**3 PhD Positions in Language Evolution**

With the launch of a new ‘NCCR Evolving Language’, which involves nearly 40 different research groups from a large variety of disciplines across Switzerland, we seek to fill three PhD positions (4 years).

Our goal is to make progress in how human and non-human primates learn to communicate (WP EarlySurround). To this end, we plan to carry out a set of studies, such as how acoustic structures are acquired and how sound-meaning linkages are established, especially by focusing on the impact of exposure to dyadic and triadic social interactions.

The entire project will encompass research with chimpanzee, bonobo and human infants in their natural surroundings. The three successful PhD students will become part of a large interdisciplinary team of scientists tackling the topic of language evolution. Although each project will have a responsible PI, research supervision of this work package will be done collectively by Profs Sabine Stoll (Uni Zurich), Simon Townsend (Uni Zurich), Carel van Schaik (Uni Zurich) and Klaus Zuberbühler (Uni Neuchatel).

Research with chimpanzees (PhD1) and bonobos (PhD2) will be conducted at the Budongo Conservation Field Station (Uganda) and at the Kokolopori Research Station (DRC), respectively. We will use observational and experimental approaches to understand the impact of social factors on call acquisition and comprehension. Successful candidates will have a strong academic background in a relevant discipline, such as zoology, anthropology, psycholinguistics or psychology, ideally with prior field experience. The bonobo research project will be conducted in collaboration with Prof Martin Surbeck, Harvard University. Both projects will require a strong commitment to working under difficult field conditions for a total period of around 24 months.

The successful candidate for research with human infants (PhD3) will join the ACQDIV group at the Department of Comparative Language Science (<https://www.acqdiv.uzh.ch/en.html>) where he/she will become part of a team of linguists and computational scientists working on maximally diverse languages. The main task will be to build a large cross-sectional corpus of the Shipibo language, spoken in the Peruvian Amazon, in collaboration with local and international colleagues. Data will be collected in the Peruvian Amazon and analysed at the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Language Evolution (ISLE) of the University of Zurich, Switzerland. The successful candidate will have an MA in linguistics (typology, language acquisition and/or quantitative methods), a strong  interest in corpus linguistics, a solid background in statistics and in at least one scripting language (e.g., R, Python), and ideally fieldwork experience.

We aim to generate a work programme that maximally fits the candidates’ own interest -- within the limits of the project’s goals – so we will look for evidence of personal initiative, independent work ethics, and a strong interest in theory. Successful candidates should have excellent teamwork skills and be interested to go beyond disciplinary boundaries.

For consideration, please compile the following documents into a single PDF labelled ‘**WP EarlySurround-**YourSurname.pdf’ and send to f[abienne.leuenberger@uzh.ch](mailto:fabienne.leuenberger@uzh.ch): cover letter (qualifications, PhD position(s) of interest, 1 page max); curriculum vitae; contacts of two referees; writing sample (2 pages max). The NCCR places great emphasis on gender balance; we particularly encourage women to apply.

The positions are available until filled (deadline **3 April 2020)**. For questions about PhD1 contact [klaus.zuberbuehler@unine.ch](mailto:klaus.zuberbuehler@unine.ch); for PhD2 [simonwilliam.townsend@uzh.ch](mailto:simonwilliam.townsend@uzh.ch); for PhD3 [sabine.stoll@uzh.ch](mailto:sabine.stoll@uzh.ch)