

Dear -----,

I am writing to apply to ----- Institute, for the PhD project regarding ----(topic)-----
-----.

In 2008, I graduated from Università degli Studi di Padova (Italy) with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. Following my first degree, I remained at the same university, where I am about to receive a Master Degree in Evolutionary Biology, in October. Through my years of studying, I became fascinated with ecology and environmental issues. After taking my high school diploma, in summer 2004, I worked as a volunteer in Riserva Naturale Isola di Lampedusa to support the local equipe in protecting sea turtles during reproductive season and doing environmental education among tourists. I also took part in the camp for applied Eco-Ethology at Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi, to study the impact of the institution of natural reserves on local population. I discovered how much application of my studies to conservation and environmental protection was satisfying for me.

I conducted my Bachelor's thesis on animal physiology, studying adaptations of a sea water crustacean (*Upogebia pusilla*) to lower oxygen environments. During this three month period, I experienced field work in the lagoon of Chioggia (Venezia, Italy) with strong enthusiasm. During Master's degree, through exams like Ethology and Organisms Interaction, as well as divulgative lectures, I acquired a strong interest in animal ethology, as is demonstrated by excellent results gained in those subjects.

In the meantime, I attended a two-year Master Course in Science Communication at ISAS (International School for Advanced Studies), Trieste (Italy). This experience not only provided me the opportunity to practice different forms of scientific communication and deal with the overall of scientific subjects, but also developed my capacity to deal with public as well as scientists, journalists, scientific and governmental institutions, through realisation of articles, multimedia, animation work in science festivals, realisation of exhibitions, organisation of scientific events.

I am currently in an Erasmus exchange program at the Université Paris-Sud XI, where I have chosen to conduct my Master thesis project in the field of ecological modelling, at Department Ecologie, Biodiversité et Evolution. In this framework I had the opportunity to work with students and researchers coming from all over Europe, who kindled my enthusiasm about prosecuting my studies with an international research experience, and made me acquire a deeper appreciation of the different perspectives in ecology. Furthermore, I sharpened my critical thinking and analysis as well as acquired new skills and techniques. I am working in R software environment on a statistical model describing reproductive pattern of sea turtles, readjusting it by search of new parameters by optimization. Attending extracurricular classes, I learned how to apply the R language on the

analysis of biological and ecological data.

I found a great interest on this topic of research because it puts together some of my favourite topics: ecology, animal physiology and ethology. Moreover, I retain the opportunity to work in a prestigious institution like Université Pierre et Marie Curie extremely challenging and as an additional motivation for me.

My varied academic curriculum provided me a solid knowledge of the different subjects implied in the research project. I also developed good skills in science communication, which could make me easy to spread research results in scientific contexts as journals, workshop and conferences, as well as public ones, like newspapers, magazines and expositions.

Given my record of good academic achievement and strong interest in your research program, I am certain that, if given the opportunity, I will enjoy working on the topics that ignite my curiosity the most. In addition to my academic qualifications, I am confident that my interdisciplinary and international background will meet your research school expectations.

Thank you for considering my application.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Rizzo