

Postdoctoral Researcher in Long-Term Forest Biodiversity and Stability (2 years, 80-100%)



Our offices at Bern's Botanical Garden

The Forest Ecology Lab at the Institute of Plant Sciences, University of Bern, is looking for a postdoctoral researcher to join OpenRing, a SERI-supported ERC project investigating long-term forest biodiversity–stability relationships across Europe using large-scale tree-ring data. Our understanding of how biodiversity shapes stability largely comes from theory and short-term experiments, sometimes overlooking crucial processes for long-lived organisms: accumulating effects, extreme events, demographic shifts, and plasticity. All are fundamental to understanding forest's

environmental responses. Since 2024, OpenRing address this gap by building an integrated network of forest plots across Europe to investigate forest responses to climate change across scales and taxa.

You will contribute to the analytical core of the project, working with an exceptional database of thousands of sites across Europe, including c. 100 plots newly collected by the team across broad diversity and compositional gradients. You will help develop the statistical framework to quantify long-term diversity–stability relationships, accounting for the nested and unbalanced structure typical of long-term complex ecological data. You will lead the resulting publications and are encouraged to develop your own research questions, with strong support to apply for external fellowships (SNSF, NSF, MSCA) should you wish to build towards independence. You will work closely with the PI, technicians, and PhD and MSc students, with opportunities for mentoring and teaching, and to collaborate with our partners across Switzerland, Europe, and North America. The position is analysis-focused, though you are welcome to join our field campaigns across Europe.

-About you-

You hold (or will hold by the start date), a PhD in ecology, forest sciences, statistics, or a related field. Quantitative depth is a strong asset: statistical skills, fluency in R, and the ability to build models that fit messy, hierarchically structured ecological data. Experience with hierarchical/mixed-effects modelling and Bayesian approaches is an advantage, as are reproducible workflows, version control, and familiarity with dendrochronological methods. Scientific curiosity and enthusiasm matter to us as much as technique. A strong command of written and spoken English is required, as it is the group's working language.



-About us-

The Forest Ecology Lab, led by Prof. Rubén Manzanedo, was established in September 2024 and works across forest ecology, long-term population dynamics, and climate change impacts. We are a diverse, international, collaborative team committed to open and inclusive science (see what we are up to at <https://rdmanzanedo.github.io/>).

The position is based in Bern, with flexibility but the expectation of regular presence in the group. The University of Bern offers excellent working conditions and strong research infrastructure. Salary follows the University of Bern's standard scales, according to experience. Bern itself is a small city with a great quality of life, buzzing culture and easy access to the Alps, the Aare, and world-class hiking, skiing and many outdoor activities, as well as excellent transport connections to the rest of Europe.

We actively encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds, particularly from those underrepresented in ecology and academia. Our group is strongly committed to diverse science and a healthy academic culture. If this project excites you but you are unsure whether to apply, please get in touch, we would love to hear from you.



-To apply-

Send your application as a single PDF to ruben.manzanedo@unibe.ch. Applications should include a **full CV** and a **one-page cover letter** describing your motivation and the skills that make you the ideal candidate. In your CV, please provide contact details for two referees, whom we would contact if you are shortlisted. No letters of support or additional documents will be considered at this stage.

Review of applications will begin **15th October 2026** and continue until the position is filled. Expected start is between **January and March 2027**, negotiable. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for online or in-person interviews. For questions about the position, get in touch by email, we are happy to clarify or expand on any details.