

Short description of the Thesis/Topic:

With this behavioral study, we are investigating dogs' sensitivity to human iconic gestures—actions that resemble the movement or manipulation of an object (e.g., moving hands up and down to mimic the flapping of bird wings). Successful applicants will have the opportunity to test dogs in a two-choice task, where the dog should choose between two moving apparatuses based on the experimenter's gestures.

The main responsibilities and required knowledge during the internship will include:

- Recruiting dogs' caregivers, for example through our database and social media.
- Testing dogs in behavioral experiments.
- Coding behavioral videos.
- Reading scientific literature and placing your findings into context.
- Writing experimental protocols and documenting progress.

If you are interested in dogs' behavior and cognition, this internship could be a great opportunity for you.

The project can serve as the basis for a Master's or Diploma thesis or be carried out as part of a study program or an extracurricular activity.

Required Skills and Knowledge:

- Interest in, and ideally experience with, dogs
- Good interpersonal skills (to recruit and interact with dogs' caregivers)
- Flexible time management and the ability to plan and work independently in the lab.

What we offer:

- International, friendly, and supportive team
- A well-equipped environment for behavioral research
- Training and experience in animal cognition research, dog handling, and behavioral data collection.

Language of the Thesis:

English

Duration of the internship:

At least 4 months

Name of the Institute/Clinic/Unit:

Messerli Research Institute, Clever Dog Lab

Contact Person for the Thesis:

Contact: Ana Tomasic, PhD candidate (ana.tomasic@vetmeduni.ac.at)

Supervisor: Dr. Christoph Völter (Christoph.Voelter@vetmeduni.ac.at)

Interested candidates may reply until:

As soon as possible