

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: 'Miquel Crusafont' Predoctoral Researcher [ICPJA021]

INSTITUT CATALÀ DE PALEONTOLOGIA MIQUEL CRUSAFONT (ICP)

Introduction. The ICP (<http://www.icp.cat>) is a public research institute focused on vertebrate paleontology. It is a CERCA (Research Centers of Catalonia) center linked to the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and established as a non-profit foundation with the Generalitat de Catalunya and the UAB as patrons.

Job description. The ICP is recruiting a full-time predoctoral researcher to join one of the research groups of any Research Area of the ICP to perform a PhD under the supervision of ICP researchers. This is the third call in the framework of the 'Miquel Crusafont' Predoctoral Contracts Program of the ICP, established in 2024.

TYPE OF POSITION AND DEADLINES:			
Number of positions:	1	Reference:	ICPJA021
Job title:	Predoctoral Researcher	Professional category:	R1
Starting date:	01/03/2026	Gross salary:	18,180 €* 18,180 €
Publication date:	15/09/2025	Application deadline:	31/10/2025
BASIC INFORMATION:			
Type of contract:	Fixed-term		
Duration:	4 years		
Career progression:	Salary increases at the third and fourth year as determined by law		
Research Group/Area:	Depending on the main supervisor		
Workplace:	Depending on the main supervisor (either Edifici ICTA-ICP at the UAB Campus or ICP Museum in Sabadell, Spain)		
Working conditions:	-Full time job (37.5 h/week; 1630 h/year) -Teleworking opportunities (up to 30% working time)		
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:			
Academic Degree:	MSc in Paleobiology, Biodiversity, or similar (when applying)		
Languages:	Good level of spoken and written English (no diploma required)		
Experience:	-Be registered in a Doctoral Program of the UAB less than 1 year ago or fulfilling all the prerequisites for doing so before signing the contract -PhD project draft focused on vertebrate paleontology or paleoanthropology -Lacking a PhD degree (in any field) -Neither currently nor previously funded by a predoctoral grant or contract		
Other:	-Agreement with an ICP R3 researcher to become main supervisor of the PhD (see below for requirements) -Approval of the research group leader to the PhD project draft		
DESIRABLE COMPETENCES:			
Expertise:	Vertebrate paleontology or paleoanthropology		
Experience:	-Participation in paleontological fieldwork -Previous work with the ICP collections or the fossil record from Catalonia -Contributions to meetings and scientific publications		
CONTACT DETAILS:			
Name:	David M. Alba	Position:	Director
Phone number:	+34 935868604	email address:	direccio@icp.cat

HOW TO APPLY:

Procedure:	All the documents must be in English (PDF format) and emailed to the contact person (Re: ICPJA021)
Documents:	All applicants must provide a motivation letter, two reference letters, and an extended CV (free format and no page limits for any document). The motivation letter must include a draft of the PhD project. One of the reference letters must be written by the supervisor(s) of the PhD, highlighting the merits of the candidate and the scientific relevance of the PhD project. The other letter must be written by the research group leader to which the main supervisor belongs and must approve the PhD project and explain its relevance for the aims and scope of the group. The Selection Committee may request additional justification of merits at any stage of the recruitment process. The selected candidate will be requested a copy of academic titles and social security's occupational history/work contracts before formalizing the contract.

* Salary is determined by law, see 'Career progression' below for further detail.

Selection Criteria. The weight of the various selection criteria (in %) is specified in the table below. During the shortlisting phase, each eligible applicant will be assigned a 0-10 score to each criterion. During the evaluation phase, shortlisted candidates will be assigned a 0-10 score to each merit included in the selection criteria (as specified on the ICP recruitment protocol), each with a corresponding percentage determined by the Selection Committee before the call is closed. Final scores will be modulated by the results of an interview and career duration.

SELECTION CRITERIA	%	SELECTION CRITERIA	%
A. Research outputs	15%	F. Fieldwork experience	30%
B. International visibility & mobility	5%	G. Management & leadership capabilities	0%
C. Fundraising abilities	5%	H. Outreach & knowledge transfer	0%
D. Supervision, mentoring & teaching	0%	I. Other merits	10%
E. Other academic activities	0%	J. Adequacy of the candidate's profile	35%

OTM-R. The ICP endorses the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers that define the EU Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), and since 2018 holds the HR Excellence Award of the EU. Therefore, the ICP is fully committed to open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R), in order to ensure that the best person for a job is recruited as well as to guarantee equal opportunities among candidates. The internal regulations that apply to this job description are available on the document entitled "ICP Protocol for the Evaluation, Internal Promotion and Recruitment of Researchers and Technicians", which is publicly available from the ICP website (http://www.icp.cat/attachments/transparencia/ICP_Recruitment_Protocol.pdf).

Non-discrimination. The Non-Discrimination Committee of the ICP will oversee the recruitment process to prevent any kind of discrimination by reason of gender, sexual preference, language, ethnicity, geographic origin, functional diversity, or any other reason unrelated to scientific-technical merits. Applicants are responsible to provide the necessary personal information related to career breaks (due to parental and medical leaves, unemployment, part-time contracts, etc.) if any of the provisos included in the recruitment protocol apply to the computation of career duration. The ICP aims to guarantee equal opportunities to all candidates and intends to promote a balanced sex ratio. Therefore, the application by female candidates is strongly encouraged.

Confidentiality. The ICP complies with applicable laws of personal data protection and guarantees the confidentiality of all the personal data provided by the candidate, which will solely be used for the purposes of the current recruitment process.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: 'Miquel Crusafont' Predoctoral Researcher [ICPJA021]

INSTITUT CATALÀ DE PALEONTOLOGIA MIQUEL CRUSAFONT (ICP)

The 'Miquel Crusafont' Predoctoral Contracts Program of the ICP. The ICP is recruiting a full-time predoctoral researcher to perform a PhD under the supervision of one or more ICP researchers. The call is framed within the 'Miquel Crusafont' Predoctoral Contracts Program of the ICP, which was established by the ICP Steering Committee in February 2024 with the triple aim to: (1) increase the number of predoctoral researchers (R1) at the ICP; (2) boost the opportunities of ICP researchers (other than research group leaders) to supervise PhD dissertations; and (3) pay tribute to Miquel Crusafont, the 'father' of the Catalan school of vertebrate paleontology and the founder of the research institute that would later become the ICP. The program aims to offer a new four-year predoctoral contract each year, so that from 2027 onward there should be four 'Miquel Crusafont' predoctoral researchers at any time. Nevertheless, the Steering Committee reserves the right to increase or decrease the frequency of these calls, depending on budgetary availability and other strategic reasons.

Besides the gross salary and associated social security expenses, the ICP will cover the registration fees to the PhD Program during the duration of the contract. Other expenses required for the development of the PhD project (computer and other equipment, consumables, travel and subsistence expenses, etc.) will have to be defrayed with competitive funds from R+D projects in which the supervisor(s) participate and/or from travel or research grants to which the predoctoral researcher might eventually apply (including ICP calls for performing stays abroad, if available).

The call is open to everyone and the selection will be performed following the standard mechanisms included in the current ICP recruitment protocol (see OTM-R above). Nevertheless, as compared to other research positions opened at the ICP, this one has two particularities: (a) applicants must have a pre-agreement with one or more ICP researchers to become their PhD supervisors if they get the contract; and (b) applicants must present a PhD project that has been approved not only by the potential supervisors but also by the leader of the research group to which the main supervisor belongs. The selected candidate will join the ICP research group to which the main supervisor belongs. Particular rules apply regarding (co)supervisors:

- Each application must have a main supervisor and may have up to two additional cosupervisors.
- Only tenured or tenure-track R3 and R4 researchers hired full-time by the ICP, as well as R3 and R4 researchers formally ascribed to the ICP, qualify as both main supervisors and cosupervisors.
- R2 researchers, part-time tenured R3 researchers, and junior (R3) research group leaders qualify as cosupervisors but not as main supervisors.
- Senior research group leaders, R1 researchers, and technicians are excluded as both main supervisors and cosupervisors for this call.
- It is strongly recommended that each applicant has at least two supervisors and that at least one of them is a female researcher.
- Unless the main supervisor is tenured or has a tenure-track contract, a cosupervisor hired by or ascribed to the ICP that fulfills this criterion is mandatory.
- Research associates, ICP technicians and, exceptionally, external researchers may be cosupervisors if there are two other supervisors hired by or ascribed to the ICP and one of them fulfills the previous requirement.
- Each ICP researcher eligible as supervisor can only be main supervisor of a single application in this call, but may be cosupervisor in other applications of the same call.
- In the future, researchers that are main supervisors of an active 'Miquel Crusafont' predoctoral researcher of the ICP will be excluded as potential main supervisor but might still act as cosupervisors.

ICP Research Group. The research performed at the ICP is organized around six research groups distributed among three research areas, which are coordinated and supervised by the current Director (David M. Alba). Each group is led by the corresponding leader (senior researcher, R4) or junior leader (researcher, R3), and may include other (experienced) researchers (tenured or tenure-track, R3), postdoctoral researchers (fixed-term, R2), predoctoral researchers (PhD candidates, R1), as well as research associates (with written agreement but no employment relationship), collaborators and technicians. Further details on the organization and both academic and non-academic personnel of the ICP can be found on the ICP Organization Chart available from the ICP website (http://www.icp.cat/attachments/transparencia/ICP_Organization_Chart.pdf).

The aims of the three Research Areas of the ICP can be summarized as follows:

- **Mesozoic Research Area:** This area focuses on the paleobiodiversity and paleoecology of terrestrial ecosystems during the Mesozoic era (252-66 Ma), with emphasis on those time intervals best represented in the fossil record of Catalonia (bony remains, eggs and ichnites)—in particular, the last dinosaurs of Europe and associated faunas, in order to model the ecosystems of the Late Cretaceous before the K-T extinction that wiped out non-avian dinosaurs and other terrestrial vertebrates.
- **Cenozoic Research Area.** This area focuses on the paleobiodiversity, evolution and paleobiology of continental vertebrates from the Cenozoic era (66 Ma to present, including the Paleogene, Neogene and Quaternary periods), with emphasis on the rich fossil record of mammals from Catalonia and nearby areas. Particular efforts are devoted to investigating paleoenvironmental change through time by means of paleoecological and paleobiodiversity dynamics analyses (which is especially relevant in the light of current global climate change), as well as in the evolution of primates based on their fossil record (with emphasis on the origins of the great ape and human clade).
- **Evolutionary Paleobiology Area:** This area is devoted to the study of the patterns and causes of evolutionary change and extinction by combining fossil evidence with the biology of extant organisms. Emphasis is put on the evolution of life-histories under changing ecological conditions from the viewpoint of adaptation, based on the paleohistological study of hard tissues within the analytical framework provided by life history theory of biological evolution (ecology, demography, physiology and adaptation). The area also encompasses computational approaches that aim to digitally obtain paleobiological and evolutionary data of extinct organisms based on a wide range of techniques from imaging to functional approaches, as well as paleogenomic and paleoproteomic techniques to retrieve molecular information from fossil remains.

Potential supervisors and research group leaders. For each research group (R.G.), the name and email of the research group leader is provided within parentheses, followed by those of R2 and R3 researchers of each group. Only tenured or tenure-track R3 researchers (**bolded**) that are not research group leaders can act as main supervisors alone as well as cosupervisors. Other R3 researchers (*italicized*) can act as cosupervisor or as main supervisor if the cosupervisor fits into the previous category or is an R3 research group leader. Finally, R2 researchers, R3 research group leaders, and current main supervisors of Miquel Crusafont predoctoral contracts can only act as cosupervisors (underlined).

Mesozoic Area:

Dinosaur Ecosystems R.G. (Àngel Galobart [angel.galobart@icp.cat]): Albert Prieto-Márquez [albert.prieto@icp.cat], **Bernat Vila** [bernat.vila@icp.cat], Albert Sellés [albert.selles@icp.cat].

Cenozoic Area:

Paleobiodiversity & Phylogeny R.G. (David M. Alba [david.alba@icp.cat]): **Arnau Bolet** [arnau.bolet@icp.cat], *Andrea Villa* [andrea.villa@icp.cat], Marta Pina [marta.pina@icp.cat], Omar Cirilli [omar.cirilli@icp.cat].

Paleoecology & Biochronology R.G. (Isaac Casanovas-Vilar [isaac.casanovas@icp.cat]): **Marc Furio** [marc.furio@icp.cat], *Ornella Bertrand* [ornella.bertrand@icp.cat], *Alba Vicente* [alba.vicente@icp.cat].

Paleoprimatology & Paleoanthropology R.G. (Salvador Moyà-Solà): **Júlia Arias-Martorell** [julia.arias@icp.cat], **Judit Marigó** [judit.marigo@icp.cat].

Evolutionary Paleobiology Area:

Computational Biomechanics & Life History Evolution R.G. (Josep Fortuny [josep.fortuny@icp.cat]): *Carmen Nacarino-Meneses* [carmen.nacarino@icp.cat], *Josep Quintana* [pep.quintana@icp.cat]; David P. Groenewald [david.groenewald@icp.cat]; Ane de Celis [ane.decelis@icp.cat].

Paleogenomics & Paleoproteomics R.G. (Tomàs Marquès-Bonet [tomas.marques@icp.cat]): **Esther Lizano** [esther.lizano@icp.cat].

Research profile. The ICP aims to recruit a motivated predoctoral researcher to perform a PhD dissertation under the supervision of one or more researchers at the ICP. The topic of the dissertation can be focused on any aspect of vertebrate paleontology or paleoanthropology, but must align with the aims and scope of one of the research areas of the ICP (see above). Applicants with PhD projects focused on organisms other than vertebrates will be considered non-eligible. The PhD project must be agreed with the potential supervisors and approved by the leader of the group to which the main supervisor belongs. Candidates should have a completed a MSc degree on paleobiology or related topics at the time of application, must lack a PhD degree (in any discipline), must not have or have enjoyed a predoctoral grant or contract, and demonstrate a good level of English. They should also be registered in a Doctoral Program of the UAB or be ready to do so if they get the contract (i.e., fulfilling the requisites, not being already accepted in one); if already enrolled in a PhD Program, registration must have been less than one year ago (or less than two years ago if part-time) so as to ensure that they will be able to enjoy the four years of contract before the deadline of the PhD dissertation's deposit. Desirable competences include experience in paleontological fieldwork, publications, meetings, and ICP collections. The position is mostly devoted to research (including publications and contributions to meetings), with no teaching burden but including other associated academic duties such fieldwork and dissemination/outreach activities.

Main responsibilities. The main responsibilities of the R1 (Predoctoral Researcher) professional category at the ICP are the following:

- Collaboration with the corresponding supervisor(s) in order to perform a PhD within the framework of the specific goals of the research group, in accordance with the strategic aims and scientific policy of the ICP, including publications, contributions to meetings and fieldwork activities.
- Participation in research project applications by the corresponding supervisor.
- Publication, as first author or coauthor, of articles in SCI journals.
- Attendance and contribution to international and national scientific meetings.
- Attendance to scientific training courses, conference cycles and workshops.
- Participation in planned and emergency paleontological interventions of prospection, excavation and/or sampling.
- Providing the Head of the Research Department and the Head of the Communication & Scientific Dissemination Area with regular updates of the (co)authored publications.

- Providing the Head of the Communication and Scientific Dissemination Area with all the required noticeable information regarding the research and dissemination activities performed.

Evaluation details. The details of the evaluation criteria are provided in the recruitment protocol (see in particular selection criteria and merits in section 2.d). Each member of the Selection Committee will assign to each merit a 0-10 score (0–2.4 = deficient; 2.5–4.9 = insufficient; 5.0–6.9 = sufficient; 7.0–8.9 = very good; 9.0–10.0 = excellent) and an average score will be computed for each. Average merit scores will be used to compute weighted average selection criteria scores, and the sum of the latter will be the total raw scoring of the candidate. A relative scoring will be computed as raw scoring multiplied by maximum career duration among all the shortlisted candidates divided by career duration of the candidate. Reductions in career duration apply not to penalize diversified career paths and career breaks (see recruitment protocol for details; the candidates are responsible to provide such details). The recruitment protocol defines ‘career duration’ as the time elapsed since 1 January of the year when the candidate first published a SCI paper; as this requirement might not be fulfilled in the case of applicants to this call, the Steering Committee of the ICP has decided to exceptionally define it as the time elapsed since 1 January of the year MSc degree completion. A corrected scoring will be computed as (raw scoring * 0.6) + (relative scoring * 0.2). An interview by ICP members of the Selection Committee will be mandatory for all shortlisted candidates. Each member of the committee will rate the interview (excellent = 1.25; good = 1.15; neutral = 1.0; bad = 0.85; terrible = 0.75) and a correction factor computed as the arithmetic mean of the interview ratings. The final scoring will be computed as corrected scoring * interview correction factor. Candidates will be prioritized based on their final scoring.

Career progression. The contract is fixed-term for a maximum of four years and cannot be extended under any circumstance, irrespective of whether the PhD dissertation has been completed or not at the end of the contract. The predoctoral researcher will have to send to the ICP Director the annual report(s) elaborated by them and/or their supervisor(s) for the monitoring committee designated by the PhD Program, as well as the results of the evaluation performed by the latter, in order to ensure that the PhD is progressing adequately. Failure to do so will result in the termination of the contract. The ICP further reserves the right to interrupt the contract if the predoctoral researcher receives a negative evaluation by the monitoring committee, preventing them to continue pursuing a PhD. The gross salary will be determined on the basis of the provisos of the Research Personnel in Training Statute (Decree Law 103/2019), which implies a salary increase in the third and another in the fourth year. In 2024, the salaries were 18,180.41 € for the first two years, 19,479.01 € for the third year, and 24,348.77 € for the fourth year; these will be updated for 2025 according to law.