TECHNICAL CONSULTANT (F/M/D)
FOR DATA DISCOVERY AND MOBILISATION ON TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE AND BIODIVERSITY IN FORMER SOVIET UNION COUNTRIES

SUPPORTING THE RESEARCH PROJECT: ‘SHEDDING LIGHT ON BLIND SPOTS IN LAND-USE AND BIODIVERSITY CHANGE’

Fixed term of one year
50% FTE
Planned remuneration: salary group (Entgeltgruppe) 9 TV-L

The German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig and Leipzig University seek to fill the above position in Leipzig at the earliest opportunity. The preferred starting date is August to October 2019 or shortly thereafter.

Background
Changes in agriculture are an important reason for changes in biodiversity and ecosystems. For a better understanding of these effects, and to advance sustainable development across the world, it is crucial to have detailed information on changes in both agriculture and biodiversity. Many former USSR countries are now experiencing rapid changes in agricultural land use, with potentially strong impacts on biodiversity. Yet, in the global databases that Western scientists have put together to study these changes, this region is underrepresented. This can be explained by language barriers and differences in scientific and civil culture between scientists and practitioners from both regions. To help bridge this gap and to contribute to a better understanding of the effects of agricultural changes on biodiversity in former USSR countries, we offer an exciting position as technical consultant at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv), an interdisciplinary and collaborative working place. The project is supervised by Dr Carsten Meyer (iDiv’s Macroecology & Society group) in collaboration with Dr Roel van Klink (iDiv’s synthesis centre), Professor Jonathan Chase (iDiv’s Biodiversity Synthesis group), and Professor Nico Eisenhauer (iDiv’s Experimental Interaction Ecology group).

Tasks
- Your main duty will be the discovery and collation of data on biodiversity and land-use change in former Soviet Union countries, with a focus on regions that are currently underrepresented in global scientific databases.
- The data you will seek includes datasets on biological communities (e.g. from ecological field studies on plants, birds, earthworms) as well as datasets on land use and land management (e.g. census statistics on agriculture and forestry, spatial data on land tenure).
- After brief introductory training, you will initially focus on “remote” data discovery via online searches of (mostly) Russian-language databases, scientific and grey literature (reports), and statistical yearbooks. You will harmonise and integrate these datasets into scientific databases to support ongoing research projects on the biodiversity impacts of land-use change.
- You will contribute to the development of a collaborative network by establishing contacts with data holders via email and/or telephone and soliciting written data requests (in Russian). You will furthermore plan and carry out an extended trip (2–3 months in early 2020) to several former Soviet Union countries (for example, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan), where you will work together with local contact points (for example, at university libraries, NGOs, and governmental agencies such as statistical offices or environmental/land administration agencies), to access offline databases and non-digital literature.
- You will be fully integrated into the research project. Occasionally, you will be asked to perform other project-related tasks (e.g. contributing to its administrative management).

Requirements
- You are a state-certified technician or have an equivalent degree and experience.
- You have excellent written and spoken Russian-language skills. Strong English-language skills are also expected. Knowledge of other languages used in the study region would be an advantage, but is not a prerequisite. We seek candidates who can traverse intercultural boundaries and communicate in a highly professional manner with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. Personal cultural ties to a former Soviet Union country, and/or prior experience working in the region would be an advantage.
You are highly motivated to contribute to a large database compilation effort; this requires attention to detail, tenacity, and frustration tolerance.

You can work independently over extended periods of time and take responsibility for the success of your project.

You have excellent organisational and time-management skills.

While not a prerequisite, any prior experience of working with a programming language (e.g. R), GIS (e.g. QGIS), or a database program (e.g. MySQL, PostgreSQL, MS Access) would be beneficial.

Personal interest in relevant fields (e.g. ecology, agriculture, forestry, environmental management, land administration or similar) would be an advantage.

The place of work is the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) in Leipzig. Note that this position entails extended travel to several former Soviet Union countries. A valid passport from a country permitted to travel to these countries is required.

Please apply, quoting reference number 160/2019, via our application portal at https://apply.idiv.de by 5 August 2019. Although we prefer applications via our application portal, hard-copy applications can also be sent to:

German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research – iDiv
Human Resources Department
Deutscher Platz 5e, 04103 Leipzig

Applications should include:
- brief cover letter describing motivation, professional interests and relevant experience
- tabular curriculum vitae, including a detailed account of relevant technical skills, language skills and prior experience
- one letter of recommendation from a past supervisor as well as contact details of two professional/scientific references
- if applicable, digital copies of degree certificates

Queries concerning the application process should be directed to our HR Department (hr@idiv.de); for research project questions, please contact Dr Carsten Meyer (carsten.meyer@idiv.de). Severely disabled persons are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in the case of equal suitability. Please note that applying via email is not entirely secure under data protection law. The sender assumes full responsibility.

iDiv is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community that collectively supports and implements our mission to do great science. We welcome, recruit, develop, and advance talented staff of all genders and backgrounds.

Privacy information
The personal data contained within your application documents or obtained during the interview will be processed exclusively for the purposes of the selection process for the position advertised. The legal basis for such data processing is Section 11(1) of the Saxon Data Protection Implementation Act (Sächs DSDG) in conjunction with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The controller for the application process within the meaning of the GDPR is the addressee of the application, as specified in the respective advertisement. When processing your application, your personal data will be passed on within Leipzig University to
- members of the selection committee
- the human resources management teams
- the Commissioner for Equal Opportunities
- the Disability Officers and
- if necessary, the Staff Council
as part of their organisational or statutory responsibilities.

Your personal data will be erased no later than six months after completion of the selection process. In accordance with the GDPR, subject to the relevant statutory requirements you have the following rights vis-à-vis the addressee of the application with regard to your personal data: right of access (Art. 15 GDPR); right to rectification of inaccurate personal data (Art. 16 GDPR); right to erasure (Art. 17 GDPR); right to restriction of processing (Art. 18 GDPR); and right to object to processing (Art. 21 GDPR). If you have any questions, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Leipzig University (office: Augustusplatz 10, 04109 Leipzig). You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection.