Leibniz-Institut für Astrophysik Potsdam

The Leibniz Institute for Astrophysics Potsdam (AIP) is dedicated to astrophysical questions ranging from the study of our sun to the evolution of the cosmos. Its research focuses on cosmic magnetic fields and extragalactic astrophysics, as well as the development of research technologies in the fields of spectroscopy, robotic telescopes and e-science. The AIP carries out its research mission within the framework of numerous national, European and international collaborations. The institute is the successor to the Berlin Observatory, founded in 1700, and the Potsdam Astrophysical Observatory, founded in 1874, which was the first institute in the world to devote itself exclusively to astrophysics. The AIP has been a member of the Leibniz Association since 1992. Around 200 employees work at our site, which is located in the middle of a beautiful park landscape in Potsdam, not far from Berlin.

To strengthen the Dwarf Galaxies and Galactic Halo section, we are looking for a **PhD student (m/f/d)** to start on or after 01/07/2026. The position is within the new Leibniz Junior Research Group led by Dr Lara Cullinane, and is part of the project “Chronicling the Clouds: Chemodynamics of the most massive dwarf galaxies”.

Your responsibilities:
The project is focussed on the stellar halo of the Large Magellanic Cloud, and involves isolating halo stars and chemodynamically characterising their properties. The successful applicant will assess the importance of different formation channels to the halo, and how dynamical events have played a role in the evolution of the galaxy. Analysis will primarily focus on a comprehensive set of stellar spectra from a new survey of the Magellanic Clouds with the 4MOST facility.

What you bring to the table:
- A Masters degree (or equivalent) in astronomy, astrophysics, or a related field;
- Proficiency in the English language;
- Programming skills; proficiency in python is desirable.
- Basic astrophysics background knowledge; familiarity with topics including dwarf galaxies, galaxy evolution, and spectroscopic analysis, particularly of resolved stellar populations, are desirable but not required.

What we offer:
- A modern working environment: offices are spacious, well equipped, and located in the heart of a World Heritage Site;
- An open and collegial working atmosphere;
- Flexible working hours;
- Opportunities for internal and external training;
- Attractive remuneration. Salary and benefits are based on the collective agreement for the public sector (TV-L), at 66% of a TV-L E13 full-time position. Social benefits include the VBL company pension with reduced earning capacity and survivor's benefits, as well as a subsidy for the commuter “Jobticket” for public transport.
- Generous travel support.

The contract duration is four years and the start date is negotiable, but expected to be in the time frame from July-November 2026. The successful candidate must have a Masters degree (or equivalent)

in astronomy, astrophysics or a related field at the time of starting the position. If you have not obtained your degree yet, please submit relevant information as to when your degree completion can be expected.

If you are interested in this role, please register at the AIP recruitment portal https://jobs.aip.de/rec040 and follow the instructions to upload the following documents, all in PDF:

- A cover letter explaining your motivation (no more than 1 page);
- A curriculum vitae and publication list;
- A two-page description of your research interests and previous work;
- A copy of your Masters or equivalent degree (if completed), otherwise include in the CV relevant details on expected completion;
- The names and contact details of two potential reference letter writers. Reference letters are due by the application deadline, but will be uploaded separately by the letter writers to the application portal directly.

Applications received before 06/12/2025 will be considered in full. In case of questions, please contact Dr Cullinane at: **bewerbung-2025-09@aip.de**

The AIP is an equal opportunity employer who values diversity and particularly encourages women and other underrepresented groups to apply. People with disabilities will be given preferential consideration if they have the same professional qualifications and skills.

Your application documents will be kept for at least three months after the recruitment process has been completed. As a rule, your documents will be made available to a selection committee and the relevant committees and officials.

Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

TOTAL E-QUALITY