

3 PhD positions to study cooperation in common marmosets and vervet monkeys, starting date 01.04.2021

The positions are linked to a collaboration between Carel van Schaik, Judith Burkart (both University of Zurich) and Redouan Bshary (University of Neuchâtel). One position is financed by the University of Neuchâtel, the other two by a 4-year grant from the Swiss Science Foundation, which also covers all field and lab work. The title of the grant is “Acts of Assistance: Solving the riddle of stable cooperation among non-relatives in nonhuman primates”. The aim is to test experimentally ‘shared stake models’ and ‘competitive altruism models’ on two monkey species with rather different social systems. The first thesis will focus on wild and captive marmosets (based in Zurich), the second on wild vervet monkeys, and the third one will link social behavior and physiological correlates in both species (latter two based in Neuchâtel).

We seek highly motivated team players who are interested in proximate and ultimate aspects of cooperation. Applicants need a master degree in Biology, Psychology or equivalent. Other criteria for our choices will be a candidate’s knowledge of animal behavior, previous field research experience, publication record, and (for the 3rd position) skills in physiology.

The application needs to contain copies of certificates, a full CV, the names of 3 potential referees (no need for reference letters at this stage!), and a letter of motivation (2 pages max) that should include your view on animal cooperation. You can specify a preference for one of the three PhD topics but this point will be largely clarified during interviews.

Time line: please submit your application until 7.12.2020 to Carel van Schaik vschaik@aim.uzh.ch. We will inform candidates before Christmas, and conduct online interviews in the second half of January. The project will start in April, 2021. If you have any questions please contact Carel van Schaik, Judith Burkart judith.burkart@aim.uzh.ch, or Redouan Bshary redouan.bshary@unine.ch.