Freie Universität Berlin

Who We Are The research group of Prof. Dr. Stephan J. Sigrist at the Institute of Biology, Freie Universität Berlin, investigates the molecular and cellular basis of presynaptic function and plasticity. Within the ERC Advanced Grant project SynProtect, we study how active zones adapt their molecular organization to sleep loss, stress, and aging, and how these changes contribute to neuronal network stability and brain resilience. Our work combines Drosophila neurogenetics with functional imaging, super-resolution microscopy, electrophysiology, and quantitative behavioral analysis. The advertised position will primarily contribute to the third work package of SynProtect, which examines how presynaptic scaling changes synaptic transmission and the activity of defined neuronal circuits, thereby influencing sleep, memory, and organismal resilience. The group is embedded in Berlin's international neuroscience community and collaborates closely with national and international partners.

Research assistant (postdoc) (f/m/d) (DM-950)

Department: Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy contract duration: limited until 31.08.2028 Salary / pay grade: E 13 TV-L FU Working hours: 100 % Requisition ID: 950 Application deadline: 14.12.2026

City: Berlin; Starting date (earliest): At the earliest possible; Duration: limited until 31.08.2028; Remuneration: Salary / pay grade: E 13 TV-L FU; Reference number: 950; Closing date: 14/12/26

Tasks

What You Can Expect in Your New Role

You will investigate the functional consequences of presynaptic active-zone plasticity for neuronal activity, behavior, and organismal resilience. Using Drosophila, you will identify and manipulate defined neuronal populations involved in the regulation of sleep, memory, and stress resistance. You will perform functional in vivo imaging experiments and analyze how neuronal activity patterns change following sleep deprivation, during aging, or in response to targeted genetic manipulation of presynaptic plasticity. You will complement these experiments with quantitative behavioral analyses and relate the functional findings to molecular and structural changes at synapses. You will independently plan, document, and analyze your experiments, contribute your findings to joint project discussions, and participate in the preparation of scientific publications and presentations. The position also involves close collaboration within the ERC team and with national and international partners.

Requirements

Key Requirements

Applicants must hold a completed university degree (M.Sc. or diploma) and a completed PhD in biology, neuroscience, neurogenetics, or a related discipline.

Desirable

We welcome advanced expertise in Drosophila neurogenetics and experience with two-photon, calcium, or voltage imaging. Knowledge of confocal or super-resolution microscopy, synaptic biology, and neuronal plasticity would be advantageous. Further assets include experience with sleep, memory, or other neurobiological behavioral paradigms; molecular biology and immunohistochemistry; and quantitative image and data analysis using FIJI/ImageJ, MATLAB, or comparable software. We are looking for a colleague who works independently and systematically, enjoys concept-driven basic research, and is committed to collaboration in an international team. A record of scientific publications is desirable. Documented hands-on research experience with Drosophila melanogaster and experience in the functional analysis of neuronal activity or neuronal circuits are required. Applicants must also have practical experience with functional imaging methods and/or quantitative neurobiological behavioral analysis. Very good written and spoken English is required.

What we offer

Benefits and Other Advantages

- Modern workplace in the leafy suburb of Dahlem
- Salary in line with the collective agreement for the civil service at the state level (TV-L FU), plus additional one-off annual payment
- Flexible working hours and mobile working by arrangement, where possible
- The compatibility of work and family life
- Thirty days of vacation (based on a five-day working week)
- Numerous training and continuing education options for professional and personal development
- Opportunity to participate in University Sports Center courses and the health promotion program
- Free parking close to the office and good public transportation connections
- Discounted “Job Ticket” for public transportation
- Free use of the Freie Universität library system
- Employee discount in the cafeteria
- Exclusive deals for products and services through Corporate Benefits

Application

If you are interested in what we have to offer,

then you can send your application materials to us directly. Simply submit your application **exclusively** via our career portal by clicking the “Apply now” button. Unfortunately, we cannot consider applications by post or by e-mail.

You can also get in touch with Mr./Ms. Phd univ.-Prof. Stephan Sigrist (stephan.sigrist@fu-berlin.de).
Please note

Freie Universität Berlin is an equal opportunity employer.

Closing date: 14/12/26
Reference number: 950
Contact person: Dr. Stephan Sigrist

By internet: https://jobs.fu-berlin.de/job/Research-assistant-%28postdoc%29-%28fmd%29-%28DM-950%29/1458744133/

More information at https://stellenticket.de/208957/BUA/
Offer visible until 14/12/26