

DC 4 | Engineering N-N bond forming enzymes for novel reactions

ORGANISATION

Since its founding in 1614, the **University of Groningen** has enjoyed an international reputation as a dynamic and innovative centre of higher education offering high-quality teaching and research. We encourage the 31,000 students and researchers to develop their own individual talents. Among the best research universities in Europe, we join forces with prestigious partner universities and networks around the world, the University of Groningen is truly an international place of knowledge. The position we offer will be embedded in the Groningen Research Institute of Pharmacy (GRIP) within the Department of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Biology (CBP, <https://www.rug.nl/research/grip/cpb/>). Researchers at GRIP strive to find new and innovative drugs and therapies and wish to improve the use of existing drugs. Bridging the gap between the fundamental natural sciences (such as chemistry and physics) and the medical/clinical sciences in the field of medicinal products is one of the core activities of the institute. The CPB Department is represented by an enthusiastic group of researchers from different parts of the world. The cell as producer and target for pharmaceuticals is the main part of the research at CBP.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main part of your PhD research (4 years in total) will be carried out at **the University of Groningen** (RUG, the Netherlands) under the supervision of **Assist. Prof. Dr. Sandy Schmidt** in the Department of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Biology at the Groningen Research Institute of Pharmacy. Within these four years, two academic research stays (in total 10 months) will take place at the **University of Graz** (UG, Austria) under the supervision of **Prof. Karl Gruber**, and at the **University of Zagreb** (UZAG, Croatia) under the supervision of **Prof. Zvezdana Findrik Blažević**. Additionally, an industrial secondment at the company **AstraZeneca** (Gothenburg, Sweden) is foreseen. The Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) – Doctoral Network (DN) project started in January 2023. The latest possible starting date of this position is December 1st 2023. Your **PhD degree** will be awarded based on successful completion of the research work from **University of Groningen** (RUG, the Netherlands). You will also be required to participate in the **training events and workshops** organized by the DN program. As a MSCA fellow, you are also expected to **contribute your time in the dissemination of your PhD project's results** through public engagement and other scientific platforms.

The PhD research will focus on:

- (i) Interdisciplinary project on biocatalysis, structural biology and chemistry
- (ii) Evaluation of substrate- and reaction scopes of novel nitrogen-nitrogen bond forming enzymes,
- (iii) Solving the crystal structures of relevant enzymes and elucidating reaction mechanism (1st academic secondment),
- (iv) Protein engineering and assay development,
- (v) Characterization studies and preparative-scale reactions (2nd academic secondment),
- (vi) Up-scaling of relevant reactions (industrial secondment).

Primary supervisor: Dr. Sandy Schmidt (s.schmidt@rug.nl, <http://schmidt-researchgroup.com>)

Recruiting institution: University of Groningen (the Netherlands)

QUALIFICATIONS

- An outstanding M.Sc. degree in Biological chemistry, Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Chemistry or related field
- Eligible as a graduate student at University of Groningen (the Netherlands),
- Research experience in molecular biology (molecular cloning, DNA/RNA extraction, PCR, gel electrophoresis), analytical methods (HPLC, GC, MS, NMR etc.), biochemistry (e.g. protein production and characterization) and microbiology (cultivation, induction of gene expression, knowledge of sterile working etc.),
- Ability to work in an international team,
- Inter- and multidisciplinary thinking,
- High motivation,
- An integrative and cooperative personality with excellent communication and social skills,
- Fluency in English – written and oral.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

We offer you in accordance with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities

- a salary of € 2,770 gross per month in the first year, up to a maximum of € 3,539 gross per month in the fourth and final year
- a holiday allowance of 8% gross annual income
- an 8.3% end-of-year bonus and participation in a pension scheme for employees
- first, a temporary position of one year with the option of renewal for another three years. Prolongation of the contract is contingent on sufficient progress in the first year to indicate that a successful completion of the PhD thesis within the next three years is to be expected. A PhD training programme is part of the agreement and the successful candidate will be enrolled in the Graduate School of Science and Engineering.

The 1.0 FTE appointment is temporary for a specified period of four years. **The latest possible starting date of this position is December 1st 2023.** The conditions of employment: <https://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/>.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply for the position, kindly provide:

- (i) A letter of motivation including a statement of your research interests, relevant skills and experience and an explanation for the choice of position(s);
- (ii) A CV including publication list (if applicable);
- (iii) Names and contact details of three referees willing to write confidential letters of recommendation;
- (iv) Copies of relevant diplomas including explanation of international grades.

Please upload applications only according to instructions at www.biodeccodinng.eu.

Address applications to: Dr. Sandy Schmidt

The University of Groningen strives to be a university in which students and staff are respected and feel at home, regardless of differences in background, experiences, perspectives, and identities. We believe that working on our core values of inclusion and equality are a joint responsibility and we are constructively working on creating a socially safe environment. Diversity among students and staff members enriches academic debate and contributes to the quality of our teaching and research. We therefore invite applicants from underrepresented groups in particular to apply. For more information, see also our diversity policy webpage: <https://www.rug.nl/iversity-and-inclusion/>. Our selection procedure follows the guidelines of the Recruitment code (NVP), <https://www.nvp-hrnetwerk.nl/sollicitatiecode/> and European Commission's European Code of Conduct for recruitment of researchers, <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code>.

Unsolicited marketing is not appreciated.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

You can apply for this position until September 30, 23:59 / before October 1, 2023 Dutch local time (CET) by sending your application documents by email to Dr. Sandy Schmidt (to s.schmidt@rug.nl).

MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS
Doctoral Networks (DN)



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