



## **PhD fellow in Fungal diversity and productivity. Open position**

The PhD position is at the Departament of Crop and Forest Sciences, University of Lleida, Spain, and the Forest Sciences Center of Catalonia, Solsona, Spain. Expected starting date is October 2016. The application deadline is June 30, 2016.

**Project title:** Evaluation of fungal diversity and productivity and their influence in generating forest ecosystem services

Fungi represent one of the most diverse kingdoms on our planet and are key to the maintenance of forest ecosystems. The ecological functions of fungal communities include decomposition and nutrient cycling, symbiosis with living plants, and pathogenesis with plants and animals. Complementing these important functions, fungi are increasingly recognized for their contribution to economic, social and cultural values. With the widespread increase in societal expectations for ecosystem services, new formulas are needed for forest management that maximize the value of forest fungi. However, the growing recognition and interest for the fungi in forest ecosystems has not been accompanied by a parallel increase in the scientific knowledge and techniques to study fungal populations, temporal dynamics or the influence of fungal diversity on the provision of different forest ecosystem services.

The aim of the PhD is to contribute to identifying and understanding the factors that affect fungal diversity and productivity in forest ecosystems, providing a scientific foundation to develop tools oriented toward sustainable forest management and the ecosystem services associated with fungal productivity and diversity.

The candidate will conduct the PhD thesis within a consolidated and internationally acknowledged research group with a strong background on modeling fungal and forest dynamics and fungal-oriented policy making. The scientific work may be partly based on the set of permanent plots monitored by the research team since 1995, which constitutes one of the most valuable datasets worldwide for studying fungal diversity and productivity in forest ecosystems. The candidate may also contribute to data gathering (fruitbodies and mycelia) and monitoring of permanent plots in relation to the PhD topic.

**Supervision:** This research project will be developed between the Departament of Non-wood Forest Products (Forest Sciences Centre of Catalonia) and the Department of Crop and Forest Sciences at the University of Lleida. The supervisors will be Dr. José Antonio Bonet, Dr. Sergio de Miguel and Dr. Juan Martínez de Aragón.

**Required qualifications of candidates:**

The applicants must have:

- Master's degree in the field of forestry, biology, environmental sciences, ecology and related disciplines (Master's degree is mandatory at october 2016).
- Fluency in English, written and spoken
- Driving license

**Terms of employment:**

The position as a PhD fellow is available for a 3-year period starting in October 2016 (tentative). The selected candidate will have a contract provided by the University of Lleida (gross salary between 14,500 and 15,000 €/year).

**Application procedure:**

The application, in English, must be submitted by e-mail to the address: [fungalphd@ctfc.es](mailto:fungalphd@ctfc.es). The application must contain:

- Motivation letter (maximum 1 page)
- Two recommendation letters signed by academic referees, including their contact details
- Short CV (maximum 1 page), including academic performance (Bachelor and MSc degree), publications, work experience and other merits and skills (CVs exceeding 1 page will not be considered)

**Key criteria for the assessment of applicants:**

- Statement of interest for the PhD project. We are looking for enthusiastic and dynamic candidates.
- Academic qualifications relevant to the PhD programme
- Previous publications or scientific contributions
- Relevant work experience
- Other professional activities
- Language skills
- Proficiency in the use of R statistical software
- Genuine recommendation letters (avoid standardised recommendations)

**Deadline for applications and selection procedure:**

The application period will remain open until 30/06/2016 (applications received later than this date will not be considered). After the expiry of the deadline for applications, the assessment committee constituted by the supervisors will evaluate the candidatures based on the key criteria for the selection of applicants. Only the preselected candidates will be contacted within a maximum period of 12 weeeeks after the end of the application deadline. The assessment committee should request a personal and/or skype interview with the final candidates for the final decision.