

## PhD Candidate in Theoretical Ecology

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Company: Universiteit van Amsterdam

Location: Amsterdam

Category: other-general

### What are you going to do

?

In this project, you will develop sex- and size-structured population models to study how plasticity in growth in body size during development affects the ecological consequences of sexual size dimorphism. You will use numerical continuation techniques and mathematical bifurcation analyses to analyse these models. While this is mainly a theoretical and computational research project, it is possible and highly encouraged to also carry out some experimental lab work at the University of Karlstad (Sweden) to test model predictions with an empirical fruit fly system.

As long as it fits in the general topic of this research position, you will have flexibility in choosing the questions you wish to investigate.

Possible questions that you may address for this project are:

How do changes in early life growth rate and the size at first reproduction affect population dynamics and species persistence in sexual size dimorphic species?

How does food availability and size-specific mortality shape sexual size dimorphism, and, vice versa, how do differences in size between the sexes affect the feedback on food availability and population dynamics?

What is the effect of resource segregation between the sexes or between life-stages on the ecological dynamics of sexual dimorphic populations?

How is sexual size dimorphism shaped by evolution, resource availability, and developmental

plasticity?

### **Tasks and responsibilities:**

Complete and defend a PhD thesis within the official appointment duration of four year;

Develop and analyse size- and sex-structured population models;

Contribute to the design and (possibly) execution of experiments to test model predictions;

Discuss your work in our group meetings, incorporate feedback, and give input to others;

Assist in teaching activities and in supervising bachelor and master students.

### **What do you have to offer?**

You have strong analytical and critical thinking abilities, you are enthusiastic and self-motivated when it comes to learning new skills or exploring new topics, and you have good communication skills.

### **Your experience and profile**

Completed or soon-to-be completed MSc in the biological sciences or different fields in the natural sciences (e.g., computational, mathematical, earth sciences) with an interest in ecology;

Experience with mathematical modelling, and an ability to learn new concepts and (computational) methods as needed;

Affinity with scientific computer programming (e.g., R, Matlab, Python);

Proficient communication skills in spoken and written English.

Writing experience and experience with bifurcation analysis is considered a plus.

### **Our offer**

A PhD position with a temporary contract for 38 hours per week for the duration of 4 years (the initial contract will be for a period of 18 months and after satisfactory evaluation it will be extended for a total duration of 4 years). This should lead to a dissertation (PhD thesis).

We will draft an educational plan that includes attendance of courses and (international) meetings. We also expect you to assist in teaching undergraduates and master students. The preferred starting date is as soon as possible.

The gross monthly salary, based on 38 hours per week and dependent on relevant experience, ranges between € 2,- and € 3,-. This does not include 8% holiday allowance

and 8,3% year-end allowance. The UFO profile PhD Candidate is applicable. A favourable tax agreement, the '30% ruling', may apply to non-Dutch applicants. The Collective Labour Agreement of Universities of the Netherlands is applicable.

Besides the salary and a vibrant and challenging environment at Science Park we offer you multiple fringe benefits:

holiday hours per year (based on fulltime) and extra holidays between Christmas and 1 January;

multiple courses to follow from our Teaching and Learning Centre;

a complete educational program for PhD students;

multiple courses on topics such as time management, handling stress and an online learning platform with + different courses;

Pre-maternity and maternity leave (16 weeks in total), with % salary;

7 weeks birth leave (partner leave) with % salary;

partly paid parental leave;

the possibility to set up a workplace at home;

a pension at ABP for which UvA pays two third part of the contribution;

the possibility to follow courses to learn Dutch;

help with your registration at UvA Staff Housing (application for a studio or small apartment when you're moving from abroad).

Are you curious to read more about our extensive package of secondary employment benefits, take a look here.

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