

Two Postdoctoral Positions in the Global History of Rubber (ERC WILDHIST), CSIC, Madrid.

The Institute of History at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) is recruiting **2 postdoctoral researchers** for the ERC Consolidator Grant Project ‘WILDHIST – Wild Rubber in the Industrial Age: A Global History of Production’, led by Dr. David Pretel.

Postdoc 1. The history of rubber production in the Amazon rainforest.

Postdoc 2. The history of rubber production in the Congo Basin.

For details, see the project description and objectives below.

Application deadline: 24 April 2026.

Starting date: 1 September 2026 (flexible).

Requirements:

- PhD in history, history of science, economic history or associated fields (Latin American studies, African studies, science and technology studies, anthropology, digital humanities), and a strong interest in the project.
- Good command of written and spoken English and, depending on research specialisation, Portuguese, Spanish and/or French.
- Be based in Madrid for the duration of the project.
- Expected to publish articles, book chapters, and/or a book manuscript / edited volume.
- Ability to collaborate within a team and to work independently.

Benefits:

- A three-year contract (full-time).
- A gross salary of 43,827 EUR.
- A fully equipped workspace at the Institute of History.
- Funding for research-related purposes, participation in international conferences, and organisation of events.
- Mentorship in applying for tenure-track and tenure positions at CSIC.

How to apply:

Your application must include the following documents:

- Motivation letter (1 page).
- Research proposal outlining the work you would undertake while on the WILDHIST project (1 page).
- Curriculum Vitae.
- Writing sample: PhD thesis, article or book chapter.

Please send your application to david.pretel@csic.es and andrea.yanez@csic.es

Application deadline: 24 April 2026.

Project Description

The Project WILDHIST aims to offer a comprehensive, multi-sited and multi-scale global history of wild rubber production during the industrial age. It investigates the hypothesis that wild rubber industries in the tropical rainforests of Africa and Latin America were key sites in the broader dynamics of industrialisation and scientific research from the early 19th century to the Second World War, forming an integral part of the era's expanding global networks of knowledge exchange. The project moves beyond plantations to focus on wild production and smallholders' cultivation in rainforests, emphasizing production processes rather than consumption or trade, and placing much stronger emphasis on the study of exploration, extraction, processing, transportation, experimentation, and manufacturing than has been typical of historical research on rainforest commodities.

WILDHIST combines an analysis of contrasting non-plantation histories of rubber production in the Amazon, Congo Basin and so-called Maya Forest with broader histories of transnational interaction. The project rethinks and rewrites the global history of wild rubber by systematically and critically exploring a rich array of written, visual and oral sources located throughout the world. Its trans-local, interdisciplinary, comparative, digital and visual methodology will provide a comprehensive historical account of how rubber was transformed into commodities and then final goods for local, regional or global markets. Beyond academia, WILDHIST contributes to discussions about bioprospecting, sustainability and labour in rainforests. To address the challenge of writing more inclusive histories of science, technology, and industrialisation, the project also considers collective memory as represented in museums, material culture, and industrial heritage.

The project has three objectives: 1) Studying the actors, techniques, skills, knowledge and relations of production at rainforests' rubber frontiers; 2) Reconstructing, mapping and analysing the transnational chains of rubber production, including networks of science and expertise; 3) Exploring the visual representation of rubber production throughout the world using tools of digital and spatial humanities.

<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101171213>



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