

*Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden, is the national research institute for biodiversity and systematics. We host over 120 researchers including 11 professors and 40 PhD's. With our collection of 42 million specimens, one of the world's largest natural history collections, and our state-of-the-art research facilities we offer the (inter)national research infrastructure for species, identification and monitoring. We closely collaborate with many Dutch universities, NWO and KNAW research institutes, industry and government. We present the history of our planet, and the diversity of life on Earth, through permanent and temporary exhibitions, educational programmes and online presence, with more than 400,000 visitors per year. All in all a unique combination of science and culture in the Netherlands!*

Naturalis is looking for a

## PhD Candidate

**to study unraveling evolutionary patterns in the microscopic wood anatomy of two tropical clades  
36 hours a week**

### Position

Despite the vast literature on comparative wood anatomy dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, evolutionary patterns in the wood anatomy of various flowering plant families remain poorly known due to scattered or incomplete information of wood anatomical descriptions in rather inaccessible journals. Apocynaceae (5100 sp.) and Sapotaceae (1100 sp.) are two of these incompletely known tropical clades. For both families, a large number of observations have already been finalized and partly published. However, a complete wood anatomical treatment, to fully infer evolutionary patterns in a modern molecular phylogenetic framework, is lacking. This fundamental knowledge will fill the gaps in our wood anatomical knowledge and will investigate large-scale evolutionary patterns in both families.

This PhD position fits within the work of Dr. Lens (<https://www.naturalis.nl/en/frederic-lens>) who has initiated a new research group in Naturalis focusing on anatomical and functional aspects of wood evolution (*Functional Traits*: <https://www.naturalis.nl/en/functional-traits>). The PhD project will be carried out in Naturalis (Leiden, The Netherlands), which houses the largest scientific wood collection in the world and encompasses all desired facilities for anatomical observations using LM, SEM and TEM. The PhD candidate will receive his/her PhD degree at Leiden University (Institute of Biology) and The National Graduate School for Production Ecology & Resource Conservation (PE&RC).

### General requirements and skills

The candidate must have a MSc degree in a relevant field (evolution, plant systematics) with a strong interest in plant anatomy and microscopy. Preferably the candidate has experience with wood anatomy, including sectioning and interpreting wood anatomical sections following the IAWA standardized list of microscopic features, along with basic knowledge in phylogeny reconstruction and ancestral state reconstruction. Excellent knowledge of the English language (written and verbal) is essential, as well as a scientific and critical attitude, excellent time management and organizational skills, and the ability to work independently as well as collaboratively within the research group. The candidate should have good communication skills and teaching experience is an advantage.

### We offer

A contract (36 hours per week) for a period of one year, to be extended with three more years after a successful first year evaluation (4y in total), and a monthly salary of € 2.840,- (circa € 37.500 gross per year). The successful candidate will be employed by Naturalis in Leiden. Naturalis Biodiversity Center offers an inspiring working atmosphere with effective and efficient supervision of our PhD candidates. Our Research Coordination Office also provides ample support to our scientific staff. Our institute promotes

gender equality and wants to enhance the diversity of staff members. Feel free to contact Dr. Frederic Lens with questions about the position: [frederic.lens@naturalis.nl](mailto:frederic.lens@naturalis.nl).

### **Procedure**

Applicants are invited to submit their application in one pdf, including a cover/motivation letter and CV. Two letters of recommendation should be sent directly by referees who have had close academic contact with the applicant. Please use this [form](#) for your application before July 31, 2020. Interviews will take place in week 35. The PhD position is expected to start November 1st 2020 at the earliest.

Naturalis endorses the Cultural Diversity Code. In the case of equal suitability, preference is given to the candidate who reinforces diversity within the team.

*Acquisition is not appreciated.*