Graduate Research Assistantship Position

Ph.D. in Animal Science
Degree awarded through Purdue University Department of Animal Sciences, West Lafayette, IN USA

Major area: Poultry behavior and welfare

Position Description: A graduate research assistantship (Ph.D.) position is available within the Purdue University Department of Animal Sciences with funding and research support through the USDA-ARS Livestock Behavior Research Unit. The selected applicant will work under the direction of Dr. Kaitlin Wurtz in the area of poultry behavior and welfare. Specifically, the selected applicant will work on projects to develop and validate automated methods for measuring poultry behavior and monitoring welfare, use genomic tools to identify poultry suitable for alternative housing systems, and examine epigenetic impacts of stress on production, behavior, and welfare. Within this research area, the applicant will have the opportunity to plan and develop research projects, learn a range of laboratory and field techniques, present research results at national and international conferences, and participate in Purdue University Department of Animal Sciences activities. Scholarly activities resulting in peer-reviewed publications and presentations are required. The successful applicant will have the opportunity to interact with a multidisciplinary team of researchers including agricultural engineers, applied ethologists, geneticists, physiologists, nutritionists, and veterinarians.

Purdue University is located in West Lafayette, IN and has an enrollment of >40,000 students. The assistantship includes a stipend equivalent to a half time employee (20 hours per week) and a tuition waiver. Health insurance is provided through Purdue University. For more information about the USDA-ARS Livestock Behavior Research Unit and the Purdue University Department of Animal Sciences please visit the websites below.

USDA-ARS Livestock Behavior Research Unit: https://www.ars.usda.gov/midwest-area/west-lafayette-in/livestock-behavior-research/

Purdue University Department of Animal Sciences: https://ag.purdue.edu/department/ansc/

Qualifications: Prior educational training in Animal Science, or closely related discipline. Experience and strong interest in animal behavior and welfare. Basic knowledge in computer programming (R, Python, MATLAB or similar). Ability to work with livestock under commercial production conditions, collect samples and data from livestock, analyze data, possess a valid driver's license, and write and speak English proficiently. Acceptance and enrollment at Purdue University.

First review of applicants: 04-15-2024; Review of applicants will continue until the position is filled.

Tentative start date: Fall 2024

Application instructions: To apply, please email a cover letter, CV, and unofficial transcripts to Dr. Kaitlin Wurtz at Kaitlin.Wurtz@usda.gov