



## Friends of EMBL 2026 project Barcelona Cryozoo, at EMBL Barcelona

EMBL Barcelona brings a uniquely powerful scientific perspective to global biodiversity and conservation challenges. Through its cutting-edge research in tissue biology, cellular dynamics, and quantitative life sciences, it uncovers fundamental principles essential for understanding how species survive, adapt, and respond to environmental stress.

As part of the [Barcelona Cryozoo](#) initiative, EMBL Barcelona transforms frontier molecular science into practical strategies for safeguarding animal biodiversity. It connects fundamental discovery with long-term conservation impact, enabling the preservation of irreplaceable cellular resources and the development of next-generation research tools.

### Friends of EMBL 2026 project

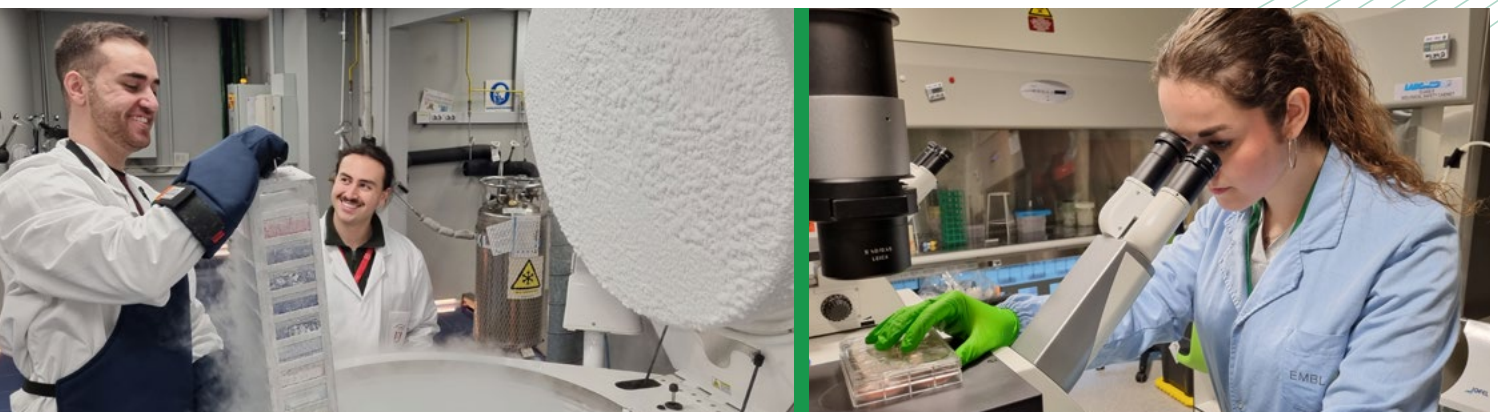
As our 2026 flagship project, the Barcelona Cryozoo reflects the shared commitment of Friends of EMBL to

science, collaboration, and hope. It shows how research can help address one of the most urgent challenges of our time: biodiversity loss.

### What is the Barcelona Cryozoo?

The Barcelona Cryozoo is a pioneering initiative dedicated to the conservation of endangered animal species according to the [IUCN Red List](#), through a joint effort between the [Barcelona Zoo Foundation](#), [Pompeu Fabra University](#), the [Barcelona Museum of Natural Sciences](#), and EMBL. It brings together expertise in zoology, molecular biology, genomics, and conservation research.

The Cryozoo collects, preserves, studies, and shares biological material from endangered species. By freezing living cells in a viable state, it safeguards genomic diversity that might otherwise be lost forever. Zoological institutions and aquariums contribute biomaterial, building a shared



European resource for conservation and research. The project draws inspiration from the San Diego Zoo biobank, founded in the 1960s, which has demonstrated for decades how preserved cells can support research, conservation, and species recovery.

### How does cryopreservation support conservation?

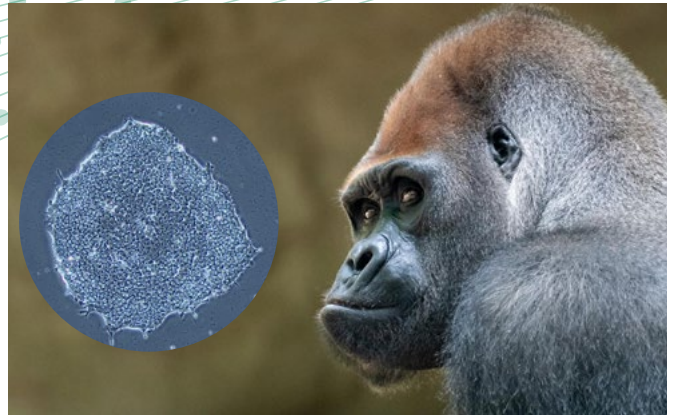
State-of-the-art cryopreservation techniques allow living cells to be stored at ultra-low temperatures. When needed, these cells can be thawed and used for research and emerging conservation approaches. The project also develops induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs), opening future possibilities for conservation biology. All data generated through the Cryozoo are shared openly with the scientific community, fostering collaboration and accelerating research worldwide.

### Why the Barcelona Cryozoo matters

By preserving life at the cellular level, we are safeguarding options for future generations to understand and protect the diversity of life on Earth. Philanthropic support will empower the Cryozoo to act where it matters most: capturing irreplaceable cellular resources before they disappear, strengthening long-term storage capacity, and advancing groundbreaking research that transforms preserved cells into knowledge and solutions for the future.



*Cells preserved in the 1980s were later used to help recover a Przewalski's horse.*



*Cell lines are cryopreserved for the gorilla at the Barcelona Cryozoo. Credits: Barcelona Zoo, UPF, Creative Team/EMBL*

### A shared commitment to hope

Friends of EMBL is proud to champion this visionary project and invite you to engage with an initiative that transforms scientific excellence into lasting impact.

Building on the committed support of Friends of EMBL, additional funding would play a catalytic role in accelerating the project's development, preserving more species and extending its scientific and conservation impact.



[cryozoo.org](http://cryozoo.org)



[embl.org/about/info/planetary-biology/projects/cryozoo](http://embl.org/about/info/planetary-biology/projects/cryozoo)

### For more information, please contact us!

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