

The Department of Ecosystem Management, Climate and Biodiversity, Institute of Forest Ecology is currently seeking a

Postgraduate Research Associate

project employment

(Reference code 151)

Extent of employment: 30 hours per week

Duration of employment: 1st of October 2026, limited to 30th of September 2030

Workplace: 1190 Vienna

Allocation in compliance with the Collective Agreement for University Staff to job group:

B1

Gross monthly salary: (depending on previous eligible experience) at least: € 2.832,10
(payable 14 times per year)

PhD Position in Forest Regeneration and Nutrient Dynamics

Tree regeneration success is a key determinant of forest resilience and long-term ecosystem stability. While light availability has been widely studied as a driver of regeneration dynamics, the role of the forest floor as a regulator of nutrient supply to seedlings has received far less attention. The Forest floor is the interface between the above- and below-ground parts of forest ecosystems. It serves as a seedbed and rooting zone for vegetation, and acts as a hub of the ecosystem where organic matter, nutrients and water are stored, absorbed, and transformed. In the context of climate change, the Forest floor and its associated ecosystem services appear as particularly at risk. As part of the research group “Humus layer: Function, dynamics and vulnerability in transition” (<https://gepris.dfg.de/project/457330647>), the goal of our project is to investigate how forest floor characteristics, root and mycorrhizal connectivity to mature trees, and drought jointly regulate nutrient availability and regeneration performance. For more information, please contact: emilie.fleurot@boku.ac.at.

Responsibilities

- Conducting lab work (measurement of soil and leaf nutrient concentration, measurement of 15N concentration, ...)
- Conducting 2 weeks of field work per year in Germany (collecting leaf and soil samples, measuring the condition and height of the plants)
- Conducting 1 week of fieldwork in an old growth forest (Rothwald) (mapping of forest soil properties)

- Performing data analysis and writing scientific publications
- Writing and defending a doctoral thesis is desired

Required skills and qualifications

- Diploma degree in MSc ecology, biology, forestry or other equivalent university degree
- Language skills: Strong proficiency in English, both written and verbal
- Training and experience in statistical analysis and the R software
- Experience in field work and motivation to work under harsh conditions
- Experience in scientific writing

Desirable skills and qualifications

- Background in forest ecology and/or soil biology
- Highly motivated candidate with strong analytical and problem-solving skills and the ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Driving licence type B
- Ability to perform fieldwork in adverse conditions
- Laboratory experiment, preferably with stable isotopes

Applications can be submitted until: 21st of August 2026

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna seeks to increase the number of its female faculty and staff members. Therefore qualified women are strongly encouraged to apply. In case of equal qualification, female candidates will be given preference unless reasons specific to an individual male candidate tilt the balance in his favour.

People with disabilities and appropriate qualifications are specifically encouraged to apply.

Please send your job application incl.

- motivation letter
- CV
- Example of scientific work (scientific article(s) or master's thesis)
- Two references [letters] will be required during the second stage of the selection process

to HR Management, BOKU University, Peter-Jordan-Straße 70, 1190 Vienna;

E-Mail: recruiting@boku.ac.at. **(Reference code: 151)**

We regret that we cannot reimburse applicants travel and lodging expenses incurred as part of the selection and hiring process.

www.boku.ac.at