
WasserCluster Lunz – Biological Station GmbH invites applications for a

PhD fellowship in freshwater ecology and limnology (f/m/d)

Working place: WasserCluster Lunz – Biological Station GmbH, 3293 Lunz am See, Austria;
www.wcl.ac.at

Employment level: 30 hours per week

Duration: 4 years (expected to start between June and October 2026)

Gross monthly salary (payable 14 times per year): EUR 2,832.10

Additional project budget for material and travel costs: EUR 35,000.00

WasserCluster Lunz - Biological Station GmbH (WCL) invites applications for a fully funded PhD fellowship in aquatic ecology/limnology. Located at Lake Lunz (150 km from Vienna), WCL is an internationally recognized inter-university research center dedicated to fundamental and applied research on aquatic ecosystems. Research spans from molecular and microbial processes to ecosystem and catchment-scale dynamics, combining laboratory experiments, field studies, and modelling approaches.

WCL provides a vibrant and highly interactive research environment with an international community of researchers and students. Strong interdisciplinary collaboration fosters scientific exchange, innovation, and training of early-career scientists. WCL is equipped with modern analytical, biochemical and molecular laboratories, and several in- and outdoor experimental facilities, enabling cutting-edge research under controlled and natural conditions (<https://wcl.ac.at/en/research/experimental-facilities>).

The following **five research groups** collaborate closely (<https://wcl.ac.at/en/people>):

- TRIDENT focuses on applied biodiversity research and molecular ecology of aquatic ecosystems.
- FLUVICHEM focuses on nutrient spiraling from biofilm to stream scale, the resistance and resilience of biofilm processes to global change, and participatory environmental research.
- SCIFISH investigates fish ecology, invasion biology, and eco-evolutionary dynamics.
- CARBOCROBE addresses the carbon cycle and microbial ecology in freshwater systems, linking microbial processes to ecosystem-level carbon dynamics.
- LIPTOX investigates food webs, trophic dynamics of lipids and stable isotopes, and ecotoxicology of aquatic ecosystems.

Description of the position:

We seek an excellent, highly motivated candidate whose research will create new synergies between the research groups at WCL. Applicants are expected to propose an **innovative PhD-project that bridges at least two research groups and aligns with WCL's core research areas**. The successful candidate should demonstrate scientific ambition, conceptual clarity, and feasibility of the proposed work. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the group leaders in advance to discuss their PhD-project ideas.

Requirements for the position:

Applicants must hold a post-graduate qualification (i.e., MSc degree or equivalent) in a relevant natural science discipline (e.g., biology, ecology), or provide proof that this requirement will be fulfilled by the start of the fellowship.

In addition, applicants must provide:

- excellent written and spoken communication skills in English
- the ability to work both independently and as part of a team

The following qualifications are considered advantageous:

- written and spoken communication skills in German
- experience in statistical analysis and script-based data analysis software
- experience with laboratory analyses and/or field-based ecological methods relevant to the proposed research project

Candidates who meet the required profile are encouraged to apply. WasserCluster Lunz recognizes the high innovation potential of a diverse workforce and is committed to gender equality and diversity as a guiding principle.

Fellowship applications must include (in a single pdf file):

- Letter of interest (max 1 page)
- CV including two professional references (max 3 pages)
- Project expose (max 4 pages) including:
 - State of art
 - Main research questions & significance of your planned research for WCL and the cooperation between at least two research groups
 - Research methods
 - Time and work schedule (including Gantt chart)
 - Contingency plan

Applications (compiled in one single pdf document) can be submitted by email until **15th May 2026** to: office@wcl.ac.at