



The Royal Observatory of Belgium seeks a collaborator (F/M/X) for the Time Laboratory

Our reference	Activity group	Recruitment category(ies)	Applications open until
ROBBdH202510_it	II. Science public service	SW1	20/08/2026

Job description

Purpose of the position

Maintaining a timescale constitutes one of the tasks of the 'Reference Systems and Planetary Sciences' Operational Directorate of the Royal Observatory of Belgium (ROB), to which the Time Laboratory belongs. This function is part of the production and dissemination of the Belgian legal timescale, UTC(ORB), realized at the Time Laboratory.

The specific objective of this function is to support the transition from microwave devices to optical devices.

More information on the Time Laboratory can be found on the ROB website.

Outcome areas

This function supports the outcome areas of the ROB Time&Frequency Laboratory mainly at the level of operations of scientific and technical infrastructure, dedicated both to the physical realization of the time scale and to its dissemination.

The development of new laboratory techniques in the field of optics will include, in particular, the development of ultra-stable laser sources, frequency transfer via phase stabilization of an optical carrier and time stabilization using the White Rabbit protocol, and frequency stabilization using an optical comb.

The position holder is expected to contribute experimentally to these aspects, in accordance with the distribution and rotation of tasks within the team.

This position requires a good command of English, as documentation, meetings and international contacts will be conducted primarily in English.

Employer

There is one position open in the Time Laboratory at the Royal Observatory of Belgium (address: Ringlaan 3, B1180 Brussels).

The activity group for the position is: II. Science public service

Time Laboratory: *The selected candidate will work within the Time&Frequency Laboratory at ORB, supported by a team of six researchers within the Operational Directorate OD1. The selected candidate will work closely with all its Time colleagues.*

Royal Observatory of Belgium (ROB): *The ROB (<http://www.observatory.be>) is a Belgian Federal institute located in the green outskirts of Brussels (Uccle). The Time Laboratory is included in the operational directorate 'Reference Systems and Planetary Sciences'.*

Skills

Behavioural skills

- **Teamwork:** A team's success depends on effective communication, cooperation and empathy. You are committed to this approach and believe in effective and responsive conflict resolution.
- **Innovation and personal development:** You implement solutions to promote continuous improvement. You are committed to developing yourself and keeping your skills up to date. You take on responsibility, show initiative and carry out your tasks without the need for constant supervision.
- **Service-oriented approach:** you listen to the specific needs of users – the very reason for the service's existence – and incorporate these effectively into your professional decisions.

Technical skills

- Software skills: excellent command of Python, as well as a basic knowledge of database access and visualisation tools (InfluxDB, Grafana, etc.).
- Technical skills: in-depth practical knowledge of optics/photonics and electronics is essential.

Assets

- Knowledge of atomic physics, vacuum technology, mechanics or electromechanics
- • Knowledge of Bash, C/C++
- You have initial experience in at least one of the following areas:
 - o White Rabbit protocol-based synchronization systems
 - o Design and implementation of a PDH-stabilized laser source using an ULE cavity
 - o Equipment monitoring system based on InfluxDB/Grafana

Conditions for consideration

Your profile

- You hold a master's degree in photonics or electronics.

***/!** Applicants who have a degree or certificate from a foreign institution who apply for a scientific position for which the tasks are not related to the permanent missions of the institution are exempt from the need for an academic equivalence evaluation.*

Do you wish to apply but your diploma is not in Dutch or French?

We invite you to contact the person listed in the 'Contacts' section (selection procedure) to find out if you need to take a language test: Article 7 - Level 1/A.

If it is deemed necessary, you can register for language exams by clicking on the link: www.travaillerpour.be/fr/tests-et-certificats/linguistique/inscription.

Job offer

Contract and category

You will be hired under a one-year fixed-term contract on the SW1 salary scale (SW10 if you do not have at least two years of recognised scientific experience, SW11 otherwise). The contract might be renewed in case of mutual satisfaction and budget availability.

Minimum pay: 47 637,25 euros (gross annual salary, at the current index, legal benefits not factored in).

For more details, see Article 4, page 18496 of the pdf at:

<https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/eli/arrete/2008/02/25/2008021028/moniteur>

Benefits

We offer you an interesting job with a social impact, which comes with a number of benefits:

- A good work-life balance
 - flexible working hours of 38 per week
 - option of taking compensatory leave for overtime worked
 - offices closed between Christmas and New Year's Day
 - 26 days of paid leave (for a year of full time employment)
 - easy commuting using public transport
- numerous opportunities for self-growth
 - numerous opportunities for training and apprenticeship (during working hours)
- Financial benefits
 - possibility of receiving a bilingualism bonus
 - hospitalisation insurance at reduced rate
 - supplementary pension (occupational pension)
 - free use of public transport for commuting between your home and the place of work
 - meal vouchers
 - possibility of receiving a bicycle allowance for travel via bicycle
 - Benefits and offers via the Benefits@Work card
 - a range of fringe benefits (subject to conditions)

Conditions for employment

If you are selected through this procedure, you must – in order to be hired – fulfil the following requirements on the date of selection:

- Enjoy full civil and political rights
- Have fulfilled military service requirements
- Behave in a manner fitting of the requirements of the position
- Hold the necessary degree(s)
- Have the necessary skills and fulfil the requirements listed in the job profile

Procedure

Step 1 – Verification of the participation conditions

You will be considered in the selection procedure if you fulfil all of the required conditions. Verification will be carried out by the selection board on the basis of the application documents you have submitted. The board will decide whether the qualifications, awards and experiences you have submitted meet the requirements of the position. If they do, you will be invited to continue to the next step of the procedure.

Step 2 – Interview

The interview will take place online or at the **Royal Observatory of Belgium**. Further details will be sent to you by one of our employees via email.

The selection board assesses whether the qualifications, awards and experience you included in your application documents meet the requirements for the position.

Depending on the number of applications received, the selection committee reserves the right to limit the number of candidates (typically five maximum) advancing to the next stage by determining which candidates it considers best suited to fill the position.

If you fail to attend

If you fail to attend the additional evaluation and/or interview, you will be automatically excluded from the remainder of the selection procedure unless you provide evidence, within three days, that your absence was justified for one of the following reasons:

- illness
- emergency relating to a member of your household (= anyone who lives with the applicant) or family (= spouse or legal cohabitant of the applicant, parents or grandparents of the applicant)
- mandatory presence at your workplace
- disruption or delay to public transport of at least 30 minutes
- force majeure

If applicable, you may request, within 10 days of the interview date, to be interviewed by the board. A new date will then be offered to you.

Notification

If you are not selected in a step, the procedure will end, and you will not be invited to any subsequent evaluations in the same selection procedure.

For each step, you will receive a notification of the result.

Equal opportunities and reasonable accommodations

The Federal Administration has an active diversity policy.

Do you live with a disability, with learning difficulties or an illness? If so, you can request accommodations for the selection procedure. Please contact the individual listed under the “Contact persons” section.

Facilities provided for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding

Are you pregnant or breastfeeding your child? If so, you can request access to the relevant facilities. Please contact the individual listed under the “Contact persons” section.

Final result

What happens if you are selected?

Following the selection procedure, an unranked group of applicants will be placed on a short-list. These applicants will be those deemed most suitable to fill the open position in accordance with the conditions for consideration. The Director General of the institute will hire one person from this list.

How long will this list remain valid?

A shortlist of selected applicants will be created and will remain valid for one year.

Apply

Do you want to apply? Send your application documents by email to Raphaël Marion (raphael.marion@observatory.be), with dir-rob@oma.be and p.defraigne@oma.be in cc, including the selection reference in the subject line.

Your application documents must include:

- an updated CV
- a cover letter
- the names and contact details of persons that can recommend your application or justify your experience are an asset

The closing date for sending your application is 20/08/2026 (inclusive).

Applications that do not follow the indicated procedure will not be considered.

Contact persons

Concerning the position:

For more information about the position, please contact:

Dr Pascale Defraigne, Time, head of the Time Laboratory, 02 3730260, p.defraigne@oma.be

Concerning the selection procedure:

For more information about the selection procedure, please contact:

Dr Ronald Van der Linden, Director General, 02 373 0211, dir-rob@oma.be

If you want to request a reasonable accommodation for the selection procedure or access to facilities for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding, please also contact this person.