

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest! We are receiving many applications and requests for additional information and in-person chats. Unfortunately, we cannot answer all the questions raised individually and arrange the in-person meetings. Below, we provide some additional information to answer frequently asked questions. We will get back to the candidates who have submitted a complete application in August and schedule online interviews with shortlisted candidates for the end of August. All the interview information will be provided to the shortlisted candidates in August. Shortlisted candidates can ask all the additional questions during the interview process.

Research topic, methodology, and flexibility

The Ph.D. candidate will work as part of a project titled "Cognitive-sensory biology of rainforest navigation in frogs," funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). The project is led by Andrius Pašukonis in collaboration with Bibiana Rojas and a team of international collaborators. The project addresses three complementary questions: (1) How frogs discover new breeding pools, (2) How frogs evaluate their quality, and (3) How frogs learn and remember where pools are. It specifically focuses on two Neotropical poison frog species with different reproductive strategies as a model system: *Allobates femoralis* and *Dendrobates tinctorius*. Field and captivity experiments are planned within the scope of the project, and the experiments will combine techniques such as tracking, behavioral observations, choice experiments, artificial breeding site manipulations and video surveillance, to name a few. The project is more extensive than a single Ph.D. thesis, so the successful candidate will work alongside other students and collaborators. The specific scope and focus of the Ph.D. thesis will be shaped together with the candidate to fit their skills and interests. Please note that the candidate's skills and interests must fit within the project's scope. However, there will be room for designing new experiments, finding additional questions, adding new methodologies, and tailoring the project to the candidate. We are committed to providing full support, training, and resources for the candidate to develop their skills, knowledge, and scientific profile to become independent researchers.

Fieldwork

This is a primarily field-based project that requires frequent travel, flexibility, endurance, and the ability to live at a remote field site. The fieldwork will be primarily done at the Nouragues Ecological Research Station (for more info, visit <https://cnrs-nouragues.fr/en/>) during yearly 2 – 3 month stays at the field station. The candidate will be part of a small team of 3-5 people, including other students working on related projects. There are local staff and other researchers at the station.

Supervision arrangements and research visits

The candidate will be co-supervised by Andrius Pašukonis and Bibiana Rojas as part of a joint cotutelle agreement between the Konrad Lorenz Institute of Ethology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria, and the Institute of Biosciences, Vilnius University, Lithuania. The

specific mentorship arrangements and the progress evaluations will be tailored together with the candidate. The candidate will be primarily based in Vienna and spend some time in Vilnius for training, data analyses, or lab work. For candidates interested in laboratory work (e.g., chemical analyses), necessary resources and lab space will be available in Vilnius or Vienna. There will also be a possibility to work in a captive frog colony at the Laboratoire Ecologie, Evolution, Interaction des Systèmes Amazoniens, Cayenne, French Guiana:

(<https://www.leeisa.cnrs.fr/plateformes/pleea-plateforme-decologie-experimentale-amazonienne/>).

Funding

The Ph.D. position is fully funded, including a salary, research allowance, and travel expenses. The initial funding is for 3.5 years with a possible extension to 4 years, depending on the research progress. The salary rate of the Austrian Science Fund for Ph.D. students is 30 hours/week, corresponding to 3579 EUR gross/ month. All the research expenses, fieldwork, conference travel, and research visits will be covered within the budget limits of the project. We will support the candidate in applying for additional funds if/when necessary.

Master's degree requirement

The University rules require a Master's degree to enter the Ph.D. program. However, exceptions can be made for candidates who can prove to have done an equivalent number of study and research credits to a European Master's degree. In Europe, a Bachelor's + Master's degree typically correspond to a total of 5 years of full-time study and ~ 300 ECTS credits (<https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system>).

Start of the position

Given the extensive preparations that the fieldwork component of the project requires, the PhD candidate must start the position no later than three months before the first trip to French Guiana, which typically takes place in January/February. Therefore, we are expecting the candidate to start no later than October 2024. **A later start is, unfortunately, not possible.**