

Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Call for Applications

Doctoral position on “European Values.Rule of law”.

DEADLINE 1-9-17

RESEARCH JOB VACANCY in Brussels
2 Year-long full-time doctoral positions (2017-2019)

This is a call for applications for one full-time doctoral position in a project on European politics and values based at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB, Brussels, Belgium). The researcher will join a team under the supervision of an interdisciplinary scientific committee (Prof. Ramona Coman, Prof. François Foret [spokesperson], Prof. François Heinderyckx). Prospective candidates are hereby invited to submit their application following the procedure described at the end of this document. The deadline for submitting applications is 1 September 2017 but candidates are encouraged to submit as soon as possible. Successful candidates are expected to start working in Brussels on 1 October 2017.

The grant covers 2 years of full paid scholarship. PhD candidates with a PhD project in progress are eligible as long as their research is in line with the topic of the project.

Outline of the project: Governing values, governing through values, governed by values? The European Union as a risk polity (<http://valeur.ulb.be>)

Values at the core of European integration have been widely discussed in recent years due to several major evolutions in EU governance. The enlargements and the constitution-making process were structures of opportunity for claims to define common values susceptible to hold European countries and citizens together and to justify public action.

Nevertheless, citizens, civil society and political actors give different meanings to values. Values create both support and conflict over European integration.

Values are invoked in many ways with different purposes. Firstly, values fuel discussions about identity, memory and communicative resources in a quest for legitimization (governing through values). Secondly, references to values may come from the necessity to deal with ethical issues calling for normative policy choices (governing values). Thirdly, values may cause legal and political conflicts and challenge established balances of powers and regulation (governed by values). The EU has encountered these three scenarios at different moments in time and with different intensities. The hypothesis is that common patterns can still be found, turning the EU into a 'risk polity', a political system where values become a usual part of European politics either as an answer to or a factor creating uncertainties.

The overarching aim of the project is twofold. It seeks to understand the reasons and modalities of the emergence of "European values" on the EU agenda. It also scrutinizes how values create unity or division, how they circulate and frame different models of political community for Europe.

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Three distinct Work Packages (WP) take on three empirical case studies:

morality politics/policies and European values (WP1); interactions between “rule of law” and regulation of/by values (WP2); debates on European values in the public sphere (WP3). This call for application refers to WP2.

A pivotal value under stress: the rule of law crises and their impact on EU’s political integration

The rule of law is key in legitimizing the EU’s raison d’être and self-conception. Although the rule of law is one of the common values on which the EU is founded, it remains an elusive concept that encapsulates lingering potential for tensions at the domestic and supranational level. While it generates political support and normative consensus on its basic definition, it engenders conflicts over its substantive features when it is used to regulate power relations at the domestic and/or EU level. Against this backdrop, the overarching research question of this WP is: When, how and why does the rule of law create conflict in EU governance and how said conflicts are overcome by political actors? Candidates with an interest in the debates on the rule of law at the EU level can submit case studies or comparative research designs drawing on an original set of data. The coordinators of the project encourage research projects that trace, compare and/or frame the conflicts over the rule of law at the EU/domestic level. The aim of this PhD is twofold: first, to contribute to the general discussion of the project related to the resurgence of values in European debates; second, to produce an original conceptual framework and a set of data regarding the rule of law tensions in EU governance.

Workload

The workload related to the doctoral mandate includes the preparation of a PhD thesis (and its completion if the work was already started) and the contribution to collective work through fieldwork and publications.

The project provides a full fellowship for two years. The candidate is expected to apply for additional funding if he/she needs more than two years to finalize his/her work.

Working environment and conditions

This multidisciplinary project takes place within three research teams:

the Centre d’étude de la vie politique (CEVIPOL) the largest political science research unit at ULB;
the Institute for European Studies (IEE), one of the oldest Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence in

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Europe; the Research Centre in Information and Communication (ReSIC), a large gathering of competencies in media sociology, journalism studies, textual analysis, political communication and related fields.

The team leaders are political scientists (R. Coman, F. Foret), historian (O. Calligaro) and media and communication scholar (F. Heinderyckx). The interdisciplinary dimension is reinforced by exchanges with internationalists, lawyers, sociologists, philosophers and other scholars working on European integration and interactions between politics, culture and religion.

The PhD candidate will join a dynamic international network of collaboration with other universities in Europe, the US and Asia.

Activities may involve travelling and short research stays.

The successful candidate will have an office and relevant administrative support at ULB. He/She is expected to live in Brussels for the duration of the contract. The contract will be managed by the university according to Belgian standards and laws.

Profile

The candidates should demonstrate their ability to evolve in a multi-cultural environment; their expertise and/or interest for European politics; their proficiency in French and English. In the application, each candidate should explain clearly his/her interest for the theme of the project and how and why he/she can contribute to the development of the collective reflection. Experience and achievements in academic research and education in areas relevant to the project will be taken into consideration at the time of selection.

Doctoral mandate

- Master in political science, EU studies, sociology, communication studies or a directly related field
- Excellent grades and other signs of academic distinctions
- Proved expertise or at least interest in European studies
- First achievements in research (master thesis) on a topic related to the project
- Experience with working in an international environment
- Very good command of English and French
- Ability to work in team, to meet deadlines and to combine autonomy with respect of guidelines

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- Legal conditions and status of the doctoral positions:
- The applicant should not already have a contractual link with the ULB
- The applicant should not have already held a position as assistant for
- more than one year in any university
- According to the experience of the candidate, the monthly net income will start from 1800 euros.

How to apply

The successful candidate will be selected on the basis of the quality of the CV, research achievements, motivation and congruence with the project.

The following application documents are to be consolidated into one single PDF file sent by email to Oriane Calligaro (oriane.calligaro@ulb.ac.be):

- A one-page motivation letter explaining the candidate's general
- interest for the project
- A short project (5,000 characters, spaces included) explaining the
- possible scientific contribution of the candidate to the collective research in general and the work package on the rule of law in particular with bibliographical references
- A curriculum vitae listing all academic qualifications, relevant
- research experience and previous publications (if any)
- Name, affiliation, e-mail and phone number of three referees who can
- be contacted if necessary
- A copy of the passport/ID and of the master diploma
- Applications are open until 1 September 2017. Candidates will be taken into consideration in their order of arrival, so they are strongly encouraged to apply as early as possible.
- A telephone or face-to-face interview may be organized.
- The hiring and the required presence in Brussels will be effective on 1 October 2017.