



The Royal Observatory of Belgium seeks a collaborator (F/M/X) for its scientific activities related to seismology

Our reference	Activity group	Recruitment category(ies)	Applications open until
CRISP	1. Scientific research and experimental development	SW2	28 January 2026

Job description

Framing of the position

The vacant position is linked to the Operational Directorate (OD) Seismology and Gravimetry. The main task of this OD is to study seismic activity, and its causes and consequences, in Belgium and Western Europe. To support this research and to provide relevant and timely information about earthquakes in our region to the authorities, the media and the public, this OD develops and maintains a seismic network for monitoring seismic activity in Belgium. Scientists from this OD are also experts in analysing ambient seismic noise in the context of applications aimed at studying the subsurface.

Using seismic data obtained through the installation of temporary mobile networks, this department also uses seismological methods for environmental scientific purposes, including the study of glacier melting, characterisation of geothermal reservoirs and the thawing of permafrost soils.

Purpose of the position

The objective of the vacant position is to contribute to the CRISP scientific project, funded by BELSPO's *Policy for Science* programme. CRISP stands for "*Cryosphere River Inputs: Seismic and Geochemical Profiling*" and focuses on the study of freezing and thawing permafrost soils in Arctic regions through a combined seismological and geochemical research. This position requires proficiency in English, given that documentation, meetings, and international contacts will be conducted primarily in English.

Outcome areas

The function supports the result objectives of the CRISP project. Understanding the processes that regulate the release of organic carbon from permafrost soils into the water cycle and atmosphere is essential for assessing the impact of permafrost thawing on our climate. The processes that ensure that organic carbon remains stored in the soil in winter and is mobilised via rivers in other seasons are very complex. Geochemical analyses can be used to measure the total organic carbon content in soils. However, it is difficult to estimate how this material is transported via rivers due to a lack of flow measurements. The challenge for CRISP is to quantify the annual export of organic carbon via rivers by linking geochemical and flow measurements with ambient seismic noise recordings.

1. Scientific Research

The core task of this position is to develop advanced seismological and geochemical tools for identifying the mobility of organic carbon in thawing permafrost. Using existing seismic data from Alaska (USA), methods need to be developed to link permafrost changes in soils with river flow measurements in Arctic regions. The results must be tested against in-situ geochemical measurements. Fieldwork and a budget are foreseen for two campaigns for sampling soils and rivers in Arctic regions and to install seismic sensors. Geochemical and isotope analysis of river and soil samples must be carried out at and with the help of the partner university in Louvain-la-Neuve.

2. Transfer of scientific knowledge

The position requires publishing and disseminating results at relevant scientific conferences and in scientific journals. The position also requires the ability to translate scientific results for the general public.

3. Management of scientific infrastructure

The ROB applies comprehensive FAIR principles to guarantee long-term accessibility and interoperability. The candidate will therefore contribute to the maintenance of acquired seismic and geochemical databases and submit them to the appropriate data repositories.

Employer

There is 1 position open in the Operational Directorate Seismology and Gravimetry at the Royal Observatory of Belgium (address: Ringlaan 3, B1180 Brussels).

The activity group for the position is: I. Scientific research and experimental development

Royal Observatory of Belgium (ROB): The ROB (<http://www.observatory.be>) is a Belgian Federal institute located in the green outskirts of Brussels (Uccle).

Operational Directorate Seismology and Gravimetry: The selected candidate will work within the Seismology and Gravimetry Department, which consists of 13 researchers and technicians. The candidate will work closely with researchers experienced in ambient seismic noise analysis and the installation of mobile seismic stations.

Skills

Behavioural skills

- Reflect and create: Seek out and independently evaluate relevant information from existing work (journal articles, software, etc.). We also expect the candidate to show curiosity for new ideas and the ability to experiment with innovative methods.
- Develop a vision: Understand and contribute to the organization's vision and values.
- Exchange and Cooperation: The exchange of information through constructive dialogue and appropriate communication is essential to the proper functioning with the scientist of the project. Collaboration is encouraged not only within the team but also internationally with other groups.

- Act and achieve results: Implement solutions for continuous improvement. Make decisions and establish priorities.
- Self-awareness and growth: Understand yourself and recognize your emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Commit to ongoing development and keeping one's skills up to date. Contribute to positive change in the team.

Technical skills

- Methodologies: Familiarity with data analysis
- Knowledge of the use and publication of scientific data
- Knowledge of permafrost sciences

Assets

- Knowledge of seismological applications such as H/V spectral ratio analysis of ambient seismic noise
- Knowledge of geochemistry and isotope geology
- Experience with fieldwork in Arctic regions
- Proficiency in Python for data analysis

Conditions for consideration

Your profile

- You have a PhD in Geosciences or in Sciences

Degree must have been conferred by the closing date for applications

The PhD degree in Geosciences or in Sciences must be obtained before the application deadline.

***/!** 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 written 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 necessary, you can register by clicking on the link: www.travaillerpour.be/fr/tests-et-certificats/linguistique/inscription.

Experience required

For this position, at least 8 years of scientific experience is required, demonstrated through publications and active contributions to scientific conferences. Knowledge of permafrost sciences is also required, enabling you to conduct independent research and make a valuable contribution to this project.

Job offer

Contract and category

Recruitment will take place in category SW21.

You will be hired under a **fixed-term contract (12 months)** as an assistant on the SW21 salary scale.

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.

Depending on the number of applications received, the selection board reserves the right to limit the number of applicants eligible for the next step by selecting those applicants it deems most suitable for the position.

Step 2 – Interview

The interview will take place on 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.

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 select one or more applicants from this short-list.

How long will this list remain valid?

The short-list of selected applicants will be valid for [Select an option](#).

Apply

Do you want to apply? Send your application documents by email to koen.vannoten@oma.be and dir-rob@oma.be, including the selection reference in the subject line.

Your application documents must include:

- an updated CV
- a cover letter
- a copy (or copies) of the degree certificates with all associated annexes; if any of these documents are not written in French, Dutch, German or English, a translation must also be provided
- any other document proving relevant experience, such as:
 - academic activities carried out with attestations as supporting documents (attestations issued by employers, authorities that provided grants, etc.)
 - a list of any scientific papers published

The closing date for sending your application is 28/01/2026 (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 Koen Van Noten, CRISP Coördinator, 02 790 92 18, koen.vannoten@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.