

The Department of Soil Biology (Institute of Soil Science and Land Evaluation) at the University of Hohenheim in Stuttgart (Germany) invites applications for a

PhD position on

EcoFuture KAP4- Developing a multi-component fertilizer for future ecological farming

The candidate will work within the Soil Biology Group and in collaboration with the University of Tübingen (Geo-Biosphere Interactions, Hydrogeochemistry) and the Steinbeis-Innovation gGmbH. The successful applicant will investigate the effects of a newly developed multi-component fertilizer on nutrient and carbon dynamics in agricultural soils. The fertilizer consists of nutrient-rich labile components in combination with more stable components and nutrient mobilizing fungal strains. It aims at closing nutrient cycles and sequestering C while improving soil biodiversity and keeping the yield gap of ecological farming as small as possible. The fertilizer will be characterized and tested in a controlled lab-experiment as well as in field experiments at three farms covering a broad range of agricultural landscapes in Baden-Württemberg, southern Germany. The applicant will apply biochemical as well as isotopic methods for the assessment of nutrient and C fluxes and pools in the soil-plant system.

Position requirements

- A very good Master's degree (or equivalent) in biology, ecology, agricultural sciences or a related field.
- A strong interest in developing innovative and sustainable agricultural food production systems.
- Experience of independently organising ecological experiments and/or field studies
- Good knowledge of statistical data analysis (preferably using R software).
- A driving licence (class B, passenger car) for field work
- Good written and oral communication skills in English. Basic German language skills are required for communication with local landowners and stakeholders.
- Ambition to publish in international scientific journals

Benefits

We offer a PhD opportunity in a topical research area of high societal relevance. Using a broad methodological spectrum and interdisciplinary approaches, the soil biology group aims to better understand matter fluxes and functional diversity of soil organisms in a changing environment. The University of Hohenheim is located on a beautiful campus in the southern German city of Stuttgart, which offers a rich cultural life and attractive surroundings.

The preferred starting date for the position is **1st April 2026**. Funding is guaranteed for 36 months. Salary and benefits are based on a German public service position (TV-L E13, 65%, for further information see <http://oeffentlicher-dienst.info/tv-l/west>). The University of Hohenheim seeks to increase the proportion of women in research and strongly encourages women to apply. Given equal qualifications, preference will be given to candidates with disabilities. The place of employment is Stuttgart/Germany.

Application

Applications and inquiries should be sent before **15th February 2025** via e-mail to Christian Poll: Christian.poll@uni-hohenheim.de

Please submit your application as a single PDF file. This file should contain a cover letter describing your motivation to apply, a CV including relevant certificates and contact details of 2 potential referees.