

PhD position in Behavioral Biology (all genders welcome)

The German Primate Center (DPZ) - Leibniz Institute for Primate Research - conducts basic biological and biomedical research in all fields in which non-human primates play essential roles: in particular, in infection research, the neurosciences, and organismic primate biology (www.dpz.eu/en/about-us/profile/mission.html). In addition to its research infrastructure in Göttingen, the DPZ maintains five field stations abroad, located in Peru, Guinea, Senegal, Madagascar, and Thailand.

As part of the Research Training Group RTG 2906 “Curiosity”, we offer a

PhD position in Behavioral Biology (all genders welcome)

This is a 65% position (payment E13 TV-L) for an initial period of 3 years, with a robust possibility of extension for a further year. The project is expected to commence on August 1, 2026.

Across eleven projects, scientists in the second cohort of the RTG 2906 will investigate the neuropsychological, biological, and computational underpinnings of curiosity. The network comprises a highly interdisciplinary consortium of psychologists, biologists, and systems and computational neuroscientists who will work together to answer three broad research questions: (A) When are we curious? (B) Why are we curious? and (C) How are we curious?

The PhD position advertised here will investigate social curiosity and long-term social memory in Guinea baboons. The PhD researcher will study wild Guinea baboons living near the DPZ field site Simenti in Senegal. The project will combine behavioral observations and field experimentation.

Your profile:

- A strong M.Sc. degree in Behavioral Biology or a related field, such as Cognitive or Comparative Biology
- Experience conducting observational or experimental studies with animals
- Field experience
- Advanced statistical and analytical skills (experience using R is a plus)
- Excellent English skills are required; proficiency in the French language is desirable.
- Strong critical thinking and communication skills.
- Team-oriented attitude.
- Willing to live and work under challenging conditions.
- Good intercultural communication skills.
- Valid driver's license.

What we offer:

- The unique possibility to study the intriguing Guinea baboons in their natural environment
- A highly interdisciplinary and collaborative, team-oriented research group.
- Close supervision by an interdisciplinary Thesis Advisory Committee.
- Enrollment in a training program comprising mandatory and elective courses tailored to individual needs and career goals, as well as regular retreats and summer schools.
- Ample funding for conferences and external laboratory visits.

RTG 2906 is based in Göttingen, a university town with 28,000 students across all disciplines. The Göttingen Campus has its overarching research foci in living networks,

sustainability, and dynamics of change, and includes four Max-Planck Institutes, the German Primate Center, the Campus Institute for Data Science, and the Campus Institute for Dynamics of Biological Networks. The eleven doctoral projects are spread across these Göttingen Campus institutes.

We welcome diversity and therefore encourage applications from qualified individuals, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, or social background, gender, religion, ideology, disability, age, or sexual identity. Registered disabled applicants with equal aptitude and qualifications will be given preferential consideration. We kindly request that you indicate any disabilities in your application.

Employment at the DPZ is based on the civil service rules and regulations. The salary scale is in accordance with TV-L, with the VBL pension scheme.

How to apply:

Detailed information on the application process, the research project, and the training programme is available on the RTG webpage (<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/rtg2906>).

Applications are due by 15.01.2026. We ask you to submit your written application as a single PDF file with the usual documents (motivation letter, CV, and certified copies of your degree and language certificates and names of two referees) via email (bewerbung@dpz.eu). Please take care to include the keyword "RTG2906_ProjectA3" in your submission.

Note that there are 11 open PhD positions in RTG 2906; in case you are applying for more than one position, please indicate this in your cover letter (applying for more than one position is in no way detrimental to your application). Please note that you must apply to each position separately.

For questions about the position, please get in touch with Prof. Julia Fischer (jfischer@dpz.eu) and check out the DPZ website with information on the field site and the work we conduct there <https://www.dpz.eu/en/cognitive-ethology>.