Reference number 18/2020
DOCTORAL RESEARCHER (M/F/D)

IN THE PROJECT “RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLANT DIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM PRODUCTIVITY (BEF-LOOPS)”

Fixed term until 31 March 2023
65% of a full-time position
Salary: Entgeltgruppe 13 TV-L

Leipzig University seeks to fill the above position at the Faculty of Life Sciences, Special Botany and Functional Biodiversity Research Group, from 1 April 2020.

Background
The Biodiversity Exploratories are a DFG-funded research project that explores how land use intensification affects ecosystem functioning and ecosystem services, as well as the biodiversity of various taxa. One of the central questions is whether management that promotes biodiversity can also have benefits for biomass production. One of the main challenges in answering this question is that in grasslands with tall, dense vegetation, light competition might negatively affect plant diversity, so that any positive effects of plant diversity might be masked by negative feedbacks. The BEF-Loops project aims to overcome these issues, by using a combination of seed addition, mowing, grazing and fertilization experiments, as well as by investigating observed relationships between plant diversity and grassland production in 150 grassland sites differing in land use intensity. The aim is to provide a mechanistic understanding of how plant diversity drives biomass production, and vice versa, which may ultimately advance our understanding of how grassland management may optimise both biodiversity conservation and ecosystem functioning.

We offer an international environment with a highly active and diverse team covering expertise in experimental and observational approaches and a wide range of statistical and eco-informatics methods. Field facilities run by the group include the University’s Botanical Garden, the Leipzig Canopy Crane and a research arboretum. Our group is co-leading the TRY initiative and is heavily involved in several projects in the field of functional biodiversity research. For more information on the work of our Research Group, please visit https://biologie.biphaps.uni-leipzig.de/de/ag/spezbot/.

Tasks
- Novel research on major questions that combines research on biodiversity-ecosystem functioning and productivity-richness relationships
- Performing fieldwork (plant community surveys, measurement of biomass production, light availability and soil sampling) in three German regions (Schorfheide, Hainich and Schwäbische Alb), in and around land use and seed addition experimental plots
- Performing a greenhouse experiment
- Statistical analysis including mixed models and structural equation models
- Writing and publication of scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals
- Presentation of results at national and international conferences

Requirements
- Master’s degree or equivalent in ecology or a closely related discipline
- Expertise in plant ecology
- Interest and ability in interdisciplinary collaboration with a diverse team of ecologists
- Strong statistical skills (in R)
- Experience in plant-related fieldwork as well as species identification
- Excellent English skills (spoken and written)
- Preferably also good German skills
- Driving licence (category B)
- Team player and strong organisational skills

Please send your application, quoting reference number 18/2020 and with the usual documents, either by email or as a hard copy, to:

alfons.van_der_plas@uni-leipzig.de
Leipzig University
Faculty of Life Sciences
Dr Alfons van der Plas
Johannisallee 21–23
04103 Leipzig

by no later than 6 February 2020.

Queries concerning the project should be directed to Dr Alfons van der Plas (alfons.van_der_plas@uni-leipzig.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.

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.