Research Assistant for Climate Neutrality Project

Position Title: Research Assistant – Climate Neutrality

Supervisor: Project Leader, Climate Neutrality

Department: Strategic Projects, University of Zurich

Workload: Starting with 2 days per week, i.e. 40% (with potential for increase based on performance)

Application period: From now until the position is filled

Application documents: Letter of motivation and CV

Submission of the application: nils.handler@uzh.ch, Project Leader

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Project Description

The "Decarb UZH Climate Neutrality 2030" project aims to contribute to achieving the University of Zurich's climate neutrality goal by 2030. This will be accomplished through scientific analyses, establishing reduction pathways (especially for impact categories where none currently exist), planning and implementing concrete measures, and building an efficient data management system.

Emission Drivers at UZH

Currently, the focus is on the impact categories of energy, air travel, catering, and waste. Four initial task forces are planned:

- Task Force Energy
- Task Force Air Travel
- Task Force Catering
- Task Force Waste

Position Summary

The Research Assistant will play a critical role in supporting the Project Leader for Climate Neutrality in advancing the University of Zurich's decarbonization efforts. This position offers a unique opportunity to develop applied quantitative and analytical skills in sustainability, providing a powerful stepping stone for ambitious academic careers or careers in industry and consulting. Starting with a part-time workload, the position offers growth potential based on demonstrated skills and ambition.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Data Analysis & Tool Development**

   o Assist in the creation and refinement of a marginal abatement cost curve (MACC) tool.

   o Collect and synthesize data from diverse task forces, including energy, catering, air travel, and waste management.

   o Perform power calculations for randomized intervention studies to evaluate potential research projects and strategies.

   o Support data management strategy (sustainability dashboard and AI-enhanced green public procurement to reduce Scope 3 emissions)

2. **Research & Knowledge Synthesis**

   o Conduct concise literature reviews on decarbonization techniques and climate neutrality strategies, for example Sustainable Aviation Fuels

   o Initiate, lead, and review applied research projects aimed at supporting the university's climate neutrality objectives, for example on the LEAF Program

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Requirements

1. **Educational Background**

   o Ideally Master's degree (completed or ongoing) in environmental sciences, economics, computer science, statistics, or a related field.

2. **Skills & Competencies**

   o Strong quantitative and analytical skills.

   o Proficiency in data analysis tools (e.g., STATA, R, and/or Python) as well as visualization tools (Tableau, PowerBI, MS Excel (incl. VBA)).

   o Excellent organizational skills with an ability to manage multiple priorities.

   o Strong written and verbal communication skills, ideally in both German and English.

3. **Personal Attributes**

   o Highly motivated, proactive, and results-oriented.

   o Collaborative team player with a growth mindset.

   o Ability to work independently and deliver high-quality outputs.

Why Join Us?

This position is more than a job—it's an opportunity to shape the future of sustainability. As a Research Assistant, you will:

- Develop cutting-edge quantitative and analytical skills.

- Build a robust foundation for ambitious academic pursuits in sustainability, economics, or data science.

- Gain highly transferable expertise valued by industry and consulting, including environmental modeling, data analysis, and project management.

Join us and make a tangible impact on the University of Zurich's journey to climate neutrality while advancing your career in academia or the professional world.