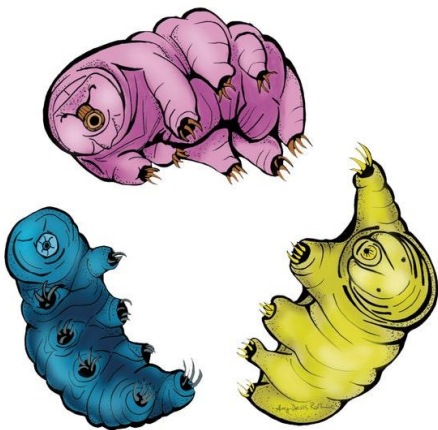
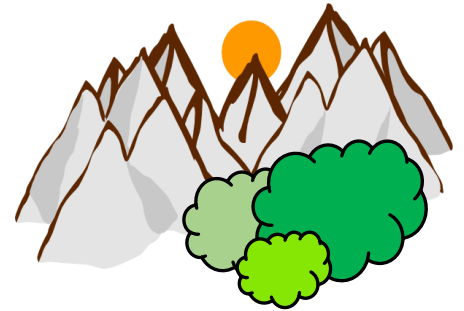


## Are you passionate about biology and ready for the real scientific experience? If so, this is a great opportunity for you!

I am seeking a motivated student for a 2-year position. The position is available in a SONATINA 6 project of the National Science Center, Poland, entitled “**Ubiquitous tardigrades along an altitudinal gradient: patterns and drivers of diversity and distribution**”. The work on these fascinating creatures will be performed at the Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow, Poland.

### Briefly about the project:

Altitudinal gradients offer a unique opportunity to understand the main drivers of species richness, which is crucial in the era of the sixth mass extinction and global environmental changes. Factors shaping biodiversity along altitudinal gradients are still far from being well understood. Relevant research on microscopic aquatic animals, such as meiofauna (body size up to 1 mm) is especially limited. Studying this issue is difficult for two main reasons. First, there is a lack of comprehensive data on the functional traits of these animals, especially those traits relevant to their diversity and distribution. Second, meiofauna taxonomy is poorly resolved, often overflowing with cryptic diversity. **The main objective of the project is to combine various analytical tools to determine the diversity and distribution patterns, as well as the effects at work, in the communities of limnoterrestrial meiofauna along an altitudinal gradient.** To achieve this, we will use limnoterrestrial tardigrades, a morphologically diverse and common group of meiofauna. The main objective will be to **(1)** quantify the composition of tardigrade communities in mountains by providing data on their phylogeny-informed diversity, and to supplement this by investigating **(2)** the effect of various ecological factors, as well as **(3)** the effect of tardigrade functional traits. Appropriate taxonomic identification (based on an integrative taxonomy approach and DNA metabarcoding) combined with ecological and functional data will allow us to make general statements about tardigrade composition, abundance, and distribution in mountains. This will greatly contribute to our understanding of the mechanisms that shape the biodiversity of meiofauna.



### My requirements:

1. I am looking for a student in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> year (biology, ecology, evolution, zoology, or related).
2. You should be interested in organismal biology and motivated to learn new methods.
3. You should be hard-working and open-minded with scientific ambition and enthusiasm.
4. Your English should be at a level that allows the use of scientific literature.
5. Previous scientific experience and a driving licence are advantages.

### Your benefits:

1. Participation in an innovative project about interesting and charismatic animals within a highly cooperative environment that supports your work and provides lots of fun!
2. Possibility of using the obtained results in your BSc or MSc thesis.
3. Professional training that allows you to gain laboratory and field work experience (sample collection, microscopy, morphology, experiments, laboratory cultures of non-model organisms, DNA barcoding and metabarcoding, molecular phylogeny, integrative taxonomy).
4. Financial incentive (salary of **12 000 PLN / year**).

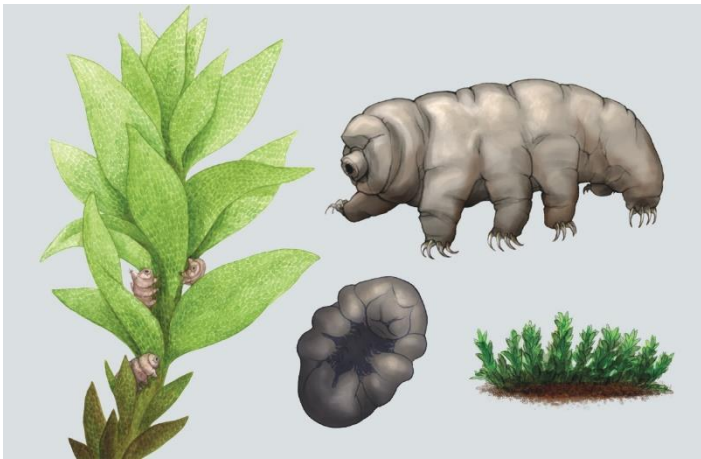
5. Co-authorship in scientific publications based on the results obtained with your involvement.
6. Acceleration of your academic career, with the possibility of realization of your own scientific ideas and side projects.
7. Professional mentoring and tutoring, which includes methodological training and support in the application for your own scholarships and grants for young scientists.

**More information about me, can be found here within my scientific CV:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/2btrnvi3h9rvnj1/Stec.CV%20EN.pdf?dl=0>

**Please submit your application in a single PDF file by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022** via e-mail ([daniel.stec@isez.pan.krakow.pl](mailto:daniel.stec@isez.pan.krakow.pl)). The application might be in **Polish OR English**. The application should contain:

1. letter of motivation explaining why you are interested in working on this project and why you are a suitable candidate;
2. CV;
3. any certificates confirming achievements or experience obtained so far.



The project will start in December 2022, but the start of your involvement is negotiable. Selected applicants will be invited for a short and FRIENDLY interview in the second half of November.

For further information do not hesitate and contact Daniel Stec ([daniel.stec@isez.pan.krakow.pl](mailto:daniel.stec@isez.pan.krakow.pl))