Job posting

**Type of position**
- ☒ scientific graduates
- ☐ administrative post docs
- ☐ other

**Title**
Postdoctoral Research Fellow (f/m/x)

**Institution**
The project examines whether democratic backsliding becomes more likely if there is precedent abroad that domestic anti-democratic actors can emulate. It employs a mixed-methods empirical research design, combining quantitative modelling to demonstrate general patterns, and qualitative case study to trace causal mechanisms. It proposes two comparative case studies of backsliding diffusion in Hungary and India.

The project is embedded within the department of Global Governance, which analyses the politics of international order with three foci on state-driven conflicts about international authority; societal conflicts in Global Governance; and institutional dynamics in the global governance system.

The WZB Berlin Social Science Center is a publicly financed research institution that conducts leading edge theory-based and problem-oriented social science research (http://www.wzb.eu/en). WZB researchers come from across the globe and work across social science disciplines including sociology, political science, economics, law, and psychology. A member of the Leibniz Association, WZB’s research is directed at the science community, policy makers, the media and the general public.

Please find more information online on the research group Global Governance, on Alexander Schmotz, and the WZB.

**Position**
The WZB Berlin Social Science Center, research area International Politics and Law, research unit Global Governance (Director: Prof. Dr. Michael Zürn), is seeking to employ

a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow (f/m/x)

for the project “The International Diffusion of Democratic Backsliding”, led by Dr. Alexander Schmotz. The position is full-time (39 hours per week) for a period of two years, starting preferably on 1 March 2024 upon confirmation of the awarding authority.
Responsibilities

Your tasks

• independently design and conduct one (of two) of the project’s qualitative case studies of backsliding diffusion (at this point, in Hungary and India)
• contribute to the second project case study
• contribute to the comparative analysis of the two project cases
• explore and analyze additional and alternative case studies for the project, independently as well as jointly with the PI
• design and conduct (jointly with the PI) more specific (paper-sized) sub-projects within the wider project framework
• co-author (with the PI) and single-author publications on the diffusion of democratic backsliding, preferably in international peer-reviewed journals
• conduct your own independent research on topics related to the project
• take part in and contribute to Global Governance department activities, such as the department colloquia and meetings

Requirements

Your qualifications

• doctoral degree, or near to completion, in political science or a related social science discipline (e.g. international relations, sociology), on a topic relevant for the project
• profound knowledge of and demonstrated experience in employing qualitative case study methods, particularly process-tracing, and including qualitative interviews, discourse analysis, media and social media analysis, and document analysis
• strong motivation to do independent and collaborative research on the international diffusion of democratic backsliding, or on international influences on democratic backsliding more generally
• profound knowledge (or the demonstrated ability and motivation to acquire the knowledge) of research relevant for the project, including on democratic backsliding, (international) autocratic politics, democracy diffusion and promotion, and (international influences on) regime change
• in-depth case knowledge (or the demonstrated ability and motivation to acquire the knowledge) of one (or more) project cases (Hungary and India), or other relevant cases of democratic backsliding and backsliding diffusion
• experience with collaborative research in a project environment, or motivation to engage in collaborative project work
• language skills relevant for the project cases or other relevant cases can be a plus
• excellent academic writing and communication skills in English
Our offer

- remuneration in accordance with EG 13 TVöD Bund
- comprehensive program for continuous professional development and further qualification, in the own discipline and beyond
- a well-equipped workplace in the center of Berlin
- international, cooperative, and diversified working environment
- in-depth integration into the scientific community in the form of colloquiums and conferences
- flexible working hours
- we promote a good work–life balance, and our engagement has been certified by audit workandfamily and the European Commission’s Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)
- additional benefits for public service employees (VBL U)

Have we sparked your interest? In that case, we are looking forward to receiving your online application by 7 January 2024.

Applications should be made exclusively using the link provided. Please apply with your complete documents in a single PDF file (in English, including a letter of motivation, a 2-page sketch of a research design for one of the project’s case studies, or an alternative case you might suggest, your curriculum vitae, copies of relevant certificates, PhD certificate). Interviews will likely take place in the week of 15 January 2024.

Equally qualified applicants with disabilities will be given preference. We value diversity and welcome all applications – irrespective of gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion, disability, age, or sexual orientation. WZB expressly encourages women or persons with migration backgrounds to apply.

If you have any questions regarding the job opening, you can contact Lina Hayek at lina.hayek[at]wzb.eu.
Contact lina.hayek[at]wzb.eu