

Call for Applications for Academic Positions at Freie Universität Berlin

Department of Political and Social Sciences

Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science

**Research project “POWDER”**

4 positions for doctoral research assistants (Praedoc)

with 65% part-time job

limited to 4 years

Entgeltgruppe 13 TV-L FU

Reference code: **POWDER-DRP-2017**

Starting date: 1 April 2018

ERC-funded project on “Protest and Order. Democratic theory, contentious politics, and the changing shape of western democracies” (POWDER)

The research project aims to analyze the interrelationship between protest and political order under the contextual conditions of the changing shape of modern western democracy. Two groups of questions are connected to this study perspective, which will be answered by means of a democratic-theoretically-led synchronous comparison of four selected contemporary protest movements – (1) *anonymous digital protest*, (2) *transnationally organized alter-globalization protest*, (3) *protest of undocumented migrants* and (4) *rightwing identitarian protest*.

The aim is to clarify the extent to which the new forms of protest question the premises of democratic orders, what potential for further development lies within the new forms of protest on the one hand, and what are the challenges to democracy on the other. Furthermore, the project seeks to determine the influence and relevance held by the democratic order itself in an age of the changing shape of democracy with regard to the specific formation of the new forms of protest, and what statements can be made on how the formation of the order is changed, in turn, by the new forms of protest themselves.

Job description:

*Mission and activities:* The appointed doctoral researchers will work closely with the project’s Principal Investigator Christian Volk, Professor of Political Science with a special focus on Politics and Law, and three research assistants. Each doctoral researcher will be responsible for the study and analysis of one of the four respective protest movements.

Specifically, the doctoral researchers will be required to:

- Conduct research in the externally funded POWDER project; within the framework of the research project, the opportunity for a doctorate is given, including:
  - Collaborate in refining the project design and methodology and further developing the theoretical frame,
  - Conduct (empirical) research on one of the four protest movements (case studies),
- Prepare and participate in joint publications;

- Collaborate in the preparation of workshops;
- Present the project and related research at conferences;
- Meet project interim goals and strictly adhere to project timelines;
- Carry out administrative and coordination duties associated with the project, including interim reporting to funders.

Requirements:

Completed degree of university education (Magister, Diploma or Master's degree) in Social Sciences (preferably in Political Science or Sociology).

Desirable:

- Excellent degree of university education;
- Verifiable skills with respect to qualitative research methods (preferably experiences in ethnographic research and/or discourse analysis);
- Knowledge of and experience in social movement research and deeper knowledge in one of the issue areas relevant to the project (digital protest, alter-globalization protest movements, protest of undocumented migrants or rightwing identitarian protest);
- Strong interests in questions of democratic and political theory;
- Strong organizational skills and ability to work autonomously;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work in a team and accommodating of diverse views;
- Very good command of English, both in writing and in speaking (further language skills are an asset, e.g. French, Arabic, Spanish);
- Intellectual drive, enthusiasm and open-mindedness
- two letters of recommendation (German or English) should be sent **by the referees** to: [sekretariat-polre@polsoz.fu-berlin.de](mailto:sekretariat-polre@polsoz.fu-berlin.de)

All applications quoting the **reference code: POWDER-DRP-2017** should be addressed no later than **January 29, 2018** as an email to Prof. Dr. Christian Volk: [sekretariat-polre@polsoz.fu-berlin.de](mailto:sekretariat-polre@polsoz.fu-berlin.de)

We look forward to receiving your electronic application in English via Email **in one PDF file (maximum 5 MB)**, including your CV, letter of motivation, as well as a short research proposal (2500 words) for one of the four issue areas addressing the question of how to study and analyze the respective protest movements.

For more information, candidates are encouraged to consult the website of the research unit: <http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/polwiss/forschung/grundlagen/rechtgrund/arbeitsbereichpolre/index.html>