



Open PhD position

We invite applications for a PhD position:

WETTEST – When an Exceptional Triassic climate change (CPE) Triggers plant Evolution in the (sub-) Tropics

Earth history is rich in examples of extreme climatic changes. The Carnian Pluvial Episode (CPE) ~234–232 Ma ago was one such event, which caused minor extinctions but major ecological changes, and initiated the evolution and radiation of modern plant families, including bennettitaleans, modern fern and conifer groups. In the SNF Joint project, various successions in the Dolomites, Julian and Carnic Alps, Switzerland and Northern Calcareous Alps will be investigated together with the Museum of Nature South Tyrol, Bozen/Bolzano, Italy. The multidisciplinary approach of the project includes revision of existing and newly collected plant macrofossils (Bozen/Bolzano) and high resolution qualitative and quantitative palynological studies (Zurich) of reference sections. The newly created data set will be used to analyze terrestrial ecosystem changes, patterns of plant evolution, radiation, and extinction in the tropical and subtropical belts of the northwestern Tethyan margin during the Carnian Pluvial Episode.

Research approaches include (1) sampling in the field, (2) lab work (using HCl, HF, and HNO₃) (3) extensive light microscopy for palynological analyses, (4) statistical evaluation and (5) writing of scientific papers, in close cooperation with the project partners especially with the researchers working on macro remains in Bozen/Bolzano.

Experience in soft rock geology and field work is desirable for the sampling part of this project. We search for a highly motivated candidate with a master degree in paleontology, geology or related topics, who will contribute to the ongoing success of our team. Other requirements are: proficiency in English, team work and social compatibility.

The salary is according to the guidelines of the Swiss National Science Foundation and University of Zurich, with funding guaranteed for 3 years.

Candidates are invited to send their letter of motivation, CV, contact details of two referees, and the abstract of their Master thesis in a single PDF document to elke.schneebeli@pim.uzh.ch

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Deadline for application: December 1st, 2023.