



EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



CSC-Tübingen PhD Scholarship Program

2026/2027 application round: prospective PhD positions at the University of Tübingen

Faculty:	Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
Institute / Section / Subject:	Vegetation Ecology, Institute of Evolution and Ecology, Department of Biology
Supervising Professor(s):	Prof. Dr. Katja Tielbörger; Dr. Andréa Davrinche
About the Supervisor(s):	Prof. Dr. Katja Tielbörger: see here Dr. Andréa Davrinche: see here; I am interested in how biodiversity change affects the functioning of ecosystems. I use niche-based approaches to understand how communities shift across time and space, and respond to environmental pressures. Practically, this involves using functional traits to identify winners and losers of change, and investigating how individual and species-level variability shapes species' responses, to ultimately define their contribution to ecosystem processes. Key interests: species interaction, functional ecology, Biodiversity - Ecosystem Functioning (BEF).
Specification/Project title:	Functional variation shapes ecological role and contribution of species within communities
Topic Description:	While we often describe patterns of biodiversity change, identifying the mechanisms that generate them remain challenging, in particular in an increasingly variable and fluctuating world. Species themselves vary, in their traits and responses to change, shaping species' roles and interactions, and ultimately, the patterns we observe. Building on niche-based approaches, this project will combine long-term observations and controlled experiments to link functional variation to species interactions, species' functional identity, and community structure. By connecting individual- and species-level processes to community patterns, we aim to better understand the mechanisms underlying biodiversity responses to environmental change, and their consequences for ecosystem functioning.
Intended Degree:	Dr. rer. nat.
Type of the PhD Study:	Full time

Required Degrees and

Qualifications:

We are looking for an enthusiastic, curious and rigorous candidate who is excited by questions dealing with biodiversity in plant communities, and familiar with general concepts in functional ecology. The candidate should have an interest for both theoretical (e.g., method development) and experimental work (e.g., experimental design and field/greenhouse data collection).

The successful applicant should have:

- a relevant MSc or equivalent qualification in ecology, biology, conservation biology, environmental science or other relevant field;
- experience with the writing of a thesis, independent project or equivalent research-based writing tasks;
- a keen interest for ecological research and the motivation to develop into an independent researcher;
- good written and spoken communication skills in English;
- willingness to integrate a working group and participate in the academic group life (e.g., seminars).

The following skills are advantageous:

- experience with functional trait data;
- familiarity with R for analysis and handling of ecological datasets;
- experience with contributing to scientific publications or reproducible analytical workflows.

Language Requirements:

Proof of proficient English language skills is required (i.e. comprehension of a wide range of demanding, longer texts as well as fluent and spontaneous expression allowing a flexible and effective language use for social, academic and professional purposes.) - TOEFL iBT 95, or IELTS 6.5, or equivalent.

Knowledge of German is useful, but not required.