Position Description

1. General information

Position reference	USAL-PF1: Role of Biomineralizing Microplankton in Carbon and Iron Removal in the Southern Ocean
Research area	Southern Ocean biogeochemistry and marine carbon removal pathways
Research fields	Biogeochemical Cycles; Carbon Sequestration; Ocean Acidification; Iron Cycle; Diatoms; Coccolithophores; Plankton Ecology; Paleorecontructions
Supervisors	• Andrés Rigual Hernández (USAL) • Peter Macreadie (RMIT)
Available research capabilities	Key research facilities, Infrastructure and Equipment: Two laboratories for full preparation of microplankton and micropaleontological samples, including diatoms, calcareous nannofossils and foraminifera. Rooms of microscopy equipped with optical microscopes of lineal (5) and circular (1) polarization and software for image analysis. The GGO members have full access to SEM and TEM. Laboratories of Micro-X-ray Fluorescence, Mass Spectrometry (MS) and absolute age dating (AMS and Gamma Spectrometry) and associated techniques for sample preparation are available through NUCLEUS (USAL Research support services; https://nucleus.usal.es/en/).
Find out more about the research groups	• https://oceano.usal.es/andres_rigual/ • https://sites.google.com/usal.es/sonar-co2/project/ • https://www.bluecarbonlab.org/ • https://www.rmit.edu.au/research/centres-collaborations/centre-for-nature-positive-solutions
Employing entity	University of Salamanca (USAL)
Seconding entity	RMIT University (RMIT)
Position funded by	• COFUND, Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), Horizon Europe, European Union • USAL • RMIT
Foreseen start date	June 2026
Gross annual salary	37.000 EUR plus complements defined below

2. Expected Candidate Profile

The expected candidate profile for the position is as follows:

Requirements:

- PhD related to the position description.
- Strong background in chemical and/or biological oceanography and/or plankton ecology.
- Minimum of 2 or 3 publications as first author in relevant journals in the field.
- Ability to work in a multidisciplinary team.
- Ability to learn new analytical methods (e.g. elemental analysis).
- Independent thinking.
- English proficiency (spoken and written) for writing publications and presenting at international conferences.

Preferred qualifications:

- Experience with Scanning Electron Microscopy and EDX.
- Identification of plankton species using diverse microscopy techniques.
- Experience with statistical analysis (R and others).
- Familiarity with elemental analysis techniques (e.g. Micro-X-ray Fluorescence).

3. Employment Conditions

University of Salamanca offers a 36-month (3-year) postdoctoral full employment contract to work at its facilities in Salamanca, Spain as part of the AuSpire researcher training program, co-funded by the European Commission under the MSCA COFUND scheme. The total working hours per week are 37,5 and there is a probation period of 4 months.

The remuneration, in line with the European Commission rules for Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant holders, will consist of a gross annual salary of 37.000 EUR. The net amount to be received by the Postdoctoral Fellow is subject to Spanish tax legislation.

The position will be jointly supervised by USAL (Employing Entity) and RMIT University (Seconding Entity), where the Postdoctoral Fellow must undertake a secondment at the premises of the latter in Melbourne, Australia for up to 12 months.

Additionally, the program includes compulsory annual in-person workshops at various locations across Spain, along with online training and networking activities.

Benefits include

- 4,000 EUR relocation for employment stipend to cover costs associated with taking up employment (flights, visa, insurance, etc.), to be distributed monthly as a top-up to the gross salary.[1]
- 9,000 EUR relocation for secondment stipend to cover compulsory project-related travel and accommodation costs (flights, visa, insurance, accommodation, etc.).[1]
- 3,000 EUR travel stipend to cover flights and accommodation for participating in compulsory AuSpire training and networking events in Spain over the 3 years.[1]
- 314 EUR monthly family allowance offered to candidates who meet the criteria.[1] [2]
- Access to all research and training facilities at University of Salamanca
- Spanish Social Security coverage.
- Sick leave.
- Parental leave
- 22 days paid holiday leave
- 6 personal leave days
- Research staff at USAL may also request other types of leave (some paid and others unpaid or partially paid) for various reasons. Conditions for each of these can be found at: https://www.usal.es/files/vacaciones_permisos_licencias_pdi.pdf
- Becoming a Marie Sklodowska-Curie fellow and be invited to join the Marie Curie Alumni Association.

[1] The definitive amount to be received by the Postdoctoral Fellow might be subject to Spanish tax legislation.

[2] According to MSCA-COFUND requirements, Fellows with family obligations are entitled to a family allowance (i.e. persons linked to Postdoctoral Fellow by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country or region where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the Postdoctoral Fellow).