

The Chair for Agricultural and Food Market Research (Prof. Dr. Monika Hartmann), Institute for Food and Resource Economics, Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Bonn offers a

## **PhD position (100% E 13 TV-L)**

with starting date as soon as possible.

The position is integrated in the MiRa project, an International Training Network (ITN) funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement.

**The Innovative Training Networks (ITNs)** aim to raise excellence to train creative, entrepreneurial and innovative early-stage researchers (ESR). It offers doctoral training in Europe, extending the traditional academic research training setting, incorporating elements of Open Science and equipping researchers with the right combination of research-related and transferable competences. It will provide enhanced career perspectives in both the academic and non-academic sectors through international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility combined with an innovation-oriented mindset.

**The MiRA project** focusses on beneficial microorganisms in their root zone of plants, some of which can enhance the plants' resistance to insect pests. Thus, *the use of Microbe-induced Resistance (MiR) to reduce pest losses in agriculture has emerged as a promising possibility to improve crop resilience and reduce use of harmful pesticides.*

**The offered PhD position** will contribute to the overall project by analysing the **economic impacts and acceptance of the MiR technology**. The aim of the research is twofold: (1) To assess consumers' awareness, attitudes and acceptance of the use of soil microbes for pest suppression and to identify whether and to what extent consumers are able to differentiate this type of biotechnology from others (e.g. GMOs). (2) To assess farmers' awareness with respect to soil microbes for pest suppression and to evaluate the impact of information on farmers' perception of main benefits and obstacles as well as their attitudes and willingness to make use of it. The results of the project will contribute to adjust theories and to develop methods to evaluate farmers' and consumers' acceptance regarding the use of resistance-inducing microbial products and methods in European agriculture. Moreover, it will help to understand consumers' and farmer's acceptance and derive recommendations to support the dissemination of this new technology.

The holder of the position will **take part in the overall training program of the MiRA project** to deepen his or her understanding on context-dependency of MiR, mechanisms, impacts on plant performance and other biocontrol organisms as well as on relevant research methods, and constraints for MiR development and use. He or she works with a consortium of academic institutions and companies, including microbial inoculant

producers and agricultural advisors.

#### **Planned secondments:**

- CASI (Cooperativa Agricola San Isidro), Spain: Economy of tomato pest losses and management (2 months)
- SA (Scottish Agronomy), United Kingdom: Economy of potato pest losses and management (2 months)
- INOQ (Inoculation, Innovation, Quality), Germany: Economy of Micro induced resistant-inoculants (2 months)

#### **What we offer:**

- Excellent training in an EU program for early stage researchers with the highest reputation
- A stimulating research environment with an open and constructive working atmosphere and the resources needed for high quality research in our department
- Collaboration within a group specialised in industry, consumer and sustainability research with a focus on the agricultural and food sector
- International research collaboration with leading scholars in the field
- Opportunity to present at international conferences

#### **What we expect:**

##### **The key tasks as a PhD student in MiRA are:**

- Participate in the research environment at the Department of Agricultural and Food Market Research and the network activities of MiRA
- Manage and carry through your research project: **Multi-Stakeholder acceptance** of using beneficial soil microbes for crop yield and pest suppression in tomato and potato cultivation in Europe
- Take PhD courses
- Write scientific articles and your PhD thesis
- Participate in congresses
- Teach and disseminate your research

##### **Key criteria for the assessment of candidates**

- A master's degree in either **agricultural/food economics**, or a master's degree in economics or psychology **and** a bachelor's degree in agricultural/food economics, agricultural science or natural science.
- The grade point average achieved in your master
- Professional qualifications relevant to the PhD program
  - **Primary skills: Experience in qualitative and quantitative research with respect to the acceptance of products or technologies**
  - **Relevant skills: economics, behavioural economics**
- Previous research publications
- Other professional activities
- Language skills: English and German or willingness to learn German to the extend necessary to do interviews in Germany

##### **Formal requirements and eligibility**

At the time of commencement, it is required that the candidates have not been awarded a doctorate degree and are within the first 4 years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers. **Furthermore, the candidate must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Germany for more than 12 months in the 3 years**

**immediately prior to their recruitment.** Short stays, such as holidays, are not taken into account. The candidate is required to spend part of their project period at other institutions in the MiRA consortium on secondments.

### **Place of Employment**

Department of Agricultural Chair of Food and Market Research, University Bonn

Please notice that this PhD fellowship entails secondments, see above.

### **Application Procedure**

The application, in English, must be submitted electronically to [mafo@ilr.uni-bonn.de](mailto:mafo@ilr.uni-bonn.de)

### **Please include**

- Cover Letter, stating your motivation and background for applying for the specific PhD project.
- Max 1-page proposal for research activities to pursue in the PhD study program
- CV
- Diploma and transcripts of records (BSc and MSc)
- 1-3 professional referees (Name, address, telephone & email)
- Documentation of English language qualifications
- Other information for consideration, e.g. list of publications (if any)

The University Bonn wishes our staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background.

By the end of August 2018 all applicants will have received information regarding the evaluation of their application.

The deadline for applications is 15.07.2018. Applications received later than this date will not be considered. After the expiry of the deadline for applications, the authorized recruitment manager selects applicants for assessment on the advice of the Interview Committee.