

Job Opening

The Wyss Academy for Nature is a Swiss foundation that co-designs and assesses innovative development pathways and conservation approaches. Our initiatives, rooted in scientific and other types of knowledge, stakeholder engagement, and the implementation of creative solutions, unfold within four regional stewardship hubs. These hubs are strategically positioned in East Africa (Kenya and Madagascar), South America (Peru), Southeast Asia (Thailand and Laos), and Europe (Switzerland). Our vision is to achieve a just and sustainable world in which nature conservation and human wellbeing reinforce each other.

At the Wyss Academy for Nature, we bring researchers, businesses, policymakers, and communities together to develop solutions to interconnected challenges—climate change, biodiversity loss, land-use change, and rising inequality. We invite applications for a researcher who will generate actionable, implementation-relevant evidence to inform the design, monitoring, and scaling of interventions across our Regional Stewardship Hubs.

Postdoc Nature-Positive Livelihoods, Social Entrepreneurship & Value Chains (80-100%)

Contract duration: immediately or by agreement

Location: Kochergasse 4, 3011 Bern, Switzerland

Contract terms: 2-3 Years, UNIBE contract, with possibility of extension

Apply by: 26 July 2026

Interviews: The first round of interviews is scheduled for the week of August 31. The second round of interviews is scheduled for the week of September 7.

About the role

This role focuses on generating decision-relevant research to support the co-design, testing, adaptation, and scaling of interventions on regenerative livelihoods, development of small and medium-sized enterprises, and inclusive value chains across the Wyss Academy's Solutionscapes. The position contributes to strategic projects on livelihood diversification, value-network development, enterprise viability and vitality, productive restoration, and transformative innovation, and is closely linked to the Wyss Academy's monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning processes. In close collaboration with Hub teams and implementing partners, the role ensures that research findings inform implementation and adaptive management. The role also contributes to evidence-based pathways for systems transformation across landscapes and regions by publishing internationally visible research and producing practical knowledge products that support partners and strategic decision-making within the Wyss Academy.

Tasks and Responsibilities

Reporting to the Professor of Governance Innovation, the successful candidate's key responsibilities include:

- Conduct research on nature-positive livelihoods, enterprise development, and inclusive value networks in rural and landscape-based contexts.
- Produce actionable evidence to inform the selection, design, and improvement of interventions in the Wyss Academy's Regional Stewardship Hubs (e.g., baseline studies, feasibility and viability assessments, value-chain and market-systems analysis, and comparative learning across pilots), including exploration of innovative financing approaches (e.g., blended finance) and longer-term investment strategies for regenerative transitions.
- Assess whether proposed livelihood and enterprise models are economically viable, socially inclusive, and supportive of biodiversity conservation, restoration, and stewardship outcomes through the application of extended accounting or valuation approaches (e.g., True Cost Accounting).

- Study the institutional, organizational, and market conditions (national and global) under which nature-positive livelihood models can succeed, be adopted, and be scaled.
- Analyze market access, traceability, certification, financing, producer organization, and benefit-sharing, with particular attention to implications for local communities, youth, women, and primary producers.

Your Profile

The successful candidate brings strong empirical expertise and is able to design and carry out rigorous field-based research using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Experience with implementation-oriented research, impact-oriented evaluation, or comparative analysis of real-world interventions is particularly valuable. The Wyss Academy is especially interested in candidates who connect academic excellence with the production of actionable evidence for practitioners and partners.

The profile is complemented by the following qualifications and experience:

- PhD in management, business, innovation studies, agricultural, development, environmental or resource economics, or a related field.
- Excellent research record in one or more of the following areas:
 - nature-positive livelihoods, rural enterprise development, and social or mission-driven entrepreneurship
 - inclusive value chains, market systems, and commercialization in rural contexts
 - sustainable business and livelihood models linked to conservation, restoration, or agroecological transition, including distributive and regenerative business design approaches
 - innovation, adoption, and scaling of interventions
 - distributional, institutional, and governance dimensions of economic transformation in social-ecological systems.
- Familiarity with systems thinking, complexity science, or related approaches to understanding and analyzing social–ecological systems.
- Field research in low- and middle-income countries.

Experience in one or more of the following would be an advantage:

- livelihood and enterprise viability and vitality assessment;
- value-chain diagnostics and market access analysis;
- sustainable or regenerative finance models, including blended finance and impact-oriented investment approaches
- research on traceability, certification, or sustainable sourcing;
- collaboration with NGOs, public agencies, producer organizations, or private-sector actors;
- inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration in applied sustainability research.

What We Offer

- Integration into an institution that develops, tests, and applies innovative solutions for the pressing challenges of our time
- Work in an intercultural, multidisciplinary, and highly stimulating environment
- Employment at the University of Bern
- A modern workplace located in the heart of Bern's Old Town
- Attractive employment conditions – including flexible working hours and home-office options

For more information, please contact Prof. Quynh Nguyen at hr@wyssacademy.org. Please submit your application in English, including a CV, publication list and cover letter (max. 1 page) via our online portal **by 26 July 2026**.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to receiving your application!



The Wyss Academy for Nature values diversity and equal opportunity. We therefore welcome applications from all qualified individuals who meet the required criteria.

Applications submitted through recruitment agencies will not be considered.