



We are pleased to advertise a 30-months postdoctoral fellow position at the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization Polish Academy of Sciences, applications deadline: 09 February 2026.

As part of a project funded by the: ERC-2024-SyG "EUROpest" 101166700

High-resolution palynology and non-pollen palynomorphs (NPP) as indicators of land-use and wetness changes shaping epidemic vulnerability in Late Medieval–Early Modern Central Europe (ca. 1300–1800).

Context: EUROpest (A Novel Understanding of Pandemic Disease in Preindustrial Europe, 1300–1800) asks why epidemic spread, mortality and recovery varied so strongly across Europe. It advances an eco-bio-social paradigm in which outbreaks are co-determined by climate, landscape and land use, demography, economy and pathogen biology. Plague (*Yersinia pestis*) is treated as the most devastating "peak" disease occurring over a broader baseline that likely included malaria, smallpox, tuberculosis and enteric infections. EUROpest conducts comparative regional case studies from Spain to Lithuania and from Greece to England, combining archival analysis with archaeology, archaeogenetics (aDNA), paleoecology (sediment cores, pollen, dating) and paleoclimatology (proxy reconstructions and modelling). Human-supervised machine learning will integrate these datasets to identify factors shaping outbreak dynamics and impacts. Results will refine historical narratives and inform future pandemic planning.

A postdoctoral position is available for 30 months (2.5 years) with a total gross (brutto–brutto) budget of up to EUR 160,000 (including salary and all employer-side employment costs), in accordance with the host institution's regulations.

Your responsibilities:

- Lead high-resolution palynological analyses (pollen) of lake/peat sediment cores covering ca. 1300–1800 CE (and adjacent intervals where relevant).
- Analyse and interpret non-pollen palynomorphs (NPP) and, if applicable, microcharcoal as indicators of land use, pastoral pressure, wetness/eutrophication and fire activity.
- Design and implement a sampling strategy (subsampling, lab preparation workflow, QA/QC, metadata documentation).
- Contribute to and/or coordinate chronological control (e.g., selecting levels for radiocarbon dating; supporting age–depth modelling in collaboration with project partners).
- Perform statistical analyses of palynological data (e.g., ordination, rate-of-change, zonation) and produce clear figures and reproducible workflows.
- Integrate palynological results with complementary proxies and with historical/archival and climate datasets in close collaboration with the international team.
- Prepare manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals and present results at scientific meetings; contribute to project reports and dissemination.
- Ensure open and well-documented data delivery (e.g., standardized datasets, code, and archiving in appropriate repositories) in line with FAIR principles.
- Support day-to-day project coordination within IGiPZ PAN (planning milestones, internal communication) and, where appropriate, co-supervise students/assistants involved in laboratory or data tasks.
- Field work



Your qualifications:

- PhD in Earth or Environmental Sciences, Physical Geography, Quaternary Science or similar
- Published research articles on human-vegetation relationship in the past
- Experience in the work with lake sediments and sedimentology
- Extensive experience in palynological analysis, including pollen preparation techniques, NPPs identification and data processing
- Knowledge in quantitative pollen-based vegetation reconstruction methods
- Strong language and communication skills (English), both oral and written
- Ability to work in an international team
- Willingness to work abroad for parts of the project time

Applications: the project PI is Michał Słowiński, head of Department of Past Landscapes Dynamics Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization Polish Academy of Sciences. Interested persons are requested to send a CV, letter of motivation, transcript of MSc and PhD with Grades, publication list, three letters of recommendation by email michal.slowinski@igipz.pan.pl

Review of applications starts on 09 February 2026 and continues until the position is filled.

Excellent applications will be invited for an online interview.

with best regards,

Prof. Dr hab. Michał Słowiński

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