



Optimistic and pessimistic decision-making under ambiguity

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

Humans differ in the way they perceive the world with some being more optimistic and some being more pessimistic. Using laboratory mice as a model organism, the project aims to apply the concept of optimism/pessimism to behavioral ecology for the first time. Two main research questions will be addressed: How does one become an optimist/pessimist and what are the fitness consequences?

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: richterh@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 Helene Richter (richterh@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.