1 week). Interviews will be carried out using on-line platforms by 5 members of the Selection Committee (SC).

Step 3: Final scoring (process duration 1 week). A list of the proposed and reserve candidates based on the ranking of the previous 2 steps will be communicated to the candidates. The list of candidates as well as the procedures of the evaluation process will be made available on the IPHES-CERCA web page.

3.2.- Composition of committees involved in the different stages of the process

The **Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee** (MMSC) will supervise the selection of experts following suggestions made by the IPHES-CERCA Internal Scientific Committee and will oversee the evaluation process (<http://www.iphes.cat/steering-committee>).

A **Selection Committee (SC)** composed of 3 members will evaluate the applicants in Step 1c and of 5 experts in Step 2.

The SC will be gender balanced. The selection of experts will be proposed by the Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee in consultation with the IPHES-CERCA Scientific Internal Committee (SIC) and will be tailored to fit within the 3 research lines of the proposal.

Prior to the procedure, all of the experts will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the IPHES-CERCA, in which they declare to undertake the process in absence of any conflict of interest and with total confidentiality.

3.3- Conflicts of interest

Members of the Selection Committee (SC) are expected to be impartial and objective and to behave in a professional manner throughout the procedure. Experts must disclose beforehand any known conflicts of interest and should immediately inform the Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee if one becomes apparent during the course of the evaluation. A conflict of interest may also arise if:

- An expert has had relevant scientific collaborations with one of the candidates they are evaluating (i.e. co-authoring a paper during the last 4 years, supervising the candidate's PhD thesis).
- The expert has family ties or other types of relevant connections to the candidate(s) being evaluated.

Should any member of the SC be found to breach the conditions defined above, she/he will be replaced by another expert.

4.- Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation and selection process will be based on the candidate's scientific achievement, excellence, motivation and scientific potential. Before beginning the evaluation process, the experts will be informed about the procedures and criteria to be applied and will be provided with clear instructions concerning their responsibilities throughout the process.

The criteria for the selection of researchers will be as follows:

STEP 1: Evaluation of CV (35%), motivation letter (15%) and Research Project (50%) = Score 1

Step 1b: Evaluation of CV (35%)

The *Curriculum Vitae* will be scored for a total of 100 points. Eligible applications will undergo a selection process based on scientific qualifications and research merits following these criteria:

Scientific publications (indexed by Scopus and/or WoS)	50 points
Research Mobility	15 points
Lead presentations in international scientific meetings	15 points
Participation in research projects	15 points
Other relevant activities: i.e. outreach activities, RRI activities, supervision of PhD thesis and/or Master thesis, fieldwork activities (i.e. archaeological excavations)	5 points

Step 1b: Motivation letter and suitability of the candidate for the scientific and strategic goals of the IPHES-CERCA (15%)

The motivation letter and suitability of the candidate for the scientific and strategic goals of the IPHES-CERCA will be scored on 100 points

Professional background	15 points
Interest in developing the project at the IPHES-CERCA	20 points
Suitability of the candidate/project for IPHES-CERCA' strategic goals	20 points
Potential impact on the IPHES-CERCA research goals	30 points
Career perspectives	15 points

Step 1c: Evaluation of the research proposal (50%)

The evaluation of research proposals will be scored on 100 points. The research project of the selected candidates after step 1 will be evaluated based on the following criteria and score values:

Excellence	Scientific significance of the objectives, originality/innovation of the research	40 points
	Research methodology and approach	15 points
Impact	Expected scientific impact	25 points
Implementation	Scheduling and feasibility explained using a detailed Gantt chart (indicating Milestones, Tasks and Deliverables)	20 points

Each Motivation letter and research project will be evaluated independently by the 3 remote experts of the Selection Committee. The final score of this step will be the average of the score of the 3 experts. In case of wide discrepancies between the evaluator's scores, two more experts will be selected to assess the motivation letter and research project. The average of the 5 evaluations will be calculated, discarding the most distant one and calculating the average of the remaining 4.

Candidates are asked to highlight any career breaks in their Motivation letter (e.g. maternity or paternity leave, national service, etc.). These career breaks will be positively evaluated and taken into account by the Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee and will be contemplated as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multi-dimensional career path.

The three best candidates in each of the three thematic areas will be selected to continue to Step 2.

STEP 2: Evaluation of the interviews = Score 2

The interviews of the candidates will be scored on 100 points. The remote interviews will be evaluated according to two main criteria:

Short presentation of the candidate's research project (maximum 10 minutes)	35 points
Competency-based interview	65 points

The commitment of the candidate to apply for an ERC Grant during the development of their contract will be highly valued. Candidates may therefore be motivated to demonstrate their familiarity with the ERC program and expose their ideas for a proposal.

Each member of the SC will give a score for the short presentation and interview (on 100). In Step 3, the final score for each candidate will be calculated as the average of the scores obtained by the five SC members.

STEP 3: The final score will be result from the following formula:

Final score= 75% of Score1 + 25% of Score2

Fellowships will be awarded according to the final ranking and the number of available positions (n=3). The list of awardees and reserve candidates (2 for each thematic area) will be made public through the IPHES-CERCA' web page.

5.- Feedback

In line with the "Transparency" principle of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, all applicants (accepted and not accepted) will receive written or electronic notice at all stage of the selection.

Redress mechanism

IPHES has a procedure to deal with complaints made by applicants who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly. Appeals may be submitted by unsuccessful applicants within 7 days of receiving notification of the decision. They will be assessed on the basis of one or more of the following issues:

1. Evidence of bias or conflict of interest by one or more of the evaluators.
2. Factual error(s) made by one or more of the evaluators that might have influenced the outcome of an evaluation.

Possible **appeals** will be evaluated and assessed by the Maria de Maeztu Steering Committee (MMST). If there is a justified cause for appeal, the MMST will convene a special joint session with the Selection Committee (SC) to review the evaluations and ranking. Providing that the conclusion confirm that the candidate should have been short-listed for concession, the provisional results can be modified to re-configure the final ranking. All complainants will receive a response within two weeks after submission of the appeal.

ANNEX 1: RESEARCH TOPICS

A) **Branch:** Subsistence strategies from an evolutionary point of view

Scope: Western Mediterranean Holocene

Field: Husbandry practices during the emergence of livestock domestication.

Issue: Farming as a resilience practice to confront climatic variations and the human costs at the beginning of the socio-economic transformation. The effects of livestock breeding on landscape modification and human niche construction.

B) **Branch:** Widening insights from technology

Scope: Mediterranean and European Middle and Upper Pleistocene.

Field: Technological and social innovations enabled Neanderthals to adapt to climate change (fire and hearths, evolved toolkits using diverse materials, spatially organized home-base sites and symbolic thought processes).

Issue 1: What evidence is there for co-existence between Modern Humans and Neanderthals in the Iberian Peninsula and what might the modalities of their coexistence imply?

Issue 2: Does the archaeological record enable detailed palaeo-ethnographic reconstructions of Neanderthal lifestyles? What were the regional networks of the Neanderthals?

C) Branch: Shifting visions on early cognition

Field: Primate archaeology

Issue: How can Primate Archaeology provide innovative insights into the origins of hominin technological behaviours?