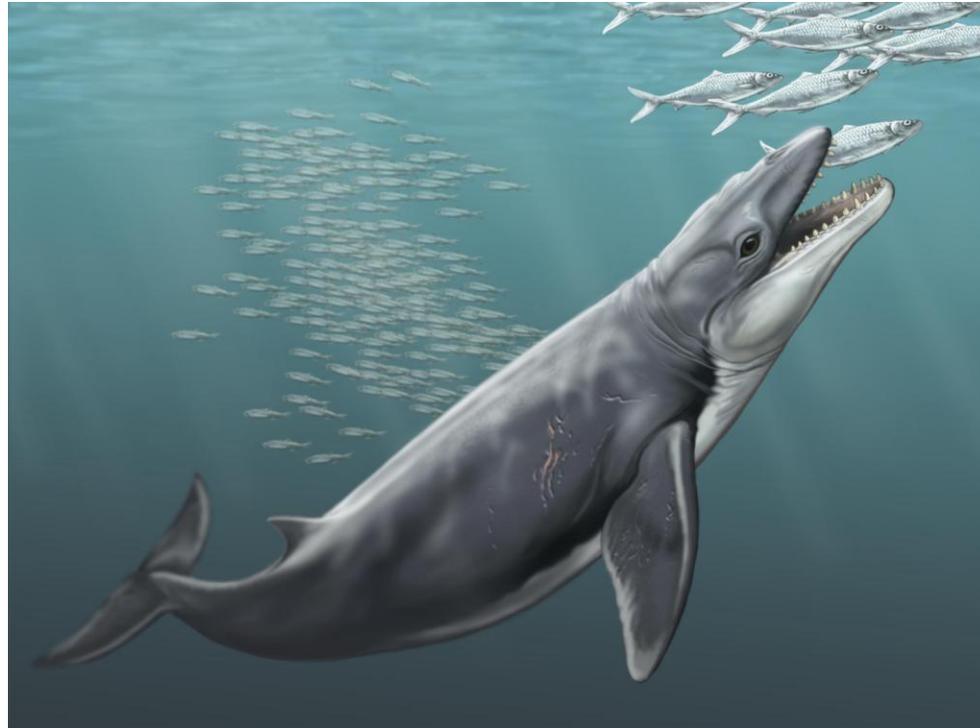


**Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions**  
Info Session for individual Fellowships  
June 2, 2015



Testimony from a Supervisor for a Global Fellowship  
**Olivier Lambert (RBINS)**

## **Presentation outline**

### **1. Brief presentation of our Global Fellowship project**

- Supervisor
- Fellow
- Proposal
- Complementarity between partners of the project

### **2. Submission process**

### **3. Evaluation**

- Strengths
- Weaknesses

### **4. Major advantages of the Marie Curie Global Fellowships**

### **5. Potential issues**

# 1. Brief presentation of our Global Fellowship project

## Olivier Lambert (Supervisor)

- Paleontologist at **the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences** (RBINS, one of the ten Federal Scientific Institutes and Museums, Host Institution)
- Main **research interests**: evolutionary history marine mammals and adaptations to the aquatic environment (with a special focus on fossil odontocetes, echolocating toothed cetaceans)
- **Why** at the **RBINS**?
  - Rich fossil localities in the area of Antwerp
  - One of the largest collections of fossil marine mammals in Europe
  - Long tradition for the study of fossil and extant cetaceans in Belgium (e.g., works by P.-J. Van Beneden)

## Felix Marx (Fellow)

- Austrian
- **Master** in Sciences at the University of Bristol (**UK**, Paleontology and Evolution)
- **PhD** thesis at the University of Otago (**New Zealand**): *Evolutionary relationships and disparity of baleen whales (Mysticeti)*
- **Postdoc** in progress at the National Museum of Nature and Science (**Japan**), focused on baleen whale evolution



# Proposal

*"The oldest and the rarest - combining insight from both hemispheres to gain a global picture of baleen whale origins and macroevolution"*

## **3- years postdoc:**

**2 years at Monash University** and Victoria Museum (Victoria, Australia; Partner Institutions)

Study of collections (from Australia and USA)

Collaboration with Pr. Alistair Evans and Dr. Erich Fitzgerald

Fieldwork in Australia

**1 year at RBINS** (Brussels; Host Institution)

Study of collections (from Belgium and Africa)

Collaboration with Olivier Lambert

Fieldwork in Belgium and Peru

## **Complementarity between partners of the project (Supervisor, Fellow, and Partner Institution researchers)**

- Similar general interests (macroevolution, phylogeny, radiations...)
- Focus on different groups of cetaceans (toothed whales vs baleen whales)



- Different methodologies (for phylogeny and disparity analyses)

- Specimens from different geographic areas

Collections from northern and southern hemispheres

Collaborative fieldwork in different regions (Australia, Belgium,  
Peru)



## 2. Submission process

- Straightforward
- Submission form = about **45 pages**
- Many explanations and comments available in the application system
- Considering the number of persons and institutions involved at various degrees by the proposal, about **one month** needed for filling the application form

First talk about the proposal in August 2014 - proposal submitted in September 2014 – project accepted in February 2015 (and starting in November 2015)

- Good **coordination** necessary, and therefore good contacts with the host and partner institutions more than needed (including administrative tasks after acceptance)

### 3. Evaluation

Criteria:

#### a. **Excellence**

Strengths: good presentation, quality of supervisors and applicant (including publication record)

Weaknesses: lack of details for the transferable skills and practical aspects of the training

#### b. **Impact**

Strengths: potential to enhance the scientific profile of the applicant, well planned outreach activities and publication of the results in high impact journals

Weaknesses: /

### **c. Implementation**

Strengths: convincing work plan, quality of the facilities in host institutions, complementary knowledge of scientists involved

Weaknesses: management structure not enough detailed

Support from different institutions and researchers (with support letters) most likely positively noted

## 4. Major advantages of the Marie Curie Global Fellowships

- High **flexibility**!! (an Austrian researcher finishing his postdoc in Japan, who will start with 2 years in Australia, whereas being officially hosted by a Belgian institution...)

  - Opportunity to work globally

  - Links with several research institutions (incl. museums and universities)

- At the **European level** (no need to come back to a specific country, especially useful for highly mobile researchers or for researchers whose research field is not well established in every European country)

- **3 years**, not bad...

## 5. Potential issues

- Once the project starts, the 12-month **return period** (here in Belgium) is **mandatory** (or the host organization has to reimburse the total amount received!)

=> You may miss other opportunities...

- Possible mismatch between tax system of the country of the host institution (here Belgium) and living costs in the country of the partner institution (here Australia)