



42,500 students and 7,750 employees in teaching, research and administration, all working together to shape perspectives for the future – that is the University of Münster. Embedded in the vibrant atmosphere of Münster with its high standard of living, the University’s diverse research profile and attractive study programmes draw students and researchers throughout Germany and from around the world.

The Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity at the University of Münster, Germany, is seeking to fill the position of a

Doctoral Research Associate (PhD position) (Wissenschaftliche*r Mitarbeiter*in, salary level E 13 TV-L, 65%)

at the earliest possible date. We are offering a fixed-term part-time position (65%) within the research group of Prof. J. Kurtz for 3 years.

Your tasks:

This research project focuses on the evolutionary flexibility of epigenetic regulation in insects. Even within the group of beetles, some species rely on CpG methylation, while other species have lost the relevant DNA methyltransferases (Dnmt genes). Using beetles as models, our project aims to understand the evolution of epigenetic regulation systems, elucidate the alternative functions of DNA methyltransferases and assess the mutual dependences between DNA methylation and histone modification.

The successful candidate will make use of the combined power of sequencing technology to analyse epigenetic processes (Methyl-Seq, Cut&Tag, RNAseq) and functional validation (RNAi) in up to ten beetle species. The candidate will collaborate intensively with a PhD student from Prof Sonja Prohaska’s research group at the University of Leipzig, who will contribute expertise in bioinformatics.

The project is part of the Priority Programme “Genomic Basis of Evolutionary Innovations (SPP 2349 GEvol, <https://g-evol.uni-muenster.de>) funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). GEvol aims to foster interdisciplinary collaboration that leverages cutting-edge computational and omics methodologies to reconstruct and understand the evolutionary history of insect genomes using comparative genomics. For a recent publication from the project see <https://doi.org/10.1002/jez.b.23303>; for further publications of the Kurtz lab see <https://www.uni-muenster.de/Evolution/animalevolecol/publications/index.shtml>.

This position is tied to working towards a doctorate.

Our expectations:

Applicants should be highly motivated scientists interested in interdisciplinary work. They should have the equivalent of a master’s degree in biology, preferentially with a focus on evolution, molecular biology, genomics or a related field. A background, and ideally some experience, in any of the following areas will be useful: molecular laboratory skills, functional genomics and/or practical insect work.

Applicants should have excellent communication skills and be able to work both independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team. The working language of the Institute and the lab is English, therefore good proficiency in spoken and written English is a requirement. German language skills are not a requirement, but a willingness to learn is desirable.

Advantages for you:

- › Appreciation, commitment, openness and respect – values which are important to us.
- › Our broad range of diverse work-time models offers great flexibility – also when working from home.
- › If you have family members or young children in your care, our [Family Service Office](#) offers concrete support to help you balance your private and professional responsibilities.
- › As an educational institution, we are deeply committed to offering [occupational training and continuing education](#) opportunities tailored to your individual needs.
- › From A – Z, Aikido to Zumba, our [sport and health programmes](#) ensure a healthy work-life balance.
- › As a university employee, you are entitled to numerous benefits afforded to public servants, e.g. an attractive company pension scheme ([VBL](#)), an [annual end-of-year bonus](#) and a position that is shielded from economic fluctuations.

The Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity provides a stimulating research environment with a number of scientific groups researching diverse topics centred on different aspects of evolution. The successful applicant will join a structured graduate program provided by the Münster Graduate School of Evolution (MGSE, <https://www.uni-muenster.de/Evolution/mgse/>). As a part of the Priority Programme GEvol (SPP 2349) the project will involve intensive collaboration with consortium partners across Germany.

The University of Münster strongly supports [equal opportunity and diversity](#). We welcome all applicants regardless of sex, nationality, ethnic or social background, religion or worldview, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity. We are committed to creating family-friendly working conditions.

We actively encourage applications by women. Women with equivalent qualifications and academic achievements will be preferentially considered unless these are outweighed by reasons which necessitate the selection of another candidate.

Then we look forward to receiving your application, written in English, in one single PDF file, by **2025-12-15**. Please note that we cannot consider other file formats. Applications should be sent to Prof Joachim Kurtz at: Joachim.Kurtz@uni-muenster.de, with the subject PhD application-SPP-your name. Applications should include 1) a cover letter with a statement of research interests and motivation (max. 1 page), 2) a CV including details about research experience and publications, and 3) contact details for at least two referees.

Reference number: **2025_11_26**

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