Postdoc in Antarctic terrestrial biodiversity patterns

At the department of Ecological Science, a post-doctoral position is available. This postdoc program focuses on biodiversity of moss, lichen and micro-organisms in Antarctica. With this research you contribute to Antarctic conservation planning. As a part of this program, you will spend 2-5 months a year in Antarctica. Do you have a relevant PhD with research experience? Please apply at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU).

Job area:
Postdoc

Educational Level:
Postdoc

VU unit:
Faculty of Science

Contract type:
Temporary

Minimum FTE:
1

Minimum salary scale:
€2,836 (scale 10)

Maximum salary scale:
€4,474 (scale 10)

Location: AMSTERDAM
FTE: 1

Job description

The aim of this postdoc work package is to quantify biodiversity measures of biota associated with Antarctic cryptogams. A central question within this package is: *'How do different cryptogam species and their functional traits contribute to Antarctic biodiversity?'* In this role, you quantify invertebrate biodiversity of the dominant moss and lichen species through standard extraction methods. In addition, using environmental DNA, you study the eukaryotic DNA of the associated invertebrates and several groups of micro-organisms. This entails bacteria, green algae, fungi and protozoans. You compare operational taxonomic units between cryptogam trait groups.

This project is a part of the research project entitled "*The Antarctic biota count (ABC): a functional trait-based approach to scale biodiversity from plot to region*". The project is funded by the Netherlands Polar Program of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).
The overall aim of this project is to deliver spatially explicit data on terrestrial biodiversity along the Antarctic Peninsula for evidence-based systematic conservation planning. This postdoc position, with its own work package and objectives, delivers an important contribution to this. You will generate a comprehensive status of the current biodiversity of invertebrates and micro-organisms associated with vegetation along the Antarctic Peninsula region. This will then form a data-driven approach to Antarctic conservation planning and provide a baseline to which future changes can be monitored. The project is run in close collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey (UK) and the University of Birmingham (UK).

Your tasks

- you quantify and compare associated biodiversity of the dominant cryptogam species along the Antarctic Peninsula. You do this through sampling and assembling previous literature data
- youxtract and identify Antarctic springtails, mites, nematodes and tardigrades
- you quantify eukaryotic and microbial DNA across dominant cryptogam species. You work with metabarcoding approaches (PCR amplification and single molecule real-time (SMRT) sequencing)

Requirements

- PhD in Ecological Sciences or comparable, with relevant research experience
- experience with invertebrate identification
- experience with metabarcoding approaches
- willingness and physical ability to work in cold and remote Antarctic regions for 2-5 months per year
- proficiency with statistical approaches and use of R
- excellent social skills to work in an interdisciplinary international research team
- English language proficiency both in speech and in writing
- ability and determination to deliver high-impact scientific papers (with publication record to show for it)

What are we offering?

A challenging position in a socially involved organization. On full-time basis the remuneration amounts to a minimum gross monthly salary of €2,836 (scale 10)

and a maximum €4,474 (scale 10), depending on your education and experience. The job profile: is based on the university job ranking system and is vacant for at least 1 FTE.

The initial employment contract will affect a period of 1 year. After satisfactory evaluation of the initial appointment, it can be extended for a total duration of 3 years. About 75% of the time is devoted to research, the remaining 25% to education and assistance in courses. The education program is organized by the national research school Production Ecology & Resource Conservation which offers a wide range of courses in scientific methodology and professional development.

You can find information about our excellent fringe benefits of employment at www.workingat.vu.nl

Additionally, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers excellent fringe benefits and various schemes and regulations to promote a good work/life balance, such as:

- a maximum of 41 days of annual leave based on full-time employment
- 8% holiday allowance and 8.3% end-of-year bonus
- solid pension scheme (ABP)

About Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

The ambition of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is clear: to contribute to a better world through outstanding education and ground-breaking research. We strive to be a university where personal development and commitment to society play a leading role. A university where people from different disciplines and backgrounds collaborate to achieve innovations and to generate new knowledge. Our teaching and research encompass the entire spectrum of academic endeavor – from the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences through to the life sciences and the medical sciences.

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is home to more than 26,000 students. We employ over 4,600 individuals. The VU campus is easily accessible and located in the heart of Amsterdam's Zuidas district, a truly inspiring environment for teaching and research.

Diversity

We are an inclusive university community. Diversity is one of our most important values. We believe that engaging in international activities and welcoming students and staff from a wide variety of backgrounds enhances the quality of our education and research. We are always looking for people who can enrich our world with their own unique perspectives and experiences.

The Faculty of Science

The Faculty of Science inspires researchers and students to find sustainable solutions for complex societal issues. From forest fires to big data, from obesity to medicines and from molecules to the moon: our teaching and research programmes cover the full spectrum of the natural sciences. We share knowledge and experience with leading research institutes and industries, both here in the Netherlands and abroad.

Working at the Faculty of Science means working with students, PhD candidates and researchers, all with a clear focus on their field and a broad view of the world. We employ more than 1,250 staff members, and we are home to around 6,000 students.

Application

Are you interested in this position? Please apply via the application button and upload your curriculum vitae and cover letter until **December 5, 2021**. The job interviews are planned for December 2021, on campus or on-line.

Applications received by e-mail will not be processed.

Vacancy questions

If you have any questions regarding this vacancy, you may contact:

Name: Dr. Stef Bokhorst
Position: senior researcher
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Telephone: +31 20 59 87004

No agencies