

# Doctoral student (PhD) position

## Research topic:

### Infection dynamics of *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* in breeding pigs and offspring and associations with immune responses and lung lesions

It is a collaborative research project between:

- The unit of porcine health management (department of reproduction, obstetrics and herd health), and
- The laboratory of bacteriology (department of bacteriology, pathology and poultry diseases) and immunology of the faculty of veterinary medicine at Ghent University (Belgium)

Both research groups have a very positive and also very successful collaboration on the topic for many years. This has led to more than 10 completed PhD theses, more than 50 publications in international scientific journals and more than 150 presentations on national and international conferences. For this project, there will also be collaboration with the industry and research groups of other European countries.

*Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* is the primary pathogen of enzootic pneumonia and one of the major pathogens of the porcine respiratory disease complex, economically the most important disease complex in pig production worldwide. The general aim of the study is to better understand the infection dynamics of *M. hyopneumoniae* in order to optimize the control of the disease. The project will focus on immune parameters against *M. hyopneumoniae* in colostrum and milk of sows, and assess infection levels and immunity for *M. hyopneumoniae* in sows and piglets in different European pig herds using cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.

#### Requirements:

- Master in Veterinary Medicine (DVM); having finalized the studies with honors is an asset
- Interest to conduct scientific research
- Interest in pig health and production. Having experience in pig health is an asset
- Willingness to perform a PhD
- Willingness to contribute to the research group and the department
- Being able to work independently but also to work well in a team
- Being able to fluently communicate and write in English. Knowledge of Dutch is an asset

#### Our offer:

- A varied and challenging position as researcher
- Research area which is very important for the pig sector, the veterinary profession and society.
- Good guidance and supervision of the research and PhD
- A dynamic research team and stimulating environment offering ample opportunities for study, research, clinical training and interactions with other national and international researchers and research teams.

Start: 1 October 2018

Duration: 3 years

Payment: as PhD student at Ghent University

#### Applications:

Written applications should be submitted by the end of **September, 2018**.

They should consist of:

- a letter with the motivation for the application
- a curriculum vitae
- copy of the diploma
- name and coordinates of 2 reference persons

They should be sent to:

Prof. Dr. Dominiek Maes, Ghent University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine  
Tel. +32 (0)9 264 75 42 - E-mail: [dominiek.maes@UGent.be](mailto:dominiek.maes@UGent.be)