

PhD studentship: The distribution and abundance of cetaceans in Irish waters

Hi all,

Below are details of a PhD opportunity being advertised at University College, Cork, Ireland.

Project Outline

Applications are invited for a 4-year PhD award within the ObSERVE programme in the School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences (BEES) and the MaREI Centre in University College Cork (UCC).

The ObSERVE programme is funded by the Department of Environment, Communications and Climate (DECC) and aims to provide updated information on the distribution and abundance of marine megafauna in Irish waters through aerial surveys. The PhD student will join a diverse group of researchers at UCC and help deliver an ambitious aerial survey programme, participating as an observer in dedicated surveys for marine megafauna (cetaceans, seabirds, turtles, sharks) and undertaking a programme of study on the distribution of marine megafauna in Irish waters. Aerial surveys throughout the Irish EEZ will be conducted in summer and winter of 2021 and 2022. In addition, a series of fine-scale surveys will be conducted along the south and southwest coastal waters in summer, autumn and winter of 2021 and 2022. The successful student should be willing and able to participate in all surveys. The proposed PhD will focus on the distribution and habitat modelling of cetaceans, identifying biodiversity 'hotspots' and marine spatial planning.

Scholarship details

The scholarship is funded by the Department of Environment, Communications and Climate ObSERVE programme and will cover EU fees of €5,900 and a tax-free stipend of €18,500 per annum for a period of four years. UK applicants will be granted EU fee status due to the Common Travel Area with Ireland, but international students would likely be required to make up the fee deficit (currently approx. €10,000 p.a.). It is anticipated that the successful candidate will start the project as soon as possible after 1st July 2021.

The student will work under the supervision of Prof. Emer Rogan and Dr Mark Jessopp and be based within the School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences (<https://www.ucc.ie/en/bees/>), with links to the MaREI Centre (<https://www.marei.ie/>), UCC. As part of a 4-year structured PhD at UCC, the student will also be required to undertake 20 credits of postgraduate modules aimed at equipping students with a range of transferable skills (e.g. project management, scientific writing, outreach & communication, and data analysis).

Requirements:

Applicants must have a good primary degree in an appropriate discipline. A MSc in Marine Biology or equivalent would be preferable, though not essential. Applicants will also need to satisfy the University's requirements regarding English language ability.

Essential criteria

- 1st or 2:1 BSc in appropriate discipline (e.g. Zoology, Ecology, Marine Biology)
- Experience in identifying marine megafauna in northeast Atlantic waters
- Willingness and ability to participate in aerial surveys in offshore waters
- Experience of ecological and statistical modelling techniques in R
- Ability to work in a team
- Familiarity with at-sea survey methodologies for marine megafauna

Desirable criteria:

- MSc in a related discipline
- Familiarity with GIS
- Marine mammal or seabird observer accreditation

- Familiarity/experience with large databases
- Familiarity with statistical modelling
- Sea Survival certification
- An EU driving license (or equivalent).

To Apply

Submit an electronic version of a cv including contact details of two referees and cover letter detailing your reasons for applying for the project and outlining how you meet the post requirements to Prof. Emer Rogan, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University College Cork, e-mail: e.rogan@ucc.ie

Closing date for applications is 12pm, Monday 21st June 2021

Further information

Please contact either of the following for more information regarding the scholarship and making an application:

- Prof. Emer Rogan, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University College Cork, e-mail: e.rogan@ucc.ie
- Dr Mark Jessopp, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University College Cork, e-mail: m.jessopp@ucc.ie