

PhD Position in Zooplankton Ecology

Arctic Freshwater Ecosystems and Changing Winters (FROST Project)



We invite applications for a fully funded PhD position (25,000\$/year) in zooplankton ecology within the **AquaLab group at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC)**, Canada. The position is part of FROST, a large, international, interdisciplinary research project focused on how changing winter conditions are shaping Arctic lake ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. **The start date is May 2026.**

Project Description

The candidate will investigate **how changing winter conditions** (ice cover, snow depth, light, temperature, oxygen) **influence zooplankton communities**, with an emphasis on their phenology, community structure, nutritional quality, and role in Arctic lake food webs. Zooplankton play a critical role in transferring energy and essential biomolecules from primary producers to higher trophic levels, yet their winter ecology remains poorly understood. Experience with zooplankton identification, biochemistry, or Arctic fieldwork are assets but not required.



The PhD project will include:

- Sampling of zooplankton in Arctic lakes, including both open-water summer and under-ice winter conditions;
- Experimental or observational approaches to examine resource availability, lipid and fatty acid dynamics, and life-history strategies;
- Integration of zooplankton data with physical limnology and wider food-web processes;
- Opportunities to work across multiple Arctic regions in collaboration with international partners and northern communities.

The student will be **supervised by Prof. Milla Rautio**, Canada Research Chair in Boreal and Polar Aquatic Ecology, and co-supervised by **Prof. Kimmo Kahilainen**, Lammi Biological Station, University of Helsinki, Finland. The position will be part of the broader FROST network, with collaborators across Canada, Greenland, Nordic countries, and the United States.

www.rautioaqualab.com

www.frost-lakes.com



Interested?

Send max. 2 pages statement of research interests and motivation, CV, Academic transcripts and contact of two referees to milla.rautio@uqac.ca

The application deadline is 20th February 2026.

