The LuiKotale Bonobo Project (LKBP) offers one position for a field assistant to join an international team of senior researchers, PhD students, and research assistants at the LuiKotale field site in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Appointments are for 9-12 months. Candidates will contribute to the long-term data-base by collecting ranging, behavioral and ecological data. Duties include focal observations of individual bonobos; collection and processing of vegetation samples; reviewing camera trap footage; and transcribing and securing field data. Candidates will be trained by senior staff and PhD students and are expected to jointly work with assistants of different nationalities. Data are collected from focal individuals belonging to different habituated bonobo communities using a combination of hand-held Cyber tracker devices, Dictaphones, and long-hand notes.

The Luikotale research site is very remote. Access to the site is with small charter planes from Kinshasa and a subsequent hike of 25 km across dense and swampy forest. There is no running water, phone coverage or internet access. Electricity is limited to power supplied by solar panels. Daily communication is restricted to text-only emails transferred via the camp’s short wave radio. However, satellite phones are available in the event of an emergency. Assistants sleep in sheltered tents and mostly eat simple, local foods (e.g., beans, manioc and rice). Both French and English are spoken in the camp.

Field conditions are physically and mentally challenging; work hours can be very long, and assistants are sometimes exposed to severe weather and tropical diseases. Team members live in close proximity to one another and have to adjust to changes in the team composition**. Please carefully consider whether you will be able to cope with these conditions for an extended period of time before applying for this position**.

Candidates express an interest in animal behavior, behavioral ecology and/or anthropology. Previous tropical field experience and experience in navigating with a compass and GPS unit are assets, but not required. Due to the remoteness of the field site and its challenging physical and social environment, candidates must be (a) physically fit; (b) resistant to mental stress; (c) self-motivated and able to work with minimal supervision while out in the field; and (d) tolerant to different social customs and beliefs. Candidates will share resources with other team members, which requires social and communication skills. The ability to work in a team is essential. **Note that the LKBP adheres strictly to gender equality and will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment.**

Candidates will need a health insurance covering expenses in case of a health emergency evacuation by charter plane. Expenses for the initial entrance visa to DRC, the health insurance, and the costs for the stay in Kinshasa, will not be reimbursed. The project will cover costs for the long-term visa in DRC, the domestic return flight upfront, and a contribution of up to 800 Euro to the international return ticket **after successful completion of the appointment.**

Salary: 300 Euro/month for the initial three months of training; 500 Euro thereafter

Term of appointment: 9-12 months, starting in February 2022

Comments:

Applications include an updated CV, a letter of motivation that shows how the candidate meets the qualifications outlined above, references of three people (or their contact information). Applications should go to Dr. Gottfried Hohmann ([hohmann@eva.mpg.de](mailto:hohmann@eva.mpg.de)) and Dr. Barbara Fruth ([bfruth@ab.mpg.de](mailto:bfruth@ab.mpg.de))

Information about the research and conservation activities at LuiKotale is available at

<https://www.eva.mpg.de/primat/research-groups/bonobos/luikotale-study-site.html>

https://www.eva.mpg.de/ecology/staff/fruth.html#c20572

https://www.bonobo-alive.org/index.html