

PhD Position in Analytical Chemistry / Conservation Science

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We are looking for a highly motivated PhD candidate to participate to a research project on the conservation of waterlogged wood at the interface of analytical chemistry, microbiology and art conservation.

This project focuses on innovative biological methods of extraction for the preservation of waterlogged wood. The research team will exploit the unique properties of some bacteria for anticipating the extraction of iron and sulfur compounds when wood is still wet. This would be the first time biotechnology is addressing the issue of salt precipitation and acidification on waterlogged wood. To this purpose, two different strategies will be adopted: 1) oxidation of sulfur species and 2) complexation of iron species.

The successful candidate will hold a University Master's degree in materials sciences, conservation science or chemistry. Experience in dealing with cultural heritage and/or microorganisms would be an advantage. The ideal applicant will have strong analytical abilities (including FTIR/Raman microscopy, XRD, SEM-EDS, XRF and Synchrotron XAS) focused on solving technical/organizational issues and be able to manage short-term deadlines as well as to develop a long term development strategy.

In addition, he/she will be able to communicate results in a multidisciplinary and multicultural environment. In particular, the candidate will assist in teaching Bachelor students, in particular for the preparation and supervision of laboratory courses in chemistry. A good knowledge of English is required and French language proficiency would be an asset.

Funding is assured by the Swiss National Science Foundation for a maximum of four years. The PhD candidate will be based at the University of Neuchâtel, under the supervision of Edith Joseph. The PhD candidate will be registered at a doctorale programme from CUSO "Conférence universitaire de Suisse occidentale" of which the University of Neuchâtel is member.

The University of Neuchâtel is an equal opportunity employer. Please send your complete application including a letter of interest, curriculum vitae with a list of publications, copies of diplomas and work certificates, and the names and contact information of two references to Edith Joseph (edithjoseph@unine.ch).

Application deadline: July 31, 2016

Short-list selection: August 1-7, 2016

Phone interview: August 8, 2016

Final decision and communication of approval: August 9-10, 2016

PhD start: September 1, 2016.