Opportunity for a master thesis or research training on primate behaviour and cognition

Topic:
"Spontaneous cognitive abilities in the grey mouse lemur (Microcebus murinus)"

Content: The study comprises a set of three cognitive tests (inhibitory control task, causal understanding task, problem solving task) that shall be conducted on captive grey mouse lemurs (Microcebus murinus) that are kept at the Institute of Zoology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Hannover, Germany. The same test battery has already been performed on other non-human primates and also on wild mouse lemurs who differ substantially from this study cohort in various levels of experience and the degree of habituation to human experimental approaches. The tasks will be recorded by video and the collected data will subsequently be analysed with appropriate software (OBSERVER XT, R). You will be asking the following research questions:

- How do captive mouse lemurs perform in standardized cognitive tests in comparison to wild conspecifics and other primate species?
- Is test performance impacted by sex, age, or previous experience?

Start of the study: October 2021 (experimental period: 2 months)

Duration: This project entails 2 months for data collection in Germany and 4 months for data analyses and write-up. It is hence best suited for either a Thesis project or Research Training of 45 hp.

Set-up: The project will be carried out in collaboration between two German Institutions (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover and the German Primate Center Göttingen) and Uppsala University. It will require carrying out experimental work on mouse lemurs and video
analyses in Hannover, whereas statistical modelling and write-up can happen in either Hannover or Uppsala.

The ideal candidate: You will ideally have some background in animal behaviour and statistical analyses with R, although this is not a requirement.

To apply and for further questions please contact jointly: Ute Radespiel (ute.radespiel@tiho-hannover.de, Tel. +49-511-953-8430) and Katerina Guschanski (katerina.guschanski@ebc.uu.se). Please enclose your CV and a short motivation letter.