PhD student in Animal Science Uppsala

Ref SLU ua 2020.2.5.1-427

Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics

A position as PhD student is available at the Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics, at SLU, Uppsala. Our vision is "Better use of genetic resources". The department has about 60 employees and is active within research areas focused on applied animal breeding, molecular genetics, quantitative genetics and bioinformatics. (https://www.slu.se/en/departments/animalgenetics/). The research will be conducted together with researchers at the Beijer Laboratory for Animal Science (https://www.slu.se/en/faculties/vh/research/forskningsprojekt/not/beijerlab/).

The research at the Beijer Laboratory for Animal Science aims to make better use of data automatically collected at high-tech farms so that management and breeding of future generations of dairy cows may be as efficient as possible. As a Beijer Laboratory PhD student you will have access to a large network of researchers, including those working in applied animal science as well as statistics, machine learning and artificial intelligence both at SLU and other universities.

Using digital tools to analyse social interactions in dairy cattle

Project description:

The work is part of the cooperative project ‘Precision livestock breeding – improving both health and production in dairy cattle’ of, besides SLU, Växa Sverige, University of Copenhagen, Dalarna University and RISE. The project is funded by FORMAS and by the Kjell & Märta Beijer Foundation.

In this project, we aim to improve both animal welfare and animal production by focusing on improvement of the social environment of animals. Animals are social beings who spend majority of their lifetime engaged in various interactions with conspecifics. Social interactions are often the most important part of the environment that individuals experience and a part of this project is to describe these social interactions and find production similarities between cows with the same level of social interactions. The variation in quality of social environment may reflect indirect genetic effects, in which case social environment is heritable.

As a PhD student in this project, you will work with data on dairy cattle, obtained from sensors and milking robots, in order to quantify social interactions and select for indirect genetic effects. A real time location system will be used to collect data on positions of each animal in dairy barns, with position updated every second. At least 250 cows will be individually tracked, resulting in 25 TB of data per year. In addition, data from an automated milking rotary system recorded over several years at the Swedish Livestock Research Centre (Lövsta, SLU) will be available to analyse social interactions in connection to milking.

We are now looking for a PhD student for our team working with precision livestock breeding. We are also recruiting two postdocs who you will collaborate with.

Qualifications:

You shall have either a strong background in biology with sound knowledge of data management and genetics, or a background in data management with sound knowledge in biology. Good skills in English (both written and oral) is required. Particular emphasis will be placed on your personal skills as team player as well as your ability to take initiatives and work independently. You need to have a EU driving license or are willing to obtain one within the first 6 months, since the project includes farm visits.
Place of work:
Uppsala

Forms for funding or employment:
Employment as PhD student 4 years

Starting date: According to agreement.

Application:
We welcome your application no later than 2020-02-23, use the button below.

A person has basic eligibility for third cycle education if he or she has taken a second cycle qualification or has completed course requirements of at least 240 higher education credits, including at least 60 higher education credits at second cycle education. Upper secondary school grades equivalent to English B/English 6 are a basic requirement.

Selection among applicants meeting the requirements is made with reference to written application including curriculum vitae, copies of degrees and transcripts of academic records, one copy of the dissertation for masters or undergraduate degree, a list of at least two references familiar with the applicant’s qualifications, certified knowledge of the English language and an interview.

Please observe that applicant/s chosen to participate in an interview shall hand in certified true copies of certificates, diplomas and transcripts from previous studies at an internationally recognized higher education institution (university or university college) and transcripts in connection to the interview. If the applicant is a foreign citizen we require a certified copy of the page in your passport with your personal data and photography.

Read about the PhD education at SLU at www.slu.se/en/education/postgraduate-studies/

Academic union representatives:

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) develops the understanding and sustainable use and management of biological natural resources. The university ranks well internationally within its subject areas. SLU is a research-intensive university that also offers unique degree programmes in for example rural development and natural resource management, environmental economics, animal science and landscape architecture.

SLU has just over 3,000 employees, 5,000 students and a turnover of SEK 3 billion. The university has invested heavily in a modern, attractive environment on its campuses in Alnarp, Umeå and Uppsala.
www.slu.se

SLU is an equal opportunity employer.

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