

## **Nomination Citation: Professor Josep Call**

We are delighted to nominate Professor Josep Call, Director of the Budongo Research Unit and a valued research partner from the University of St Andrews, for the honour of Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), in recognition of his exceptional contributions to primate cognition research, education, and public engagement.

Professor Call is a world-leading comparative psychologist with decades of experience in primate research and a recognised authority on chimpanzee cognition. His efforts to help multiple zoos across Europe, including Twycross, Leipzig, Gossau, Valencia, and Furivik design and develop their own research infrastructure has been highly recognised. Not to mention being the co-founder and past-director of the Wolfgang Koehler Primate Research Centre (Pongoland) in Zoo Leipzig.

As current Director of the Budongo Research Unit (BRU), based within the RZSS Budongo Trail at Edinburgh Zoo, he has established an innovative and integrated research facility where chimpanzees voluntarily participate in cognitive studies, all visible to the visiting public. This unique model allows visitors to directly engage with cutting-edge scientific research, strengthening connections between people, science, and nature.

Supported by a major European Research Council (ERC) grant secured by the University of St Andrews, Professor Call played a key role in the redesign and development of the BRU, creating a state-of-the-art research space that opened in 2018. Alongside Living Links, the BRU forms part of a collaborative research consortium focused on primate cognition, behaviour, and welfare, making a significant contribution to RZSS 2030 strategy for research and engagement.

Professor Call's scientific output is extensive, with over 450 publications, including peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, producing high-impact research while advancing innovative technology-based studies of chimpanzee cognition. His work provides cognitively enriching experiences for the chimpanzees and offers visitors unique opportunities to observe and learn from non-human primate behaviour. He has also championed training the next generation of comparative psychologists, offering rare practical experience in this highly specialised field.

In 2024, Professor Call co-led the establishment of the Global Research Centre for Diverse Intelligences (GRCDI), funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation, further strengthening international collaboration and promoting the RZSS–University of St Andrews partnership model.

Professor Call's expertise, leadership, and commitment to advancing research and engagement make him an outstanding and highly deserving candidate for Honorary Fellowship.