

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

## **Post-Doctoral Researcher within the ERC Project PREDEF**

is vacant.

The successful candidate will work in an interdisciplinary research team within the ERC project “Prefiguring Democratic Futures. Cultural and Theoretical Responses to the Crisis of Political Imagination” led by Prof. Oliver Marchart, the project’s Principal Investigator (PI), and running until September 2027. 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 PhD students and 3 Post-Docs.

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. Located at the intersection between cultural research and democratic theory, *PREDEF* meets this challenge empirically and theoretically. The project searches the history of ideas for ‘forgotten’ institutions that hold untapped democratic potentials and elaborates a theory of democratic imagination. Furthermore, artistic and cultural counter-practices are investigated that champion democratization in the time-based arts through theatrical occupations, counter-summits and ‘mock’ tribunals.

The Post-Doctoral researcher will decisively contribute to the empirical part of the project, coordinate the subproject I “*Culture—Pre-enacting Democratic Spaces*”, collaborate with two PhD students and engage in a number of case studies. He/She will have a background in Cultural Studies, Theatre Studies, Performance Research, European Ethnology or related fields, as well as interest in Political Theory, with an expertise in theory-led qualitative research and experience at the intersection of time-based arts and political activism. He/She will 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 candidate is expected to conduct interviews with activists and engage in discourse and document analysis. He/She will coordinate collective research processes within the subproject. This is an exciting opportunity for a PhD graduate to develop further 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**

**Duration of employment:** until the project ends on September 30, 2027

**Extent of employment:** 30.00 hours/week

**Classification according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for University Staff:** Article 48, salary group B1 lit. b (postdoc)

<https://personalwesen.univie.ac.at/en/jobs-recruiting/job-center/salary-scheme/> (Please take into account that the stated salary is gross for 40.00 hours/week)

**Workplace:** Vienna. The successful candidate is expected to move to Vienna.

**Main duties:**

- Contribute to ongoing research in the PREDEF project, analysis and writing, in discussion with the PI, to deliver on project aims
- Coordinate subproject I “*Culture—Pre-enacting Democratic Spaces*”
- 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 publications 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
- Supervise students on research related work and provide guidance to PhD students, where appropriate
- Participate in outreach activities to communicate science to the public.

**Personal profile:**

- PhD in one of the following fields: Cultural Studies, Theatre Studies, Performance Research, European Ethnology or related fields, with an interest in Political Theory
- Expertise and proven experience in qualitative methods in the cultural and social sciences, especially with regard to conducting interviews.
- Knowledge in one or more of these fields: art and cultural research, theatre studies, performance studies, social movement research, democratic theory
- Excellent writing skills
- Excellent command of German and 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](mailto:predef.erc@univie.ac.at) with the subject line “predef postdoc” by **January 12, 2023** and include the following documents in a single PDF file in English:

- Cover Letter outlining your motivation and how your expertise is linked to PREDEF’s project objectives incl. an overview of how you would pursue the research (3-5 pages)
- Curriculum vitae
- List of publications – with the most important scholarly publications highlighted (at least two)
- Three sample publications: dissertation manuscript or published dissertation as well as two journal articles.
- Contacts of at least 2 references
- Certificate of PhD degree

**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](mailto:oliver.marchart@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.*