Widening Country Inspiration Story

"Choose the right supervisor, preferably someone you have collaborated with in the past.

Name of the fellow: Andreas Bertsatos
Country of the host: Cyprus
Project Acronym: RECONSTRUCT
Project start and end date:
01.06.2023 - 31.05.2025
Type of MSCA, Horizon Europe:
Postdoctoral Fellowship

What is your project about?
RECONSTRUCT aims to develop a computational method to reconstruct the geometry of human long bones, which are fragmented or partially recovered. Bone morphology conveys a wealth of information about the deceased individual and by extension about their population. However, our capacity to retrieve this information is severely hindered when dealing with incomplete bones, which is the usual scenario in archaeological contexts but often also applies in forensic cases.

Why is your project important for society?
Skeletal remains are instrumental in uncovering the lives of people and societies from the past, since they are the only biological remnants which can withstand time. They become even more invaluable when looking at prehistoric times and beyond, where skeletal remains are almost exclusively the only archaeological records upon which we can reconstruct past human activity. Thus, reconstructing the past goes through reconstructing fragmented bones and this is exactly the goal of the RECONSTRUCT project.

What communication and public engagement measures have you foreseen?
Apart from the usual academic dissemination channels, i.e. journal publications and conference presentations, RECONSTRUCT aims to communicate its results through workshops and seminars seeking public engagement.

Why did you choose a widening country as a host?
Choosing a widening country can provide an advantage in terms of succeeding with the MSCA application, although this did not make a difference in my particular case. The selection of Cyprus as the host country was entirely based on the fact that my supervisor's placement at the Science and Technology in Archaeology Research Center (STARC) was in Cyprus. Of course, the cultural proximity to Greece, where I come from, also favoured an easier adaptation during the MSCA mobility.

MSCA-NET

How did you find your host organisation?

STARC is a well-established archaeological research hub in the Eastern Mediterranean.

What kind of support did you get?

Most of the support I received came from my supervisor, Prof. Efthymia Nikita, who not only thoroughly reviewed my proposal and guided me through the submission process, but also facilitated granting access to the skeletal collections across Europe that are necessary for my project's implementation. The materials on how to apply for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions funding, available at the Funding and Tenders Opportunities portal, have also been very helpful throughout my application process. Lastly, members of the Research and Innovation Foundation have also provided valuable feedback on the project proposal with special focus on EU directives and guidelines.

What tips can you give other researchers who would like to apply for MSCA?

There are two important aspects to consider when applying to MSCA. The first relates to the project's research goals and implementation and how these will advance both the state-of-the-art in your field and you as a researcher. The second aspect is choosing the right supervisor, preferably someone you have collaborated with in the past.

More information on the project:

The Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) support researchers at all stage of their career across all disciplines. The

MSCA also support cooperation between industry and academia and provide innovative trainings and career developments.

The MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) enable talented researchers to work on project in Europe and beyond. They aim at enhancing the innovative potential of postdoctoral researchers through advanced trainings, international and intersectoral mobility.

The MSCA-NET project is the MSCA NCP project to facilitate the transnational cooperation to achieve a consistent and harmonised level of NCP support. The scientific community can also profit from our project to support their MSCA application.