

Two Junior Researcher positions on the comparative biomechanics of the primate shoulder

Organization: KU Leuven / UGent

Position: Junior Researcher (4-year position)

Project Overview:

We invite applications for two Junior Researcher positions in functional anatomy, explicitly focusing on the biomechanics of the primate shoulder. This exciting opportunity is part of a research project in collaboration with the University of Ghent (Belgium) and TU Delft (the Netherlands) that aims to deepen our understanding of the intricacies of primate shoulder anatomy and its implications for human evolution. Which anatomical traits in the shoulder affect forelimb function? And which can be used to reconstruct the locomotor behaviour of our ancestors from fossil remains?

To address these questions we combine techniques from different disciplines - medical imaging, computational modelling, shape analysis, biomechanical experiments, anatomical dissections – and apply these to study chimpanzees, bonobos, gibbons, gorillas and orangutans.

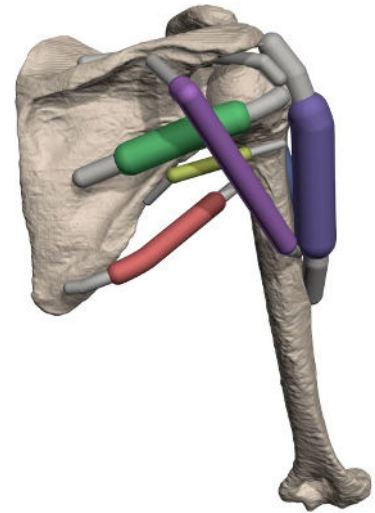
The junior researchers will be jointly supervised by Evie Vereecke (professor of anatomy at KU Leuven) and Alexander Van Tongel (orthopedic surgeon at UZGent). The project will be run in close collaboration with Ajay Seth from TU Delft and Emmanuel Audenaert (orthopedic surgeon and professor of anatomy at UZGent) who are both expert in computational modelling and simulation. This multidisciplinary supervisory team will ensure a stimulating research environment with ample opportunities for acquiring additional expertise in orthopaedics as well as biomedical engineering. The junior researchers will be given the opportunity to conduct a PhD.

Key Responsibilities:

- Conduct independent research on the functional anatomy of the primate shoulder
- Collaborate effectively within a multidisciplinary research team
- Communicate research findings through presentations, publications and other media
- Utilize various software packages for modelling, data analysis and interpretation
- Apply for additional funding

Qualifications:

- Master's degree in a relevant field (e.g., Movement Sciences, Biology, Biological Anthropology, Biomedical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Sciences)
- Demonstrate a strong affinity with human evolution and anatomy
- Being open to combine computational talent with anatomical skills
- Proficiency in English (both written and spoken)
- Excellent academic record, demonstrating a high level of competency
- Highly motivated and enthusiastic about contributing to cutting-edge research



Desired Skills:

- Experience with various software packages for image processing, modelling and data analysis
- Programming experience is a plus (e.g., Python, Matlab, R)
- Excellent communication skills with experience or interest in scientific outreach

Please note that we are describing the background we imagine would best fit the role. Even if you do not meet all the requirements and feel that you are up for the task, we absolutely want to see your application! The research process is also a learning experience.

Our Offer:

- 4 year position with competitive salary. The initial contract will be for 1 year and will be extended after a positive evaluation.
- Excellent guidance by a dynamic, international and multidisciplinary team
- High level scientific training at two top-ranked universities
- Enrolment in PhD program at the doctoral school of KU Leuven and/or UGent
- Preferred starting date: as soon as your schedule permits, starting from 1st of April 2024

Location:

- Research group Jan Palfijn Anatomy Lab in KU Leuven Campus Kulak in Kortrijk, and
- Research group Human Structure and Repair in UZ Gent, Ghent.

Application Process:

Interested candidates should submit the following documents **before March 1st, 2024**:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Cover letter outlining research interests, relevant experience, and motivation
- Academic transcripts
- Contact information for two professional references

Please submit your application through the KU Leuven portal: <https://www.kuleuven.be/personeel/jobsite/jobs/phd>. In case you have questions about this job opportunity, please contact Prof. Evie Vereecke (Evie.Vereecke@kuleuven.be) via email and mention "PhD position Primate Shoulder" in the subject line. More information on the research group can be found at <https://jan-pal.kuleuven-kulak.be/>

KU Leuven and UGent strive for an inclusive, respectful and socially safe environment. We embrace diversity among individuals and groups as an asset. Open dialogue and differences in perspective are essential for an ambitious research and educational environment. In our commitment to equal opportunity, we recognize the consequences of historical inequalities. We do not accept any form of discrimination based on, but not limited to, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ethnic or national background, skin colour, religious and philosophical diversity, neurodivergence, employment disability, health, or socioeconomic status.