



MSc Thesis Opportunity: ‘Plant survival tactics: How do plants cope with global environmental change?’

Description: Phenotypic plasticity is a very important strategy for plants to survive and thrive in changing habitats. Two major environmental changes are rising temperatures and nitrogen pollution. While there is a basic understanding of the importance of phenotypic plasticity in the individual factors, we know little about the **trade-offs** between **temperature** and **nitrogen-availability**.

We study this in the context of the **Leaf Economic Spectrum (LES)**, a powerful method to describe plant strategies (e.g. how conservative or acquisitive plants grow) based on leaf phenotypes.

With your thesis, you will analyze the plasticity of LES by investigating functional leaf traits and additional interesting traits of *Arabidopsis thaliana* accessions along a nitrogen and temperature gradient. You will further explore the results in an eco-evolutionary and plant functional context.

Requirements:

- Master studies on Biology, Botany, or similar
- Fluent in English
- Flexible working times
- Interest in interdisciplinary concepts and topics

Tasks:

- Set-up and conduct experiments in climate cabinets
- Extensive phenotyping (above and below ground)
- Statistical analysis of functional plant biology and phenotypic plasticity

Start and Duration:

- Start September 2026 (flexible)
- 6 months

What we offer:

- Work in an international research setting
- Research on the intersection of ecological and molecular functional biology
- Participation in various events organized by a large Collaborative Research Centre

Are you interested or have questions? Contact:

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