

Call for Doctoral Student: 4-Year PhD Position in Megalithic Landscapes and Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction

We are seeking a highly motivated doctoral student to join the MILESTONE research project, which aims to advance our understanding of megalithic landscapes and the socio-environmental contexts that shaped them.

Position Details:

- **Duration:** 4-year contract (Full-time)
- **Field:** Archaeology, Paleoenvironmental Science, Architecture
- **Start Date:** first trimester of 2025
- **Location:** Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Institute of Heritage Sciences, Spanish Research Council (INCIPIT-CSIC)

Project Overview:

This project proposes testing the viability of a spatial model for megalithic landscapes. The underlying hypothesis is that megalithic monuments are cultural MILESTONES, as they evidence the first domestication of space. Through the model of megalithic space, it is proposed that these mounds served as more than just burial sites; imposing and perpetuating socio-cultural structures, shaping societies' relationships with their environment.

By studying the spatial organization of megalithic landscapes, we aim to uncover patterns and regularities guiding societies' thought. Now, a state-of-the-art multiproxy & multicore paleoenvironmental reconstruction is proposed, to study environmental conditions (vegetation, land-use, topographical features) during the Neolithic period accurately. This data will be incorporated in GIS analyses, testing the visibility and navigation.

Overall, this research project aims to improve our understanding of not only megalithic landscapes, but also megalithic rationality through a combination of scientific methods, paleoenvironmental reconstruction, multi-scalar comparative case studies, and computational simulations.

Research Focus:

We are looking for candidates with a background in one of the following areas:

- **Paleoenvironmental Studies:** Candidates with expertise in scientific data processing, paleoenvironmental reconstruction methods (e.g., palynology, sediment analysis), and the use of environmental proxies. Experience in integrating paleoenvironmental data into archaeological research and spatial analyses is desirable.
- **Megalithic Research and Archaeology:** Candidates with a focus on megalithic monuments, landscape archaeology, and architectural analysis. Experience in GIS, spatial analysis, landscape studies, and/or architectural design is highly valuable. The chosen candidate may develop a case study on megalithic structures and their interaction with environmental and social contexts.

The specific research topic is negotiable and is adaptable to the candidate's expertise.

The doctoral student will be expected to engage with:

- **Paleoenvironmental data** and its integration into archaeological research;
- **Comparative case studies** on various spatial scales, from localized megalithic concentrations to regional and supra-regional studies;
- **GIS-based spatial analyses** (e.g., visibility and navigation studies);

Requirements:

- A Master's degree in **Archaeology, Paleoenvironmental Sciences, Geography, Anthropology, Architecture** or a related field.
- Experience or interest in **paleoenvironmental reconstruction** and/or **megalithic landscapes**.
- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to process and interpret environmental and archaeological data.
- Excellent written and spoken English or Spanish; knowledge of additional languages is an advantage.

What We Offer:

- A stimulating and interdisciplinary research environment with opportunities for training in paleoenvironmental methods and advanced GIS
- Close connection and interaction with the XSCAPE project and team (ERC-Synergy Grant research on Material Minds studying the interaction between materiality and cognitive processing)
- Full integration in INCIPIT-CSIC, in Santiago de Compostela, a lively and rich research environment with about 100 specialists approaching heritage and archaeology studies from different but complementary perspectives and disciplines
- Fieldwork opportunities in Galicia

The doctorate candidate will be working under supervision of Jadranka Verdonkschot and Felipe Criado-Boado