



Mammal Research Institute
Polish Academy of Sciences
Białowieża

**PhD position at the Mammal Research Institute
Polish Academy of Sciences in Białowieża within the project funded by
National Science Centre in Poland**

We are looking for a motivated PhD candidate to work in a project „*Changes in the range, genetic diversity and habitats of occurrence of two roe deer species in Europe from the last glaciation to modern times*”.



Photo: R. Kowalczyk

Project description

The goal of our project is to study the history and changing distribution of two roe deer species — European roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) and Siberian roe deer (*C. pygargus*) — in Europe over the last 50,000 years. We aim to determine when these species started interbreeding, how their ranges shifted over time, and how they responded to climate change and human-induced landscape modifications. These two species differ in morphology, behaviour, genetics, and habitat preferences, which makes them an interesting subject for studying their ecological and evolutionary history. Our main research question focuses on how the ranges of these two species shifted in response to climate changes, particularly during the last glacial period and after it. We hypothesise that both *C. capreolus* and *C. pygargus* experienced dynamic range shifts, adapting to climatic changes and landscape transformations, such as the expansion of agricultural land. Furthermore, our research aims to

determine when the ranges of these two species overlapped and how extensively interbreeding occurred, especially before and after the Last Glacial Maximum. Although the European roe deer is a common species in Europe, its ecological and demographic history is still largely unknown. Furthermore, historical data on the distribution changes of roe deer over thousands of years are difficult to establish, as distinguishing between the two species based solely on morphological features has often been challenging. In our study we will use modern genetic methods to more accurately assign subfossil remains to the one of species and to detect their potential hybrids. These techniques will allow us to better track changes in the distribution of these animals and investigate how environmental changes, such as climate warming during the Holocene or the development of agriculture, influenced their ranges.

Methods

Our project brings together expertise from various fields, including genetics, palaeontology, and biogeography. We will analyse genetic material from both contemporary and subfossil roe deer samples using advanced DNA sequencing methods. Additionally, by analysing carbon and nitrogen isotopes in bones, we will assess ecological differences between the two species and their feeding habitats. Radiocarbon dating will also be used to determine the chronological and geographical shifts in their distribution.

Working environment

The Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences (MRI PAS) founded in 1952, conducts research in the field of ecology, ethology, morphology, population genetics as well as population management and conservation of mammals and other terrestrial vertebrates. The mission of the Institute is to acquire, advance, and disseminate knowledge of natural patterns and processes in order to improve the scientific basis for effective nature conservation activities and sustainable development. We focus mainly on Białowieża Primeval Forest (UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site) as a study area, but also on other regions of Poland and Europe. The Institute employs ca. 60 people, including researchers, PhD students, and qualified technical and office staff. The institute is based in the village of Białowieża in the middle of Białowieża Forest, Poland. This is a remote place (ca. 1500 inhabitants) close to the Polish- Belarus border, ca. 20 km from a nearest city.

This project is conducted in the Biogeography Group at the MRI PAS as part of a consortium with dr habil. Mateusz Baca from the Centre of New Technologies at the University of Warsaw, and dr habil. Maciej Krajcarz of the Institute of Geological Sciences, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, and in collaboration with zooarchaeology and palaeontology specialists from Poland and other European countries.

We provide

- Work in a friendly research team with support and supervision of competent colleagues;

- Possibility to work and live in a nice place: a village (i.e., Białowieża) located in the middle of Białowieża Primeval Forest - one of the most important biodiversity hotspot in Europe;
- The possibility of effective scientific development through cooperation with the best world research institutes;
- Participation in an interesting scientific project with travelling opportunities;
- Possibility to attend courses, workshops and conferences organized by MRIPAS and BioPlanet doctoral school.
- The possibility to apply for inexpensive accommodation in MRI PAS flats.

PhD student tasks and duties within the project

- Collection of materials for the study stored in different zoological museums;
- Collection of scientific data for the study from the published sources;
- Extraction of collagen from bone fragments for radiocarbon dating and stable isotopic analyses in the laboratory of the Institute of Geological Sciences, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw;
- Computer work (statistical and spatial analyses of the obtained results, revision of the scientific literature, writing manuscripts, etc.);
- Presenting results and preparing drafts of scientific articles.

Requirements:

- MSc degree in biology or related field,
- Basic experience in laboratory work,
- Basic experience in spatial analyses (GIS),
- Basic experience in analyses in R software,
- Team cooperation skills,
- Fluent spoken and written English,
- Driving license.

Conditions of employment:

PhD student scholarship of 4790.00 PLN/ month netto. This is the highest allowed salary for PhD in the NCN project. As living in Poland is cheaper than in Western Europe, this ensures quite satisfactory standard of living. Project will last 4 years.

The recruitment rules will follow NCN regulations. The selection will be based on the qualifications of the candidates including scientific achievements, experience, awards, internships, skills and competences. An interview will be part of the selection of candidates. Recruitment is a two-stage process and includes: 1) evaluation of candidates' documentation and 2) an interview with selected candidates.

Successful candidates will need to recruit to BioPlanet Doctoral School, you will find all details on the web page: <https://szkoladoktorska-bioplanet.pl/en/home/>

If a candidate is already hired somewhere or involved in other projects and seeking for additional activity, our project will not be a good choice – we expect a candidate to

be full-time involved in the PhD project in MRIPAS – combining the PhD with other form of employment is unrealistic.

Required documents:

1. Application for admission to the BIOPLANET Doctoral School along with consent for the personal data to be processed for the purpose of recruitment, and declaration of acceptance of the terms and conditions of admission ([application form](#)).
2. Certified copy of diploma or certificate of completion of studies. If the applicant does not have proof of the qualifications, s/he is obliged to provide them before the Doctoral School program begins (until 01.10.2025).
3. CV including education, employment and research experience with a list of publications and a short description of scientific achievements, particularly information on participation in scientific conferences, workshops, training and internships, participation in research projects, involvement in learned societies and students' scientific associations, and awarded distinctions and scholarships.
4. Certificates or other documents confirming knowledge of English, if the applicant has them at his/her disposal.
5. An opinion on the applicant and their past scientific activity from an academic staff member or a university teacher with at least a doctoral degree. Instead of providing such a document, a person who is an academic staff member or a university teacher and holds at least a doctoral degree can be designated from whom the Recruitment Committee can obtain their opinion on the applicant independently.
6. Declaration of consent for processing of personal data, attached below (the signed page should be scanned and delivered through e-mail).

Applications should be sent directly to Magdalena Niedziałkowska electronically by **24th August 2026**. The selected candidates will be invited to an online or stationary interview and the decision will be announced by 4th September 2026.

Contact

Magdalena Niedziałkowska PhD - project leader
Mammal Research Institute Polish Academy of Sciences
ul. Stoczek 1,
17-230 Białowieża, Poland
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phone: +48 85 682 77 94

**Declaration of Consent for the Processing of Personal Data
in the Scholarship Recruitment Procedure for NCN-Funded Research Projects**

I hereby give my consent for the **Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Białowieża** (hereinafter referred to as the “IBS PAN”) to process my personal data for the purposes necessary to conduct the recruitment procedure for scientific scholarships in research projects funded by the National Science Centre (NCN).

This consent is given in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR), and applicable national data protection regulations.

I acknowledge that this consent is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time. Withdrawal of consent does not affect the lawfulness of processing carried out before its withdrawal, but may prevent further participation in the recruitment procedure.

.....
(Place and date)

.....
(Signature)

Information Clause on the Processing of Personal Data under Article 13 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This information clause is provided pursuant to Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR).

1. Data Controller

The Controller of your personal data is the **Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Białowieża**, represented by its Director, with its registered office at 1 Stoczek St., 17-230 Białowieża, Poland, e-mail: mripas@ibs.bialowieza.pl, phone: **+48 85 682 77 50**.

2. Data Protection Officer

If you have any questions regarding the processing of your personal data or wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, you may contact the Data Protection Officer: e-mail: iod@ibs.bialowieza.pl or by post at the Controller's registered office address, marked "**Data Protection Officer**".

3. Purpose and Legal Basis for Processing

Your personal data will be processed to the extent necessary to conduct the scholarship competition procedure for scientific scholarships awarded within research projects funded by the National Science Centre (NCN). If you are selected as a scholarship holder, your personal data will also be processed for the purpose of concluding and performing the scholarship agreement, including the administration and payment of the scholarship.

The legal bases for the processing of your personal data are:

- a) **Article 6(1)(b) GDPR** – processing necessary to take steps prior to entering into and for the performance of the scholarship agreement, in accordance with the **Rules for Awarding Scientific Scholarships in Research Projects Funded by the National Science Centre** and the **Agreement for the Implementation and Financing of the Research Project** under which the scholarship competition is conducted;
- b) **Article 6(1)(a) GDPR** and, where applicable, **Article 9(2)(a) GDPR** – where processing is based on your consent, including, where applicable, the processing of special categories of personal data voluntarily provided by you;
- c) **Article 6(1)(f) GDPR** – processing necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the Controller, including establishing, exercising or defending legal claims arising in connection with the scholarship procedure or scholarship agreement.

4. Recipients of Personal Data

Your personal data may be disclosed to:

- a) the National Science Centre (NCN);
- b) the appointed Scholarship Committee;
- c) entities responsible for evaluating, monitoring or auditing the implementation of the research project;
- d) public authorities and other entities entitled to receive personal data under applicable law.

Recipients will process your personal data only to the extent necessary for the purposes specified above.

5. Data Retention Period

If you are not awarded a scholarship, your personal data will be processed until the recruitment procedure has been completed, unless you withdraw your consent or request restriction of processing where such consent constitutes the legal basis for processing.

Where personal data continue to be processed after completion of the recruitment procedure on the basis of the Controller's legitimate interest (for example, in connection with court or administrative proceedings relating to the recruitment process or scholarship), the data will be retained until the final conclusion of such proceedings or until you successfully object to the processing, where applicable.

6. Scholarship Award

If you are awarded an NCN scientific scholarship, your personal data will be processed for the duration of the scholarship agreement and the implementation of the research project, until the project has been completed and financially settled with the National Science Centre.

After completion of the project, your personal data will be retained for the period required by applicable law, including for archival purposes and until the expiry of the statutory limitation period for any claims arising from the scholarship agreement or the research project.

7. Your Rights

Subject to the conditions laid down in the GDPR, you have the right to:

- a) access your personal data and obtain a copy thereof;
- b) request rectification of inaccurate or incomplete personal data;
- c) request erasure of your personal data;
- d) request restriction of processing;
- e) object to processing carried out on the basis of the Controller's legitimate interests;
- f) data portability, where applicable;
- g) lodge a complaint with the President of the Personal Data Protection Office (Urząd Ochrony Danych Osobowych – UODO), ul. Stawki 2, 00-193 Warsaw, Poland.

8. Withdrawal of Consent

Where the processing of your personal data is based on your consent, you may withdraw that consent at any time. Withdrawal of consent shall not affect the lawfulness of processing carried out before its withdrawal.

Please note that withdrawal of consent during the recruitment procedure may make it impossible to participate further in the scholarship competition or to award the scholarship.

9. Provision of Personal Data

Providing your personal data is voluntary; however, it is necessary in order to participate in the scholarship competition procedure. If you are awarded a scholarship, providing the required personal data is necessary for the conclusion and performance of the scholarship agreement.

10. Transfers of Personal Data

Your personal data collected for the purposes of the scholarship competition will not be transferred to third countries or international organisations.

11. Automated Decision-Making

Your personal data will not be subject to automated decision-making, including profiling.