

Expected to be advertised soon:

Vacancy associate professor/full professor Aquaculture

in the Department of Animal Sciences and Aquatic Ecology of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering at Ghent University

At the [UGent faculty of Bioscience Engineering](#), research and academic education in aquaculture are currently found in the [Department of Animal Sciences and Aquatic Ecology](#), which ensures the integration of two core disciplines within 'Blue Growth' (Aquaculture and Blue Biotechnology). Nevertheless, aquaculture research at Ghent University (UGent) started in the 1970s with research into the unique properties of the brine shrimp, *Artemia*, and its crucial role as live food in the larval culture of commercially important farmed fish and shrimp species. The international recognition of this research resulted in the establishment of the Artemia Reference Center, which has brought the research group to the world top of larviculture research. Some important lines of research that have been developed over the past decades and that (may) form the basis for future research are: larviculture of fish, crustaceans and shellfish, pond culture of *Artemia* for both biomass and cyst production, and more recently identification of the *Artemia* genome, gnotobiotic culture of *Artemia* as a model organism, and interaction of (larval) hosts with their microbiota with the ultimate aim of contributing, on an industrial level, to "health management in aquaculture".

Also in the field of education, thanks to the international reputation, a 2-year English-taught [master degree in aquaculture](#) was established (since the early 1990s). For the past 30 years, the Laboratory of Aquaculture has ensured continuous financial support for this educational program with external means (mainly through Belgian/Flemish government funding from development cooperation). Recently (2020) funding was obtained for an ERASMUS Mundus master program "[International Master of Science in Health Management in Aquaculture](#)". This program started in 2021.

In recent decades, the aquaculture sector has experienced rapid growth, but more importantly, progressive professionalization. This was accompanied by a strong increase in the complexity of the (larval) culture processes. This required strong multidisciplinary collaboration in both research and education. The [Laboratory of Aquaculture and Artemia Reference Center](#) responded to this by uniting the expertise of other research groups from its own faculty and other UGent faculties into the UGent [Aquaculture R&D Consortium](#) and the IOF Aquaculture Ghent University consortium, which was more recently further expanded into the [BLUeGent consortium](#). This reinforcement, by bringing together these diverse UGent expertises, was also reflected in the educational offer within the aquaculture master's program, which resulted in a unique and strong reputation in the educational landscape of the aquaculture world. Continuing the international pioneering role within the rapidly evolving aquaculture sector is a challenge, not at least because worldwide, and in Asia in particular, the number of good-quality local training opportunities at the undergraduate level and/or master level, is increasing. This requires a UGent aquaculture educational program, based on a balanced general education and in-depth knowledge of specific UGent core specializations in order to profile and differentiate internationally. In this respect, the more explicit profiling within the domain of "aquaculture health management" constitutes a strategic choice for the Ghent University aquaculture programs within the international aquaculture educational landscape and offers opportunities to consolidate complementary partnerships for research and education with the strong international network of the Laboratory of Aquaculture and Artemia Reference Center (a.o. via alumni).

Profile:

For the coordination, management and further international development of the research and education outlined above and the consolidation of the international role of the Artemia Reference Center, the successful candidate should have broad and global aquaculture knowledge, based on professional experience in the aquaculture sector, and an international network, combined with a strong track record in “health management” in aquaculture/larviculture.

Specific expertise in aquaculture health management, larviculture, and/or Artemia is recommended as this constitutes the core expertise of the Laboratory of Aquaculture and Artemia Reference Center. The research expertise and vision of the successful candidate is complementary to the expertise present in the UGent Aquaculture R&D Consortium. Given the multidisciplinary research context, the aim is to collaborate with members of this UGent consortium for the further development of this research. In addition to research, the successful candidate also coordinates the organization and qualitative implementation of the international master programme(s) in aquaculture of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering, with recently a strong profiling in the field of "Aquaculture Health Management". As outlined above, the strong international evolution in aquaculture education and the dependence on external funding are major challenges. The successful candidate has a future-oriented and strategic vision on this, based on a good insight into the international educational landscape within the domain of aquaculture.

We aspire to attract an inspiring candidate at the level of associate or full professor who, as a leader, has capabilities to motivate and steer.

Timing

We expect the vacancy to be advertised at the end of March/beginning of April 2022. The recruitment is from September 1, 2022 or February 1, 2023 (depending on the length of the selection procedure and the availability of the selected candidate). If you are interested in this vacancy, please keep an eye on [this website](#).

Information

For further information, please contact Prof. Peter Bossier (peter.bossier@ugent.be) current head of the Laboratory for Aquaculture & Artemia Reference Center (ARC) or Prof. Veerle Fievez, department chair (veerle.fievez@ugent.be).