

The “Geomicrobiology and Symbiosis” research group in the Courant Research Centre (CRC) for Geobiology, University of Goettingen, Germany, invites applications for a **postdoctoral position** to study **the ecology and evolution of gut symbioses in groundwater amphipods**.

*Niphargus* is a diverse genus of primarily subterranean amphipods distributed across most of Europe, and some species live in sulfidic caves, such as Frasassi caves (Italy) and Movile cave (Romania). Unlike most subterranean ecosystems that are fed by aboveground photosynthetic input, Frasassi and Movile caves are supported by chemoautotrophic microbial productivity. Three *Niphargus* species are found in Frasassi (Flot et al., *BMC Evolutionary Biology* 2010, **10**:171), and preliminary analyses suggest that they all harbor gut symbionts, some of which are closely related to gut microbes of shrimps living at sulfidic deep-sea hydrothermal vents! The postdoctoral project will examine the ecology and evolution of *Niphargus* gut symbionts, using samples collected from Frasassi and other sulfidic and non-sulfidic groundwaters across Europe. Topics such as (but not limited to) the potential role of gut symbionts in invasion of sulfidic ecosystems, and possible host-symbiont co-evolution will be addressed.

Goettingen is a quaint German university town with an international student-based community. The CRC Geobiology, funded through the German Excellence Initiative, offers state-of-the-art facilities and an excellent environment for interdisciplinary research. The successful candidate will join a small but growing group (<http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/102704.html>) established in August 2008.

A PhD degree in Biology, a strong background in molecular biology and phylogenetic analyses, and fluency in English are required. Previous fieldwork experience is desired. The position is funded through the German Excellence Initiative, and salary is based on the German TVL-13 scale. Initially, a **one-year contract** starting on **March 1, 2012** will be offered. Based on satisfactory performance of the selected candidate, the contract may be extended until **July 31, 2014**. The University of Goettingen is an equal opportunities employer and places particular emphasis on fostering career opportunities for women. Qualified women are therefore strongly encouraged to apply as they are underrepresented in this field. Disabled persons with equivalent aptitude will be favored.

Applications should be sent to Dr. Sharmishtha Dattagupta ([sdattag@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:sdattag@uni-goettingen.de)) by **November 31, 2011**, and include a curriculum vita, copies of one or two recent publications, a statement of research interest (or letter of motivation), and contact information of **two** referees. Informal inquiries are welcome.