

At the Faculty of Social Sciences (Department of Political Science) of the University of Vienna the positions of

Two Doctoral Researchers (prae doc) within the ERC Project PREDEF

are vacant.

In the **interdisciplinary ERC research project** “Prefiguring Democratic Futures. Cultural and Theoretical Responses to the Crisis of Political Imagination (*PREDEF*)” led by Prof. Oliver Marchart, the project’s Principal Investigator (PI), and running until September 2027, we are looking for **two doctoral researchers** with different profiles:

- Prae-Doc 1 will have a background in **social science, ethnography or cultural research**;
- Prae-Doc 2 will have a background in **art or culture research, theatre studies or performance studies**.

The research group is hosted by the Department of Political Science of the University of Vienna and is composed of the PI, a research administrator, 2 doctoral researchers and 3 post-doctoral researchers.

The central objective of *PREDEF* is to address the crisis of democracy as a **crisis of political imagination**. As the infamous TINA-principle (‘There is no Alternative’) illustrates, it has become increasingly difficult to imagine genuine democratic alternatives to the status quo. *PREDEF* sets out to explore potentials for deepening and pluralizing democracy beyond the sphere of politics narrowly defined as the body of existing political institutions. The project turns to the fields of **culture, art and intellectual history**, for these fields hold hitherto untapped potentials for extending our democratic imaginary and disclosing political alternatives.

The two doctoral researchers will decisively contribute to the empirical part of the project, subproject I “*Culture—Pre-enacting Democratic Spaces*”, collaborate with one another and a post-doctoral researcher, and engage in a number of case studies. Experience at the intersection of time-based arts and political activism as well as expertise in theory-led qualitative research are desirable. They work on *PREDEF*’s subproject I by investigating the **democratizing potential of performative practices in the cultural and artistic realm**. The subproject explores how, by appropriating authoritative institutions such as theatres, international summits and tribunals, artists/activists aim at prefiguring alternative democratic futures.

The successful candidates are expected to conduct **interviews** with activists and engage in **discourse and document analysis**. They will engage in collective research processes within the subproject. This is an exciting opportunity for PhD students to further develop research experience, working with senior and junior colleagues on an ERC funded project in an interdisciplinary environment that includes researchers from philosophy, political science and art and cultural research.

Start of employment: April 1, 2023

End of employment: March 31, 2027 (duration of employment: 4 years)

Extent of employment: 40.00 hours/week

Classification according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for University Staff: Article 48 salary group B1 Grundstufe (praedoc) with relevant work experience determining the assignment to a particular salary grade. ([Job grading in accordance with collective bargaining agreement](#))

Workplace: Vienna.

Main duties:

- Contribute to ongoing research in the *PREDEF* project, analysis and writing, in discussion with the PI, to deliver on project aims
- Analysis and synthesis of research findings
- Collaborate with members of the research team, including researchers from other disciplines
- Co-organize and coordinate scientific events (workshops, lecture series, conferences)
- Prepare publication drafts and coordinate collective writing processes
- Present research outputs and disseminate research findings for publication, by giving talks in research seminars, conferences, and writing manuscripts
- Participate in outreach activities to communicate science to the public.

Personal profile:

- University Degree (Diploma, MA) in one of the following fields:
 - **Prae-Doc 1:** Political Science, Sociology, Cultural Studies, European Ethnology, Human Geography, or related fields, with an interest in Political Theory
 - **Prae-Doc 2:** Cultural Studies, Theatre Studies, Performance Studies, or related fields, with an interest in Political Theory
- Expertise in qualitative methods in the cultural and social sciences, especially with regard to conducting interviews
- Excellent writing skills
- Excellent command of English
- High-level analytical capability
- Ability to communicate complex information clearly
- Interest in art and cultural research, the study of political activism/social movements, and democratic theory.

Application:

Applications should be sent electronically to predef.erc@univie.ac.at with the subject line “PREDEF prae-doc” by **February 23, 2023** and include the following documents in a single PDF file in English:

- Cover Letter (2-3 pages) outlining your motivation, indicating to which position you apply (Prae-Doc 1 or 2) and how your expertise is linked to *PREDEF*'s project objectives
- Curriculum vitae / list of publications
- Two academic writing samples (e.g. publication, term paper, chapter of master thesis).
- Contacts of two references
- Certificates

Selection & Next Steps:

Following the closing date, we will contact you by email to let you know whether or not you have been shortlisted to participate in the next stage of the selection process.

For inquiries about the application process, please contact: oliver.marchart@univie.ac.at

For an overview over the project, please visit: predef.univie.ac.at

The University of Vienna intends to increase the number of women on its faculty, particularly in high-level positions, and therefore specifically invites applications by women. Among equally qualified applicants women will receive preferential consideration.