



Social niche conformance during adolescence and beyond

2 PhD positions in Behavioural Biology

The Department of Behavioural Biology at the University of Münster invites applications for two PhD positions from February 1st 2018 or soon thereafter. The positions are available for three years and are funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) within the recently approved collaborative research centre (SFB/TRR 212) entitled: A Novel Synthesis of Individualisation across Behaviour, Ecology and Evolution: Niche Choice, Niche Conformance, Niche Construction (NC³).

Thematic background & profile

Mechanisms of adaptive shaping of behavioural phenotypes have evolved during early phases of life in numerous species. In this project we address the questions: How can behavioural phenotypes be shaped by social experiences during adolescence and beyond? Are these phenotypes adjusted to the environmental conditions? Do males and females differ? What are the underlying hormonal mechanisms? We aim to study these questions using a highly social rodent, the guinea pig.

We seek bright and highly motivated students who have a proven record in behavioural biology. A very good Master degree or equivalent in a relevant topic is expected. Very good knowledge of spoken and written English is mandatory. Finally, good organizational, writing and presentation skills as well as the ability to work well both independently and in a team environment are advantageous.



Research environment

The successful candidates will be based at the Department of Behavioural Biology at the University of Münster. The department offers a mind-stimulating and interdisciplinary research environment. Current research projects deal with (1) stress, stress avoidance and animal welfare, (2) evolution and development of social behaviour, and (3) the role of gene/environment interactions in the control of emotional, cognitive, and social behaviour.

To apply, please provide: (i) a letter of motivation including a statement of your research experience; (ii) a CV including publication list; (iii) names and contact details of two referees willing to write confidential letters of recommendation. **All materials should be emailed as a single PDF file to: kaisesy@uni-muenster.de.**

The **application deadline is January 7th 2018** and interviews will take place shortly thereafter. The preferred start date is February 1st 2018 but is flexible. For further information on the project and the Department of Behavioural Biology in Münster, please see www.ethologie.de or contact Sylvia Kaiser (kaisesy@uni-muenster.de) or Norbert Sachser (sachser@uni-muenster.de) with any informal inquiries.

The University of Münster is an equal opportunity employer. We particularly welcome applications from women and handicapped people. Given equal suitability, qualifications and professional achievement, women or handicapped people will be given preference, unless particular circumstances apply.