Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Doctoral / Ph.D. Student (all genders welcome)

Stellen-ID:	3264
Einrichtung:	Johann-Friedrich-Blumenbach Institute of Zoology and Anthropology
Kontaktperson:	Frau Prof. Dr. Maria Teresa Aguado
	aguadomolina@uni-goettingen.de
	0551 3925536
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The Johann-Friedrich-Blumenbach Institute of Zoology and Anthropology at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen is looking to fill the position of a

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for research on Unlocking hidden marine annelid diversity through phylogenomics and integrative taxonomy.

The position is funded by the Leibniz Collaborative Excellence Programme for a period of three years, with a salary according to the German salary scale **TV-L E13** (65 %), and should be filled by 1st May 2026.

This PhD position is part of the EuroWorm project, a collaboration between the Leibniz Institute for Biodiversity Change (LIB), Georg-August-University Göttingen, the Senckenberg Nature Museum, and the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University of Bonn. EuroWorm is a new interdisciplinary initiative that brings together museum-based experts in marine annelids with specialists in genomics and bioinformatics. Its overarching aim is to unlock Europe's hidden biodiversity by applying state-of-the-art molecular and computational tools. The project seeks to accelerate global biodiversity discovery by making museum collections more accessible through open data and to advance our understanding of annelid evolution across broad spatial, ecological, and temporal scales.

PhD Project - Specific Focus

The PhD project contributes to EuroWorm by concentrating on a targeted, specimen-based investigation of marine annelid diversity and evolutionary relationships. The work will involve coordinated field sampling at selected type localities across Europe and the generation of high-quality morphological and genomic datasets for these species. These data will be directly linked to digitized voucher specimens housed in major natural history museums, reinforcing their role as essential biodiversity repositories.

Using cost-effective genome-skimming, the PhD project aims to produce a densely sampled phylogenetic framework for selected annelid lineages, with particular attention to groups that are rare, symbiotic, or morphologically derived. The phylogenetic framework and integrative taxonomy will be used to explore how key evolutionary transitions, such as changes in body plan, reproductive strategies, regenerative abilities, and symbioses have shaped diversification within annelids.

The PhD candidate will collaborate closely on the production and analysis of low-coverage genomic data with a project postdoc based at LIB Hamburg, as well as with a PhD candidate based at the Senckenberg Nature Museum in Frankfurt focused on uncovering the genomic basis of evolutionary novelties in marine annelids, including de novo genome assemblies and comparative genomic analyses related to evolutionary innovations and biomineralization.

Your Tasks

- Conduct field sampling at key type localities across Europe.
- Generate and analyse morphological and genomic data for selected marine annelid species.
- Digitize and link specimen-based data to museum voucher collections.
- Build phylogenetic trees using genome-skimming and other molecular datasets.
- Contribute to integrative taxonomy of target groups.
- Investigate evolutionary transitions within Annelida using comparative approaches.
- Collaborate with project partners, including the associated PhD student at Senckenberg Frankfurt.
- Present and discuss results in lab meetings, seminars, and scientific conferences.
- Contribute to publications in peer-reviewed journals.

Your Profile

- Diploma or MSc degree in Biology or a closely related field.
- Background in molecular systematics or evolutionary biology.
- Practical experience in microscopy and molecular as well as morphological laboratory techniques.
- Strong motivation to conduct independent, hypothesis-driven research.
- Ability to work collaboratively in an interdisciplinary, multinational team.
- High proficiency in English; knowledge of German and/or Spanish is beneficial.

- Willingness to participate in fieldwork and contribute to group activities, including student mentoring.

Desirable Skills

- Familiarity with annelids or other lophotrochozoans (advantageous but not required).
- Basic skills in next-generation sequencing (NGS) technologies and bioinformatics (e.g., sequence assembly, phylogenetics, comparative analyses).
- Interest in natural history collections and digitization workflows.
- Strong organizational skills and a proactive approach to problem-solving.

This position offers an excellent opportunity for early-career researchers to gain comprehensive experience in fieldwork, museum collections, molecular methods, and large-scale comparative analyses, while developing scientific independence within a dynamic and collaborative research environment.

The University of Göttingen is an equal opportunities employer and places particular emphasis on fostering career opportunities for women. Qualified women are therefore strongly encouraged to apply in fields in which they are underrepresented. The university has committed itself to being a family-friendly institution and supports their employees in balancing work and family life. The University is particularly committed to the professional participation of severely disabled employees and therefore welcomes applications from severely disabled people. In the case of equal qualifications, applications from people with severe disabilities will be given preference. A disability or equality is to be included in the application in order to protect the interests of the applicant.

How to apply?

Please send your application (letter of motivation with a short description of your previous and current research foci, a CV, certificates of academic achievements, list of publications as well as letter(s) of recommendation, if available) electronically (as a single PDF) until **1 April 2026** in electronic form to M**aria Teresa Aguado (aguadomolina@uni-goettingen.de) and Conrad Helm (chelm@uni-goettingen.de), Johann-Friedrich-Blumenbach-Institut für Zoologie und Anthropologie, Animal Evolution and Biodiversity, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Untere Karspüle 2, 37073 Göttingen, Germany.** For further questions, please contact one of the latter.

For further questions regarding the project and the position please contact **Maria Teresa Aguado Molina (Email: aguadomolina@uni-goettingen.de), Conrad Helm (Email: chelm@uni-goettingen.de), or Christoph Bleidorn (Email: christoph.bleidorn@biologie.uni-goettingen.de)**.

Please note:

With submission of your application, you accept the processing of your applicant data in

terms of data-protection law. Further information on the legal basis and data usage is provided in the Hinweisblatt zur Datenschutzgrundverordnung (DSGVO) https://www.uni-goettingen.de/hinweisdsgvo

Kontakt für Anzeigenschaltung

Abteilung Personaladministration und Personalentwicklung
Goßlerstraße 5/7
37027 Göttingen (37073 Göttingen)
Tel. + 49 (0) 551 39-24932
Fax + 49 (0) 551 39-25688
bewerbungen@zvw.uni-goettingen.de