

Max-Planck-Institut für evolutionäre Anthropologie - Zentrales Bewerbermanagement



About MPI-EVA The Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology unites scientists with various backgrounds (natural sciences and humanities) whose aim is to investigate the history of humankind from an interdisciplinary perspective with the help of comparative analyses of genes, cultures, cognitive abilities, languages and social systems of past and present human populations as well as those of primates closely related to human beings. About DLCE The Department of Linguistic and Cultural Evolution aims to answer big picture questions about the evolution of language and culture. Our focus is on describing and explaining the major patterns of linguistic and cultural variation across the globe. We tackle these questions by developing novel language documentation methods, global linguistic and cultural databases, and analyses using evolutionary theories and computational methods.

Postdoctoral researcher (m/f/d) in the area of writing systems and language change

City: Leipzig; Starting Date: 01/04/25; Duration: 2 years; Renumeration: TvÖD; Reference number: FT-17-2024; Closing date: 10/01/25

Working field

The research project “The impact of writing systems on linguistic and numerical evolution” will investigate the impact of writing systems on the evolution of languages, specifically examining how the transition from purely oral to literate societies affects the rate and trajectory of linguistic change. By stabilizing certain features of language through orthographic representation, writing can potentially slow down phonological erosion and grammatical simplification, while fostering the preservation of archaic forms. In close collaboration with our exciting and interdisciplinary ERC synergy grant project QUANTA, one focus of the project will be on the evolution of numeral systems, investigating how the codification of numerals in writing may lead to the standardization of base systems and positional notation. Writing may also facilitate the development of more complex numerical structures, preserving innovations in number morphology and syntax that might otherwise undergo simplification in purely oral transmission.

Requirements

- A passion for science
- A PhD in Historical Linguistics or Computer Science
- Excellent statistical / computational skills with a knowledge of Python and/or R
- Familiarity with computational linguistics tools and frameworks
- Familiarity with the comparative method in historical linguistics
- Ability to work in interdisciplinary teams
- Proficiency in both spoken and written English

What We Offer

- Full-time position, starting in late spring of 2025, initially limited to two years
- Salary based on experience according to the German TVöD
- According to German labor laws, benefits include 30 days holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays and Christmas closure days as well as an attractive pension proposition
- An inspiring, international, interdisciplinary environment with leading domain scientists at our department and in various Max Planck Institutes and universities
- Space, freedom, support and resources to do all the things described above

Application

Please submit your application in English, including the following:

- Cover letter, explaining research experience and reason for interest in this project, along with a proposed research project (max. two pages).
- Your CV and copies of degree certificates (Bachelor's/Master's/PhD diplomas and transcripts)
- Names and contact information (including e-mail and phone) for 2-3 referees

Please apply online via our online application system (link via the job ad on our career website). Only complete submissions via this link will be taken into consideration. Deadline for applications is 10 January, 2025.

The Max Planck Society is committed to employing individuals with disabilities and especially encourages them to apply. Additionally, we seek to increase diversity of our workforce in areas where it is underrepresented and therefore explicitly encourage women and members of underrepresented groups to apply.

More information at <https://stellenticket.de/188882/>

Offer visible until 10/01/25

