

The Leibniz Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops (IGZ) strives for excellence in horticultural research and related plant, environmental, and social sciences. Based in Großbeeren, close to Potsdam and Berlin, IGZ is a member of the Leibniz Association (WGL). Our mission is to provide science-based solutions that address four challenges currently threatening horticultural systems: climate change, biodiversity and pesticide reduction, healthy nutrition and food quality, and resource-efficient agricultural and food systems. Our scientific expertise covers the entire spectrum, from molecular plant physiology and biochemistry to human nutrition, food security, and horticultural production systems, thereby covering the full range from fundamental to applied research.

The following position is to be filled at the institute at the earliest possible date, for a fixed term of three years, as part of the DFG funded project "A modular prion-like domain code for the activation of the heat shock factors in plants":

PhD student (f,m,div) in Plant Biology
Reference number: 09/2026/1

The salary will be based on qualification and research experience according to the wage agreement TV-L, up to pay scale 13, 65% of the regular working time. The conferral of a doctorate is possible at University of Potsdam.

The position is part of the research group Temperature Sensing in Plants in the programme area Plant Adaptation. The aim of the research project is to understand how intrinsically disordered regions (IDRs) and prion-like domains (PLDs) control the temperature responsiveness of the HSF transcription factors in *Arabidopsis thaliana*. The project builds on a recent paper showing how HSFs in Arabidopsis undergo liquid-liquid phase separation in response to temperature (Peng et al., (2025) Molecular Plant. Reference: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1674205225000280>

Tasks include

- cloning and construct creation
- experimental design
- plant growth and survival assays in response to heat stress
- protein biochemistry and purification
- plant physiological measurements
- molecular biological investigations (e.g., gene expression analyses)
- analysis and publication of results in international journals
- presentation of results at national and international meetings

We are looking for candidates with

- a university degree (Master's/Diploma) in biology, food chemistry, biochemistry, biosciences or a related subject area
- sound knowledge in the fields of plant stress signaling
- experience in cloning and plant biology
- knowledge in the role of temperature signaling in biology
- experience in the application of molecular biological methods
- experience in the statistical analysis of research results or willingness to acquire such experience
- very good knowledge of MS Office, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- good written and spoken English skills
- self-motivated, independent and responsible working style and high organisational skills
- ability to work in a team and willingness to integrate into an international working environment

We offer

- the opportunity to work on an interdisciplinary, cutting-edge research project
- a challenging position in plant science
- the opportunity to do a doctorate
- an inspiring and dynamic research environment with first-class laboratory facilities near Berlin and Potsdam
- a pleasant and appreciative working atmosphere flexible and family-friendly working time model and the possibility of mobile working (up to 50% of working time)
- subsidy for a company ticket for public transport or the Deutschlandticket (Germany ticket)

More information on about the IGZ you can find under www.igzev.de. For questions, please contact: Prof. Dr. Philip Wigge (+49 (0)33701 78 411; wigge@igzev.de).

We encourage a healthy work-life balance. The IGZ attaches great importance to equal opportunities. Applicants with disabilities will be given preference in case of equal qualifications. The IGZ embraces diversity in its workforce, and welcomes applications from all qualified candidates, irrespective of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, world view, disability and belief or ethnic origin.

Please send your complete application (stating the reference number and including a motivation letter, your CV, academic certificates (B.Sc./M.Sc.), and the names and addresses of two references incl. your earliest possible starting date) by email to bewerbung@igzev.de in pdf format by 05.07.2026.