MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES

At the Max Planck Institute for Multidisciplinary Sciences, we bridge the gap between basic research and translational, preclinical approaches. Here, researchers from the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, and medicine collaborate across disciplines, supported by high-performance service facilities and a modern research infrastructure. As the largest institute of the Max Planck Society with around 1,000 employees from over 66 nations, we offer an inspiring, international working environment with exceptional scientific breadth.

The research group *Ubiquitin Signaling Specificity* (Dr. Sonja Lorenz) invites applications for the position as

PhD student or Postdoc (f/m/d)

– Understanding and manipulating ubiquitin ligase specificities –

Our laboratory aims to understand how the posttranslational modifier ubiquitin coordinates eukaryotic physiology. A major key lies in the action of ubiquitin ligases that recruit specific substrates for ubiquitination and determine the ubiquitin signals they are decorated with. The immense potential of ubiquitin ligases for therapeutic applications has been illustrated by the clinical efficacy of immunomodulatory drugs in the treatment of hematological malignancies and recent advances with PROTACs and molecular glues. However, efficient targeting of ubiquitin ligases in the clinic is still limited by our insufficient understanding of their structural mechanisms and integration into cellular pathways.

We offer a PhD or Postdoc position to explore one of the following research directions: (i) The mechanism, specificity, and consequences of cellular small-molecule ubiquitination, building on our recent discovery that drug-like compounds are selectively ubiquitinated by human HUWE1 (doi: 10.1038/s41467-025-63442-x). (ii) The structural mechanism and biological functions of TKUL, a dual functional kinase-ligase we identified as a novel virulence factor in *Leishmania* (doi: 10.1016/j.molcel.2025.09.002) (iii) Structural analyses of localization-dependent ubiquitination, combining cell-based analyses with cryo-EM/cryo-ET.

PhD candidates should hold/soon expect a MSc or equivalent degree in a relevant area of the life sciences. Initial experience in *one or more* of the following techniques is desired: protein biochemistry, mammalian cell biology, or any aspect of structural biology.

Postdoc candidates should hold/soon expect a PhD or equivalent degree in a relevant area of the life sciences. A strong published track record in one of the following techniques is desired: cryo-EM, cryo-ET or mammalian cell biology + high-resolution imaging.

The successful candidates for either position should be curiosity-driven, creative, and passionate about science. A high degree of self-motivation and independence is important, as well as the ability to communicate well within an international, multidisciplinary team.

What we offer

- A stimulating and collaborative international research environment
- Professional development opportunities, skills training, and the Max Planck Society's online training academy
- Support for balancing work and family life, including on-campus childcare
- Corporate health management, fitness and sports programs
- On-site cafeteria offering warm meals and a salad bar
- Sustainability initiatives and a nature-oriented campus environment, including a biotope

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About us

Based at one of Germany's premier research campuses, our research group has access to leading-edge infrastructure in all areas of cell and structural biology, including cryo-EM and super resolution imaging. We are an ambitious international team with English as a working language; knowledge of German is not required. The historic city of Göttingen, located in the center of Germany, offers great outdoor and cultural opportunities, a vibrant student scene, and an impressive scientific heritage.

Position details

The positions should be filled as soon as possible; the exact start date is flexible. PhD students will be funded for three years (with a possibility of extension) and have the opportunity to enroll in one of several joint PhD programs with the University of Göttingen. Fast-track MSc/PhD students are also welcome to apply. Postdoc positions are initially funded for two years with a possibility of extension. Remuneration is based on the TVöD Bund (German federal civil service pay scale), depending on qualifications and professional experience. In addition, public sector social benefits apply.

We are committed to being a cosmopolitan institute that offers a diverse and inclusive working environment with equal opportunities. We also aim to increase the number of employees with disabilities. We welcome applications from all backgrounds.

Application

Please submit your application including a cover letter (explaining background and motivation), CV, academic transcripts, publication list, and the contact addresses of two references preferably *as a single PDF file* to the email address below. Review of applications will begin immediately.

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Zertifikat seit 2006
audit berufundfamilie

Information pursuant to Article 13 DS-GVO on the collection and processing of personal data during the application process can be found on our website below the respective job advertisement.