

# Cognitive box experiments with captive Guinea baboons (*Papio papio*) at the Nuremburg Zoo

## Lab Rotation and Potential Master's Thesis Project

Project length: 6-8 weeks

Project window: Early-August to mid-October

### Project Description:

This project will involve conducting a series of behavioural experiments with a population of captive Guinea baboons housed at the Nuremburg Zoo. The goal of the project is to assess whether Guinea baboons can access the foraging abilities of group mates, and if they modify their own behaviour to take advantage of others' abilities. To do this we will artificially inflate the social standing of a single adult male baboon by giving only them the ability to open a food box containing a shareable quantity of food.

The experiment will involve presenting a food box to the baboons in the enclosure, that can be opened by remote control, and waiting until the appropriate male depresses the box's lever before opening the box. This project will require learning to identify individual adult baboons by their facial and body characteristics, collecting behavioural data on active subjects using a fixed ethogram, and conducting precise experimental manipulations independently in an open zoo enclosure.

This existing project is well suited to a lab rotation, but there is also room to develop your own ideas, develop apparatuses, and carry out further experiments with the baboons that could be developed into a master's thesis.

This project will require the student to be in Nuremburg working with the baboons during the weekdays for the duration of the project. The cost of initial travel and accommodations in Nuremburg will be provided.

### Materials to submit:

- A curriculum vitae (CV) containing relevant coursework and volunteer or work experiences that you feel would qualify you to work on this project.
- A statement of interest (no more than a page single spaced in English) detailing why you are interested and explaining why you think you are a good fit for the project.

Please send these materials to William O'Hearn, the PhD in charge of the study, at [wohearn@dpz.eu](mailto:wohearn@dpz.eu)

