



## PCE<sub>3</sub> Seminar Series

Thurs, April 25<sup>th</sup>

12 p.m. EDT/9 a.m. PDT

More information & registration:

[prebioticchem.info/seminar-series/index.html](http://prebioticchem.info/seminar-series/index.html)



### Zack Cohen

NASA Postdoctoral Fellow

*NASA Ames Research Center*

“Natural soda lakes provide compatible conditions for RNA and membrane function that could have enabled the origin of life”



### Sebastian Haas

Postdoctoral Researcher

*University of Washington*

“How soda lakes could have satisfied prebiotic chemistry’s enormous phosphate demand: new insights from modern analogues”

Topical introduction by Prof. David Catling, Professor of Earth and Space Sciences, University of Washington

## Zack Cohen

Zack Cohen is a postdoctoral fellow at NASA Ames Research Center, where he is investigating whether coevolution of small RNAs could have enabled the formation of the first ribozymes during the origin of life. Zack received his PhD in Chemistry and Astrobiology from the University of Washington in spring 2023. At UW, Zack was an NSF Graduate Research fellow, and he investigated the behavior of fatty acid membranes in evaporating lakes on the early Earth. Zack received a B.S. from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in Physics and Integrative Biology, where he worked on computational microbial ecology in the lab of Professor James O'Dwyer.

## Sebastian Haas

Sebastian Haas is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Earth and Space Sciences at the University of Washington, where he studies high-phosphate soda lakes as potential analog environments for an origin of life on early Earth. He holds a PhD in Chemical Oceanography from Dalhousie University, Canada, and an MSc in Marine Microbiology from the University of Bremen and the Max-Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology, Germany. His graduate research focused on biogeochemical cycling of nitrogen, carbon, and sulfur in oxygenated and anoxic waters of stratified lakes, underwater caves, and the coastal ocean.