

**From:** Mark van Kleunen  
**Subject:** PhD position in Konstanz, Germany, on root traits and plant functional diversity

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#### PhD position in plant ecology

We are seeking an excellent student for an ambitious PhD project on belowground functional traits of plants as drivers of biodiversity and ecosystem functions. The major objectives of this project are (1) to determine the contribution of belowground root-trait diversity to ecosystem functioning, and (2) to assess the contribution of functional root traits to global and regional commonness and local abundance of plant species. We plan to do this by assessing root traits for a large number of central European grassland species, and relate them to measures of species commonness and abundance and ecosystem functions as measured in the Biodiversity Exploratories ([https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A\\_\\_www.biodiversity-2D&d=CwIF-g&c=Ngd-ta5yRysqeUsEDgxhcqsYYY1Xs5ogLxWPA\\_2Wlc4&r=e2OJ1azRFn8ihJzh2HxZT0AqoiqLvxfeeATyN59ZLoL&m=xMROZQfxXog2YEIJAWNl9p\\_msyPpS7dW6ycrsWeRIU&s=sorGj20DWuSWd2oz8dDakpirUBV-2cW0nkMbvhlY8U&e=exploratories.de/1/home/](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.biodiversity-2D&d=CwIF-g&c=Ngd-ta5yRysqeUsEDgxhcqsYYY1Xs5ogLxWPA_2Wlc4&r=e2OJ1azRFn8ihJzh2HxZT0AqoiqLvxfeeATyN59ZLoL&m=xMROZQfxXog2YEIJAWNl9p_msyPpS7dW6ycrsWeRIU&s=sorGj20DWuSWd2oz8dDakpirUBV-2cW0nkMbvhlY8U&e=exploratories.de/1/home/)). This project will be done in collaboration with PD Dr Judy Simon at the University of Konstanz, and Prof. Matthias Rillig and a PhD student in his group at the Free University of Berlin. Our project will include large greenhouse experiments, in which we will use imaging software to measure root morphological traits, stable-isotope feeding experiment to measure nutrient uptake efficiencies and microscopy to measure mycorrhization. Advanced statistical analyses will be applied to address the research objectives mentioned above. The successful candidate should have an interest in plant ecology, and particularly in plant functional diversity. She or he should have strong writing and statistical skills. The position will be funded for three years (pending final confirmation by the DFG), and the salary will be at scale 13 TV-L (65%). The position should start in March or April 2017. The University of Konstanz is one of the Universities of Excellence in Germany. Konstanz has a beautiful historical center, is situated directly at the shore of Lake Constance, and is in close vicinity to the Alps. The Ecology Group ([mark.vankleunen@uni-konstanz.de](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__cms.uni-2Dkonstanz.de_vkleunen_&d=CwIF-g&c=Ngd-ta5yRysqeUsEDgxhcqsYYY1Xs5ogLxWPA_2Wlc4&r=e2OJ1azRFn8ihJzh2HxZT0AqoiqLvxfeeATyN59ZLoL&m=xMROZQfxXog2YEIJAWNl9p_msyPpS7dW6ycrsWeRIU&s=u5Zc_hsf2eb1-II3_NLuC2s4S-ZjXJVOi-AgWE6uX-8&e= ) is young and very international, and works on a wide range of topics, including among others mating system evolution, plant responses to global change and determinants of plant invasiveness. If you are interested in this position, send a PDF with the following contents to <a href=):

- a motivation letter (why do you want to do a PhD?, why this one?, why in this group?)
- your CV
- the contact details of two references
- a writing sample (e.g. a publication that you wrote, the abstract and introduction of your Master thesis)

Merge all these documents into a single PDF, and include your name in the file name (for example: `Smith_John_Application.pdf`). The application deadline is 15 January 2017. For more information, contact [mark.vankleunen@uni-konstanz.de](mailto:mark.vankleunen@uni-konstanz.de).