



Dr. Roman M. Wittig

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Research Assistant for the Taï Chimpanzee Project (TCP)

We are looking for a research assistant (RA) to conduct data collection on behavior and recordings of vocal communication of the wild chimpanzees in the Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire. This data collection will be part of the long-term data of TCP. TCP is a long-term research project conducting research on many aspects of chimpanzee biology and conservation (www.taichimproject.org).

The research assistant will be trained at the Institute for Cognitive Sciences (ISC) in Lyon, France, on the data collection methods needed for the research with the chimpanzees by a PhD student who will use the data afterwards. After the initial training of one week, the research assistant will be moving to Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa. The RA will be responsible for data collection in one or two habituated groups of chimpanzees, following the chimpanzees from nest to nest and conducting focal animal sampling on the behavior observed and recording calls. The research assistant will also collect fecal and urine samples, demographic and food information. The RA is locally supervised by the PhD student and the TCP project manager and remotely by a team of experts.

The research assistant should have a Master in Biology, Psychology or Anthropology with a strong interest in behavioural ecology / animal behavior / animal communication. Field experience with primates or social mammals is crucial and knowledge of behavioural data collection will be of advantage.

Living conditions are very basic. Internet connection is not reliably present. Living under remote and tropical conditions, living and working together with the same people whether one likes them or not, requires stress resilience, excellent social skills, and professionalism in the work. Working with the chimpanzees is also physically demanding, so excellent physical condition is conditional. The research assistant needs to speak English AND French, and needs to be able to work independently.

We offer an initial training of about 1 week (depending on existing knowledge and experience) in Lyon. Afterwards we expect a tenure of 12 months in the Taï National Park. The research assistant receives free accommodation and a compensation of 500 € per months for living expenses, insurances, etc. After the successful tenure we reimburse the international flights from Lyon to Abidjan and back as well as visa costs (to a max of 1000 €).



Institut des Sciences Cognitives Marc Jeannerod

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This project is a cooperation of the Institute for Cognitive Sciences (CNRS UMR 5229) in Lyon (F), the Helmholtz Institute for One Health in Greifswald (D) and the Evolution of Brain Connectivity Project at the Max Planck Institute EVA in Leipzig (D).

Please apply by sending a motivation letter, a CV (including your experience with behavioural data collection), and two references to taichimpanzeeproject@gmail.com

Start: As soon as possible (approx. Oct 2023). We will start to evaluate the applications as they come in and until the position is filled. Tenure 8-10 months.



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