“Stromal Cells in Neuropathic Pain”
PhD Position at the Department of Neurology, University Hospital Würzburg

Who are we? We are an **energetic neuroscientific team** in “Translational Somatosensorics” focusing on pain and neuropathy research at the Department of Neurology.

Whom do we seek for? A strong and industrious, eager, and reliable PhD candidate of Life Sciences or related Faculty who is enthusiastic about neuroscience and pain research.

Background: In our project, we address the urgent unmet need of millions of people living with intractable **chronic neuropathic pain** based on peripheral inflammatory and non-inflammatory neuropathy. Investigating exclusive patient-derived biomaterial and applying advanced human *in vitro* cell culture models, we will investigate whether **CD90$^+$ stromal cells and Schwann cells** represent a key driver of persistent pain in the absence of classical inflammation. Our project is part of our interdisciplinary **European consortium DECIPHER** consisting of clinicians, translational neuroscientists, stromal cell immunologists, physiologists, and patient experts across Europe and as such embedded in a highly collaborative environment.

Tasks PhD candidate:

- Immunohistochemistry and microscopy (human sural nerve and skin punch biopsy specimens)
- Advanced cell culture (human stromal and Schwann cells, sensory-like neurons with co-cultures)
- qRT-PCR, immunocytochemistry
- Functional analysis (multielectrode array, patch-clamp)
- Large data analysis (clinical, histological, electrophysiological data)
- Advanced statistics (e.g. multivariate analysis)

Prerequisites: The project is a close collaboration with the DECIPHER consortium members, hence, strong communication and organization skills are required. The candidate will be enrolled into the Graduate School of Life Sciences.

- MSc (or equivalent) in life sciences or related Faculty.
- Experience in immunohistochemistry and cell culture is mandatory.
- Experience with microscopy techniques and molecular biology is desired.
- Practical knowledge in stem cell research and electrophysiology is beneficial.
- English proficiency of at least B2 level is necessary; C1 level preferred.

What to expect from us: We offer a supportive and collaborative TEAM environment with strong supervision, structured scientific work, continuous exchange, and plenty of room for personal development and active shaping of the project. Further, in person and online consortial networking will be granted on a regular basis.

Funding: Our project is funded by the European ERA-NET-Neuron Programme and the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG).

Start and duration: Start is possible from July 2026 on, 3 years, 65% TVL-E13.

PI and contact: Please send your application including a motivation letter to Prof. Dr. N. Üçeyler ueceyler_n@ukw.de.