

3 years PhD position

Social immunity in an insect with family life



We invite applications for a 3-years PhD position at the JG University of Mainz, Germany. The project aims to better understand the importance of social immunity in the early evolution of social life in insects. Our model system is the European earwig, *Forficula auricularia*, a species with non-obligatory forms of maternal care. The PhD student will conduct a series of standardized experiments to investigate how behavioral interactions between family members help individuals fighting against pathogens, as well as to determine the genes involved in the expression of social immunity. The scientific project includes behavioral experiments (mostly), immunity measurements (e.g. PO and PPO) and RNA-seq analyses. Depending on the student interests, the project may also include quantitative genetics, chemical ecology and/or population genetics.

The position requires a recent Diploma or Master degree in Biology (or a related field). The successful candidate should be highly motivated and have strong background in evolutionary biology and behavioral ecology, as well as experience in conducting behavioral experiments. Good skills in biostatistics or a high motivation to improve the statistical knowledge (e.g. R language) are important. Previous experiences with insect immunity and/or RNA-seq are advantageous, but not required. The position is fully-funded by the DFG (65% TV-L E13). People from every nationality are encouraged to apply. The working language of the laboratory is English.

The University of Mainz hosts many excellent scientific institutions (<http://www.uni-mainz.de/eng>) and Mainz is a historic city located on the River Rhine with many students and a rich social and cultural life (<http://www.mainz.de>).

Our young group offers an international, dynamic and interactive scientific environment and state-of-the-art, newly equipped laboratories. Information on our scientific work including recent publications can be found under http://www.bio.uni-mainz.de/zoo/evobio/322_ENG_HTML.php. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact Joël Meunier (meunier@uni-mainz.de).

Interested candidates should send applications (as a single .pdf e-mail attachment) containing a motivation letter (max. 1 page), a curriculum vitae (with the grades of their B.Sc and M.Sc), a copy of their Master or Diploma thesis (if not finished, please send a summary of the project and the expected date of submission), and the names and email address of 2-3 potential referees to Joël Meunier (meunier@uni-mainz.de).

Review of applications will begin **the 30th of June 2014** and will continue until the position is filled. The ideal starting date for the position is September 2014, but is negotiable.

