

## **Assistant Researcher – Fish Ethology and Welfare (M/F) –**

### **1 Position Available**

**Reference: CCMAR/IAEBEP/16/2024**

The **Centro de Ciências do Mar do Algarve (CCMAR)** is opening a recruitment and selection process for one position for an Assistant Researcher in Fish Ethology and Welfare. This position is open to citizens of any nationality, including stateless individuals, under a permanent employment contract to recruit and select the best candidate for activities within the Foundation for Science and Technology Tenure Program (FCT-Tenure), according to the following conditions:

#### **1. About CCMAR:**

CCMAR (<https://ccmar.ualg.pt/>) is one of Portugal's leading marine science research centres, rated Excellent in evaluations promoted by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). With a multidisciplinary team, well-equipped facilities, and laboratories, CCMAR engages in core areas such as research, training, business, societal engagement, and collaboration.

#### **2. Summary and Functions:**

The selected candidate will lead research at CCMAR focused on advancing knowledge in fish ethology and welfare. EU advisory bodies recognise this field as critical for improving finfish production, and the European Commission and Parliament acknowledge it as a pillar for the EU aquaculture sector. CCMAR aims to leverage its position to spearhead innovative research addressing both fundamental and applied aspects of fish behaviour and welfare.

The candidate will coordinate a research group to expand understanding of fish behaviour using the four questions of ethology (function, causation, development, and evolution) as a framework and apply this state-of-the-art knowledge to enhance the welfare of farmed and wild-caught aquatic animals.

This area of research is increasingly relevant in science, policy, and public discourse. Advances in neuroscience have demonstrated the interconnection between behavioural traits and physiological mechanisms, with fish serving as unique models for vertebrate behavioural regulation. This research has wide-ranging implications, particularly for food production systems, as fish welfare directly impacts flesh quality, contributing to food security and the competitiveness of fish production and harvesting companies.

#### **Key Responsibilities:**

a) Conduct research to deepen knowledge of fish behaviour and its physiological underpinnings, integrating fundamental and applied perspectives.

- b) Develop and implement methodologies to assess and improve fish welfare in aquaculture and wild fisheries.
- c) Coordinate studies linking fish behavioural traits to physiological mechanisms, emphasising food quality and security implications.
- d) Supervise and mentor a research group, including MSc and PhD students, fostering an environment of innovation and scientific excellence.
- e) Secure competitive funding to support research activities and projects.
- f) Engage with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the general public to raise awareness about the importance of fish ethology and welfare.
- g) Establish and strengthen collaborations with national and international research institutions, hosting visiting researchers and students.
- h) Disseminate findings through high-impact publications, presentations at international conferences, and participation in outreach activities.
- i) Partner with aquaculture and fisheries industries to translate research findings into practical applications that enhance fish welfare and production efficiency.

The selected candidate will contribute to CCMAR's mission by addressing societal challenges, advancing scientific understanding, and supporting the sustainable development of aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

Note: This is the initial work plan. However, the selected candidate may be assigned additional tasks and responsibilities in alignment with the CCMAR's evolving strategy, allowing for adaptation to new priorities and challenges.

### **3. Applicable Law:**

- a) Decree-Law No. 57/2016, of August 29, amended by Law No. 57/2017, of July 19.
- b) Regulatory Decree No. 11-A/2017, of December 29.
- c) Labour Code, approved by Law No. 7/2009, of February 12, in its current version.
- d) Decree-Law No. 124/99 of April 20, in its current version.
- e) Administrative Procedure Code.
- f) Internal Regulation for Scientific Research and Technological Development Personnel, and Science and Technology Management and Communication at Centro de Ciências do Mar do Algarve [here](#).

**4. Start Date:** The contract is expected to start in January 2025.

**5. Workplace:** Activities will occur at CCMAR (University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal) and other locations necessary for the proposed tasks.

**6. Working Hours:** 35 hours per week.

**7. Monthly Salary:** The gross base monthly salary is €3.427,59 (Index 195)

**8. Application Period:** The application period starts on 04<sup>th</sup> of December, 2024, and ends on 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024, at 23:59 (Lisbon time, Portugal).

**9. Required Profile:**

9.1) The selected candidate must have completed a PhD in Biology, Ethology, or a related field, with at least 5 years of relevant research experience, particularly in fish behaviour and welfare.

9.2) The candidate must have a strong publication record in internationally recognised journals, focusing on fundamental and applied aspects of fish welfare science, particularly in the last 5 years. Research must encompass multiple species, life stages, and farming systems, addressing critical areas such as welfare at slaughter, ongrowing phases, and strategies to improve welfare in captivity.

9.3) The candidate must exhibit robust theoretical knowledge in welfare science, including cognition, domestication, and the impacts of climate change on aquatic species.

9.4) The candidate must have a proven track record of securing competitive funding and active participation in scientific events as an invited keynote or plenary speaker.

9.5) The candidate must demonstrate excellence in stakeholder engagement and science-policy communication, including the ability to:

- Engage with NGOs, producers, and policymakers at national and European levels;
- Deliver high-profile talks at non-scientific events and prepare policy briefs for national governments and EU regulatory bodies;
- Show evidence of official work with EU advisory bodies and/or other high-level institutions.

9.6) The candidate must have experience coordinating large teams and organising scientific events and advanced training activities for researchers and other stakeholders.

9.7) The candidate must have experience in consultancy, with evidence of impactful contributions to practical applications of fish welfare science, such as guidelines, industry standards, or policy development.

9.8) The candidate must demonstrate experience in teaching or lecturing, with a strong commitment to capacity building and mentoring students and early-career researchers.

9.9) High proficiency in English (spoken and written) is required.

**10. Selection Panel:**

The selection panel consists of:

- 1 - Adelino Vicente Mendonça Canário, President of the CCMAR Board of Directors and Full Professor at the University of Algarve and (President);
- 2 – Deborah Mary Power, Full Professor at the University of Algarve and Researcher at CCMAR (regular member)
- 3 – Sofia Alexandra Dias Engrola, Member of CCMAR Board of Directors and Principal Researcher at CCMAR (regular member);
- 4 – Michail Pavlidis, Professor University of Crete (regular member);
- 5 – Sonia Rey Planellas, Professor at the University of Stirling (regular member);
- 6 – Peter Hubbard, Assistant Researcher at CCMAR (substitute member);
- 7 – Pedro Miguel Guerreiro da Costa Guerreiro, Invited Assistant Professor at the University of Algarve and Assistant Researcher at CCMAR (substitute member).

#### **11. Evaluation and Selection Process:**

The evaluation will consist of a curriculum assessment (final rating between 0-100).

Admitted applications will be evaluated considering the scientific and curricular path, focusing on the relevance, quality, and up-to-dateness of the following criteria:

(CV) Curriculum Vitae (80%):

CA) Scientific and technological production, cultural or artistic, of the last five years, considered most relevant by the candidate. The content of the scientific output is more relevant than publication metrics or the publishing entity (55%);

CB) Applied or practice-based research activities developed in the last five years and considered by the candidate to be of the most significant impact (20%);

CC) Extension and dissemination activities developed in the last five years, particularly in the context of promoting scientific culture and practices, considered most relevant by the candidate (4%);

CD) Management activities of science, technology, and innovation programs, or experience in observing, monitoring, and evaluating the scientific and technological system or higher education in Portugal or abroad (1%).

(MCI) Motivation and Capacity for Innovation (20%):

MA) Coherence in expressing motivations for the position, explaining the relevance of the scientific and curricular path to the position and personal goals;

MB) Demonstration of alignment with the goals and values of CCMAR, based on the relevance of the scientific and curricular path;

MC) Ability to present specific contributions to the development of CCMAR based on the relevance of the scientific and curricular path, career plan, and work plan.

The selection panel may extend the five years referred to in the evaluation criteria upon the candidate's request when justified by suspending scientific activity for socially protected reasons, such as parental leave, severe prolonged illness, and other legally protected situations of work unavailability.

The selection panel reserves the right to contact or interview candidates if additional information or clarification of documentary aspects related to research results is needed. The possible interview, which does not constitute a selection method and is not classified, aims to obtain clarifications or explanations on elements contained in the candidates' CVs.

## **12. Selection Panel Functioning:**

The evaluation (with a score of 0-100) is carried out through the assessment of the motivation letter (with a personal evaluation of the relevance of the activities of the last 5 years to the present competition, highlighting the chosen publications), the CV that will include activities in the specific area and the candidate's scientific and professional path, and up to 5 articles selected by the candidate.

The score of each candidate is obtained by summing the points of each criterion multiplied by the respective weights according to the following formula:

$$C = CV80\% + MCI20\%$$

After determining the candidates' scores (C), each selection panel member will rank the candidates from highest to lowest score. Voting follows for the first place and each successive place. The candidate receiving the majority of votes will be selected.

If no candidate is selected in the first round of voting, the lowest-ranked candidate is eliminated, and the process is repeated with the remaining candidates. In the event of a tie, applying the previous criteria, the jury president will make the tie-breaking decision.

The selection panel will write minutes of meetings describing the evaluation and selection process, including a ranked list of admitted candidates and their scores. The CCMAR Board of Directors will validate the panel's final decision.

The jury reserves the right to close the competition without recruitment if the candidates do not possess the appropriate profile for the proposed functions. If the selected candidate cannot be appointed due to non-compliance with documentary requirements or other reasons, or if they later terminate the employment contract, the jury reserves the right to appoint the next candidate in the final ranking based on a reserve list that can be used up to 12 months from the date of this announcement.

## **13. Required Documents, Process, and Submission of Applications:**

Only complete applications submitted directly and obligatorily on the CCMAR website <https://ccmar.uaig.pt/en/career-opportunities> are accepted. The application is considered valid

only after the candidate receives written confirmation from CCMAR. The application in English must include:

- a) A motivation letter (in English) with a personal evaluation of the relevance of the activities of the last 5 years to the present competition, highlighting the chosen publications, considering the MCI evaluation criteria, and a career plan that includes a work plan falling within the scope of point 2 (Summary and Functions) not exceeding 10 000 characters;
- b) Detailed curriculum vitae (in English) that includes activities in the specific area and the scientific and professional path of the candidate organised according to the CV evaluation criteria;
- c) Up to 5 articles chosen by the candidate.
- d) A copy of the Ph.D. certificate;

Non-compliance with requirements/documents outlined in 9.1, 9.9 and 13 invalidates the application. According to the law, false information may be penalised.

#### **14. Results:**

The list of admitted and excluded candidates and the final ranking list will be posted on the CCMAR website at <https://ccmar.ualg.pt/en/career-opportunities>, and candidates will be notified by email.

#### **15. Prior Hearing and Final Decision Deadline:**

15.1) After evaluating all admitted applications, the Selection Panel will produce a provisional minute describing the admission, evaluation, and selection process, including a list of candidates ranked and their scores and decisions.

15.2) All candidates will be notified by email of the Selection Panel's provisional decision.

15.3) Under Article 121 of the Administrative Procedure Code, all candidates have 10 working days from the date of email notification to contest the provisional decision by emailing the Selection Panel.

15.4) The CCMAR Board of Directors will validate the final decision, which will be communicated (by email) to all candidates within 90 working days from the application deadline.

#### **16. Final Information:**

16.1) Candidates holding certificates proving degrees from a foreign university must have their certificate recognised in Portugal when signing the employment contract. Failure to do so justifies exclusion from the procedure. Information on degree recognition can be obtained from any Portuguese university or here.

16.2) The CCMAR Board of Directors reserves the right to cancel this recruitment process without hiring if circumstances related to the project change.

16.3) CCMAR endorses the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter and Code).

16.4) Disabled candidates have a preference in case of equal classification, which prevails over any other legal preference. Candidates must declare in their application, under oath, their disability degree, type of disability, and means of communication/expression to be used in the selection process under the aforementioned decree.

16.5) CCMAR's non-discrimination and equal access policy: No candidate may be privileged, benefited, prejudiced, or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty on the grounds of, namely, ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, social origin or condition, genetic heritage, disability, chronic illness, nationality, ethnicity, territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs, and union membership.

The members of the Selection Panel approved this announcement on 03-12-2024.