

1 PhD position in Behavioural Ecology

A PhD position in behavioural ecology is available at the Faculty of Biology at Bielefeld University, in the Department of Animal Behaviour (with Dr. Barbara Caspers, <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/biologie/animalbehaviour/caspers/home.html>). The position runs from early 2018 to 2021 and is 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).

The aim of the PhD project (project A04 of the collaborative research centre) is to conduct a field study on a fire salamander (*Salamandra salamandra*) population and to test for consequences of niche conformance in this species. Fire salamander deposit on average 40 larvae each year in to specific larval habitats. This project aims to investigate the ability of individual larvae to conform to this given niche, by doing behavioural experiments and by analyzing and characterizing the impact of the larval habitat on the chemical phenotype as well as on the skin microbe community.

The collaborative research centre: The position will be embedded within a larger collaborative research centre (SFB) comprising 18 principle investigators, 8 postdocs and 16 PhD students based at Bielefeld University, the University of Münster and the University of Jena. The aim of the SFB is to produce a conceptual and empirical synthesis of individualisation across behaviour, ecology and evolution. The SFB will provide exceptional opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and academic networking, together with structured training, scientific exchange and early career support programmes. Full details of the SFB can be found at www.uni-bielefeld.de/biologie/crc212.

Main responsibilities

- Research tasks (90%):
 - Conducting field work on a fire salamander population from late March to early June each year
 - Performing behavioural experiments in the field
 - Analysing skin microbe communities
 - Statistical analyses of complex multivariate data sets
 - Collaboration with other research groups in the collaborative research centre
 - Writing scientific publications
- Organizational tasks in the research group and collaborative research centre (10%)

Applicant's profile

We seek a bright and highly motivated student with

- a university degree in a relevant discipline with specialization in behavioural ecology, microbiology or chemical ecology
- experience with field work, preferably with amphibians
- experience with statistical software, preferably R
- interest in both behavioural and life history questions,
- ability to work both independently and as part of a team, and
- excellent oral and written communication skills in English.

The following qualifications would additionally be of advantage:

- papers in peer-reviewed international journals
- experience in 16sRNA analysis
- experience with chemical analysis using GC/MS or LC/MS

Remuneration

Salary will be paid according to Remuneration level 13 (65%) of the Wage Agreement for Public Service in the Federal States (TV-L).

Bielefeld University is particularly committed to the career development of its employees. It offers attractive internal and external training and further training programmes. Employees have the opportunity to use a variety of health, counselling, and prevention programmes. Bielefeld University places great importance on a work–family balance for all its employees.

Application procedure

To apply, please provide: (i) a letter of motivation including a statement of your research interests and skills and experience relevant to the position; (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: barbara.caspers@uni-bielefeld.de.** The **application deadline is January 7th 2018** and interviews will take place shortly thereafter. After the decision, the position should start as soon as possible. For further information on the project and the department, please contact Barbara Caspers Barbara.caspers@uni-bielefeld.de with any informal inquiries.

Bielefeld is a city of 325,000 inhabitants with all expected amenities and easy access to the Teutoburger Wald for hiking and other outdoor pursuits. It offers a high standard of living and is well connected to most major European cities.

Bielefeld University has received a number of awards for its achievements in the provision of equal opportunity and has been recognized as a family friendly university. The University welcomes applications from women. This is particularly true with regard both to academic and technical posts as well as positions in Information Technology and Trades and Craft. Applications are handled according to the provisions of the state equal opportunity statutes. Applications from suitably qualified handicapped and severely handicapped persons are explicitly encouraged.