

The University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna is active in teaching and research and provides services in connection with ensuring animal health in Austria. These tasks represent our contribution to maintaining the health of humans and their animal companions and to producing healthy food.

To strengthen our team, the **Institute of Animal Welfare Science** is looking for a

PhD student in Positive Human-Animal Interactions and Animal Welfare

Grade:	B1
Level of employment:	30 hours
Length of employment:	3 years
Deadline for applications:	31.08.2020

The Institute of Animal Welfare Science is part of Vetmeduni, ranked 5th worldwide (2019 Shanghai Ranking for Universities, Veterinary Sciences) and located in Vienna, consistently ranking as one of the most liveable cities in the world.

Responsibilities

Positive social interactions improve longevity, health and well-being. The effects are well documented but poorly understood. The project aims to: 1) Characterize the structural and sequential behavioural features of positive interactions, 2) Identify the specific roles of neurotransmitter systems, and 3) Elucidate the effects of repeated positive interactions on the brain and the immune system. This PhD position forms part of a national science foundation ('FWF') project on the topic of positive human-animal interactions, their determinants and benefits for animal well-being, using farm pigs as a model and state-of-the-art methods.

The candidate should be motivated, independent and reliable. The candidate will be involved in conducting behavioural tests, behavioural analysis, learning physiology and neuroscience techniques, and writing publications, under the supervision of a PostDoc managing the overall project. We will use a multi-disciplinary series of experiments combining behaviour, neuroendocrinology, neuroimaging, psychoneuroimmunology, and proteomics. The candidate is not expected to have prior knowledge in all techniques used within the project, but should exhibit an enthusiasm to learn them. Support from colleagues will help the candidate to learn or develop those skills. Nevertheless, a strong knowledge in animal behaviour is a must. Although we make every attempt to avoid them, some experiments will require moderately invasive procedures (e.g. experiments on physiology aspects will involve catheters), which will be placed by a veterinarian under anesthesia.

The proposed starting date is November 2020 but a different starting date is negotiable. The work will be conducted in English, and will require travel for experiments at the research farm. Current restrictions due to covid should not inhibit you to apply.

Please submit a letter addressing the selection criteria below (necessary knowledge and qualifications, desired skills and abilities) in a few pages, a full CV, a list of two reference names, and a letter of motivation describing your research interests, experience and goals.

Necessary knowledge and qualifications

- Proof of completed studies with a post-graduate degree in biology such as MSc, veterinary medicine or another relevant course of study, before starting the work (expected graduation at the latest by 15 February 2021)
- An understanding and past experience in animal behaviour research
- Fluent English (B2 level)

Desired skills and abilities

- Expertise in research on social behaviour: data collection and data analysis
- Ability to conduct research relatively independently
- Interest in multi-disciplinary research approaches
- Evidence of initiative and persistence
- Publications would be a plus

Contact /Further Information

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<https://www.vetmeduni.ac.at/en/animal-welfare-science/>

Minimum salary

The minimum salary for university staff is regulated by the collective contract and at the level given above amounts to EUR 2.196,80 gross per month (14 times/year)). The minimum salary may be increased when previous employment and other salary components are taken into account.

Applications

Please submit applications quoting the **reference number 2020/0704** via e-mail (preferably) to bewerbungen@vetmeduni.ac.at or by post to the Personnel Department of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinärplatz 1, 1210 Vienna. Please do not forget to include the reference number or we shall be unable to relate your application to the correct vacancy announcement.

The Vetmeduni Vienna is attempting to increase the proportion of female staff, particularly in senior positions, and in accordance with § 41 of the 2002 Universities Act it is striving to attain a balanced representation of men and women, especially on its scientific staff. Applications from qualified women are thus particularly welcomed. If women are underrepresented (below 50%), female applicants who are as well qualified as the best qualified male applicants will be given preference, provided that there are no strong reasons for favouring a particular male candidate.

Applicants have no entitlement to reimbursement of any travel or accommodation costs they may incur as a result of the application procedure.

The Vetmeduni Vienna is proud to have been awarded the certificate “*hochschuleundfamilie*” (career and family). We should thus be especially pleased to receive applications from people with families. Applications from persons with disabilities are similarly welcome.