

Post doc position: The role of parasites in environmental governance and society (1,5 years)

Job description

The [Department of Geography and Sustainability](#) (IGD) at the University of Lausanne (UNIL) is looking for a highly motivated Postdoc to work on **imaginaries and governance of fish parasites in lac Geneva** as part of a larger EU-funded project on European fish parasite diversity (IMPACT).

The department

The [Department of Geography and Sustainability](#) is an interdisciplinary community of about 130 scholars working on space, place, and the environment. With 27 professors and more than 60 postgraduate students, the Department offers a vibrant and stimulating environment for cutting-edge research. It hosts regular lecture series and distinguished visiting scholars from around the world.

The European project

Parasites are typecast as biological villains due to their threats to human health and wildlife conservation, despite most metazoan parasites having no zoonotic potential, and constituting an overwhelming proportion of current biodiversity. Unsurprisingly, parasites remain the most neglected components of biodiversity monitoring and management strategies, and completely absent from conservation discussions. The IMPACT project (Integrated Monitoring of PARasites in Changing EnvironmenTs), funded by the EU Biodiversa+ programme, will provide the foundation to break down key barriers to parasites in transnational biodiversity and ecosystem change monitoring. The IMPACT project will examine the multiple facets of parasitic helminth diversity (taxonomic, functional, phylogenetic and genetic) in European fish. It will explore existing and develop new European fish parasite diversity datasets, test novel molecular methods for parasite diversity monitoring, and elucidate the role of parasites in environmental governance to address the overall goal of providing evidence-based knowledge to support the integration of parasites into biodiversity monitoring directives and environmental decision making.

The advertised Postdoc position is one of several PhD and postdoc positions in the project. The multidisciplinary consortium of the project includes scientists from nine European research institutions across seven countries (Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland) with expertise in parasite ecology & taxonomy, biogeography, macroecology, molecular ecology, aquatic biodiversity monitoring and human geography.

IMPACT is coordinated by Dr. Rachel Paterson of the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA), supported by Dr. Isabel Blasco-Costa of the Natural History Museum of Geneva.

The position

The position is part of **WP 4 : The role of parasites in environmental governance and society**. The main objective is to gain knowledge about stakeholders' perceptions of parasites, understand the role of parasites in environmental governance, and provide an evidence-

based approach for integrating the functional role of parasites in conservation management and policies. The research question address in the WP is what limits the inclusion of parasite biodiversity monitoring and governance in environmental decision making. To answer this question and achieve these goals, the candidate will have to develop and conduct a qualitative enquiry with natural management authorities, local users and environmental NGOs concern by parasites at the local (mainly Geneva) and national level (CH), including the arrangement of national and cross-scale workshops in Switzerland. The candidate will also be responsible for arranging (online) international parasite knowledge exchange seminar.

The Postdoc candidate will be directly supervised by Dr. Joëlle Salomon Cavin (IGD-UNil) in collaboration with Dr. Isabel Blasco from the Museum of Geneva. Within the project, the Postdoc will collaborate with other PhD candidates, Postdocs and PIs working on the IMPACT project.

Job information

Job title: Postdoc "The role of parasites in environmental governance and society"

Start date: **1 April 2024** (the start date of the contract may possibly be postponed).

Duration of contract: 18 months

Activity rate: 100 % (1 year) then 50 % (0,5 year)

Location: Geopolis Building, Lausanne, Switzerland

Your profile

PHd in Social, human or political sciences or another field relevant to the position with an interest in issues and approaches addressed in Ecology. A background in Biology, conservation sciences with a proven interest in social sciences and humanities may also be considered. The ideal candidate should be capable of planning and organizing their own work independently, and meet deadlines imposed by the project. Given the multidisciplinary nature of the project, we are looking for a candidate who is open and communicative to facilitate interactions with other project members.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate expertise in qualitative methods, enjoy observation and fieldwork and have strong writing skills. Excellent English oral and writing skills are essential. Language skills in French are also expected, given the field research in Geneva.

What we offer

We offer a stimulating work environment and atmosphere, with dedicated support for developing an academic career. Members of our research groups become part of international networks and benefit from opportunities to attend conferences and workshops around the world.

We offer an excellent remuneration package and additional funds for fieldwork and conferences. Different formation opportunities are possible at UNIL or in Swiss institutions that promote doctoral research.

Your application

Deadline: 16 February 2024

Interested applicants should send to joelle.salomoncavin@unil.ch in PDF format only :

- A Cover letter explaining how the candidate's profile matches the above criteria;
- A Full Curriculum Vitae;

- Names and e-mail addresses of three academic referees;

Contact for questions :

Joëlle Salomon Cavin : joelle.salomoncavin@unil.ch

Additional information

UNIL is committed to equal opportunity and diversity:

<https://www.unil.ch/egalite/en/home.html>

UNIL supports early career researchers: <https://www.unil.ch/graduatecampus/en/home.html>