



The newly established Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe, KFG) '[Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History](#)' at [Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich](#) (LMU) is seeking to appoint

Junior Fellowships

with a **research topic** focusing on **economy** *or* **human rights** *or* **religion/secularity in contemporary European history**. Applications with

other research topics, connected to the overall agenda of the KFG, are welcome. Future Calls for Junior Fellowships will be following every term.

The Centre is seeking for:

- two Junior Fellows for the **summer term** (April - September 2023), with a preferred starting date on **1 April or 1 May 2023**, and
- two Junior Fellows for the **winter term** (October 2023 - March 2024), with a preferred starting date on **1 October 2023**.

Project description

The Centre for Advanced Studies (Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe, KFG)

Centres for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (KFG), funded by the [German Research Foundation](#) (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) are interdisciplinary research groups with exceptional funding conditions. They have an initial funding period of four years, with the possibility of prolongation for a second funding period, and offer an international fellowship programme, which allows a large number of leading experts to convene and explore an innovative research topic over a long period of time.

The KFG 'Universalism and Particularism' investigates **universalist and particularist models of order in European contemporary history from the 1970s to the present**. Universalist claims aim at universally applicable rules, the demand for which, however, usually follows concrete interests. In contrast, particularist models reject any general claim and justify guiding principles that are oriented towards the construction of individual or group-related needs. The KFG research program focuses on economic, religious/secular and human rights regimes, and poses the question how universalist and particularist claims were constructed in contemporary history and how political-social change was conceived, justified, promoted or even prevented with them. The aim of the KFG is to gain a better understanding of the complexity of the transition and the overlaying of universalist and particularist concepts in European contemporary history.

Research Focus 'Orders of Religion and Secularity'

Religious concepts are used for both universalist and particularist designs. The research focus analyses religious and secular models of order, based on the presumption of their ambivalence and openness to interpretation. It is especially interested in those religious or secular concepts that have gained political relevance in recent contemporary history, e.g. in the transformation of East (Central) European societies after 1989, the global financial crisis or in view of worldwide migration. At the same time, the research project is interested in intersections of religion and particularist ideologies such as nationalism.

Research Focus 'Orders of Economy'

Economic ties are thought to be able to reduce the risk of interstate conflicts. However, economic activity is always space- and time-dependent, and markets only arise in certain social orders. In the contemporary history of Europe since the 1970s, the universal and the particular in economic activity often overlap. In Western Europe, economic integration developed in a balancing act between the opening of internal borders and greater closure to third states. In Eastern Europe, economic integration projects beyond the EU are also developing, some of which are based on market structures from before 1989. The validity of the idea of a liberal, open economic order is severely limited both by internal developments in the EU and by external challenges. The research focus also examines the interaction of economic discourses with economic practices with a special emphasis on scientific discourses.

Research Focus 'Orders of Human Rights'

The postulate of human rights became attractive as a concept worldwide in the 1970s and was a major driver of political protest in the pre-1989 dissident movement. With the democratization of post-communist societies, the issue of human rights lost importance. On the other hand, recourse to human rights formed a decisive element in the universalistic draft of the world order of liberal internationalism that triumphed in 1989/91. At the same time, this policy was increasingly met with opposition. Since the 2010s, the EU has been confronted with a serious problem in maintaining a uniform standard of civil rights in Poland and Hungary. The modern authoritarian and populist regimes of East (Central) European countries question the universality of human rights by trying to unmask them as a particular ideology that is directed against the traditional family or cultural values.

Fellowships

The KFG fellowships are awarded for **3-6 months** in either the **summer term (April - September 2023) or the winter term (October 2023 - March 2024)**. We offer **a stipend and a rent subsidy on a monthly basis**, as well as **travel costs to and from Munich** at the beginning and end of the fellowship. Apart from engaging in their individual research, fellows are expected to actively participate in the KFG's weekly colloquia and to contribute to the development of a methodological anthology on the main concepts of historical and political sciences connected with universalism and particularism in European contemporary history. The Junior Fellows are also expected to organize a two-day workshop in Munich in cooperation with the KFG team.

In the **summer term 2023**, the KFG examines religious and secular regimes. During the research stay in Munich, Junior Fellows will have the opportunity to exchange with the KFG directors [Martin Schulze Wessel](#), [Kiran Patel](#) and [Andreas Wirsching](#), as well as the Senior Fellows Marta Bucholc, José Casanova, Hans Joas, Nadieszda Kizenko, Alexander Libman, Hélène Miard-Delacroix, Zdeněk Nešpor, and Angelika Nußberger.

The **winter term 2023-2024** focuses on economy and offers exchange with the KFG directors, as well as the Senior Fellows Marta Bucholc, Alexander Libman, Hélène Miard-Delacroix, Viacheslav Morozov, Angelika Nußberger, and Philipp Ther.

Interdisciplinarity plays a significant role for the KFG's research, so that, for both terms, applications are possible with topics contributing to any of the three research foci, or to the overall agenda of the KFG.

Requirements

- Applicants must have a PhD in a respective field.
- The working languages of the KFG are English and German, therefore excellent spoken and written knowledge of one of the languages is required.
- Regular presence at the KFG in Munich is obligatory.

The KFG offers

- Participation in an interdisciplinary, innovative und prestigious DFG-funded joint research project;
- Access to extensive international networks of high-profile researchers in the social sciences and humanities;
- An open-minded, cooperative team;
- Flexible working hours and family-friendly working time schemes;
- A fully equipped workplace.

Applications

Applications should include:

- Cover letter describing the applicant's career path and current research interests;
- CV including list of publications;
- Outline of the planned research project and how it contributes to the agenda of the KFG (max. 3 pages);
- Information on the preferred starting date and duration of the fellowship;
- Work sample (2-3 publications);
- Names and contact details of two potential referees.

The latest submission date for applications is **February 13, 2023**. The preferred starting date for the summer term is 1 April or 1 May 2023; for the winter term 1 October 2023.

Please note that costs arising in connection with your application (travel expenses, etc.) cannot be reimbursed.

In its pursuit of academic excellence, LMU is committed to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture and values diversity. LMU is a family-friendly employer and is also responsive to the needs of dual career couples.

For further details about the fellowships, please contact [Lena Lopatschowa](mailto:lena.lopatschow@lrz.uni-muenchen.de): lena.lopatschow@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

Applications must be sent **in one PDF file** to Lena Lopatschowa (KFG research coordinator): lena.lopatschow@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

More information on the KFG and its research agenda can be found here:

[Centre for Advanced Studies \(Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe, KFG\) "Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History"](#)

[LMU Newsroom: No End to History](#)