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 Biodiversität at the University of Münster, Germany, is seeking to fill the position of a

Doctoral Research Associate (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. Full-time employees are required to teach 4 hours per week during the semester.

Your tasks:

The position is embedded in the DFG-funded Collaborative Research Centre 1748 'Principles of Reproduction'. The CRC 1748 involves scientists of the University, University Hospital, and Max Planck Institute Münster as well as of the RWTH Aachen. Our central objective is to elucidate the genetic, molecular, and cellular mechanisms governing the formation and function of the testis, production and function of sperm, fertilisation, as well as early embryonic development – in both health and disease. To this end, we combine interdisciplinary research in molecular, structural, and cell biology as well as in physiology, biophysics, epi / genetics, (bio)informatics, and multimodal data analysis.

The Kurtz group focuses on evolutionary ecology, including reproductive biology. This joint project together with Dr. Robert Peuß at the Institute of Integrative Cell Biology and Physiology will address the role of the Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC, or HLA in human) for fertilisation and infertility. We combine the strengths of two fish species, stickleback and cavefish, exploiting their natural MHC variability together with analyses of human genomic datasets to identify HLA variants associated with infertility.

Your tasks involve the genetic analysis and manipulation of stickleback MHC, using CRISPR-Cas technology, to conduct experiments on the role of MHC for spermatogenesis, sperm function, and gamete interaction. You will further be involved in the analysis of human whole exome sequencing (WES) data of infertility cases and controls.

This position is tied to working towards a doctorate

Our expectations:

- Applicants must have the equivalent of a master's degree in biology, preferentially with a focus on evolution, molecular biology, reproductive biology 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 fish 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; a willingness to learn Germany is desirable

Advantages for you:

- Working in the highly collaborative environment of the CRC 'Principles of Reproduction' with access to state-of-the-art technology and datasets.
- Benefiting from collaboration with another PhD student carrying out related work in the cavefish and with our external collaborator, Prof. Tobias Lenz (University of Hamburg), who is an expert on both fish and human MHC.
- A unique opportunity to combine basic research in evolutionary ecology with applied research on human reproduction.
- 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 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.

Are you interested? Then we look forward to receiving your application via our career portal until **2026-02-27**.

Please include, in one pdf document:

- Cover letter with a statement of research interest and motivation (max 1 page)
- CV including details about research experience and publications
- Transcript and scanned copies of your degree certificates
- Names and contact details of at least two references

Reference Number 2026_02_10

VIELFALT GESTALTEN DIVERSITY AUDIT DES STIFTERVERBANDES ZERTIFIKAT 2024

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