



The Research Project “**Contours of a Non-Oligarchic Democratic Future**”, funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation, invites applications for a

Postdoc Fellowship
(36 months, starting 1 April 2025)

About us

The project “**Contours of a Non-Oligarchic Democratic Future**”, led by Janosch Prinz, Enzo Rossi, and Manon Westphal, conducts research on oligarchic threats to democracy (broadly constructed). It seeks to contribute to addressing the oligarchic tendencies in contemporary democracies by identifying oligarchic power structures and the corresponding remedies at the institutional and civil society level. The project has two main aims: First, to develop a comprehensive conceptualization of the systemic character of “oligarchic democracy” by using an epistemic approach to ideology critique. Second, we aim to draw the contours of a systemic cure to the oligarchic threat by exploiting untapped capacities such as institutional innovation to counter and disperse oligarchic power. More precisely, we will outline possible counter-oligarchic strategies on two levels – political institutions and civil society – tailored to break and transform the power structures identified in the diagnosis.

The postdoc will be based at the **Professorship “Political Theory and Philosophy”** (Dr. Manon Westphal), which is currently being established at the **Munich School of Politics and Public Policy**. The Munich School of Politics and Public Policy (HfP), with its affiliation to **the Technical University of Munich (TUM)**, deals with the multifaceted interactions between politics, society, business and technology in research, teaching and practice. The Professorship “Political Theory and Philosophy” focuses on contemporary political theory and philosophy and develops methodological and substantive approaches to a realist, practice-oriented political theory that is closely linked to empirical research. It deals with current social and political challenges for democracies, such as the phenomena of power concentration, polarization and deep disagreement, as well as responses that can strengthen the ability of democracies to address these challenges. It conducts research on democratic innovations, including ways to reform democratic politics with new institutions, procedures and technologies.

Your future responsibilities

- Conducting high quality academic research in the field of political theory as part of the project “Contours of a Non-Oligarchic Democratic Future”, funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation.
- Collaborating with the other members of the project, including joint research activities with the team based at Maastricht University and the University of Amsterdam.
- Teaching (Bachelor and Master) in the areas of political theory and philosophy, as part of a separately paid teaching assignment at the Munich School of Politics and Public Policy (HfP) that can be combined with the stipend paid by the Gerda Henkel Foundation.

Your profile

- University degree in political science, philosophy or other relevant fields in the social sciences and humanities



- Doctoral degree in political science, philosophy or other relevant fields in the social sciences and humanities
- A research agenda focused on oligarchic threats to democracy (broadly construed)
- An ongoing programme of research and publications, focused on international peer reviewed journals and/or books published by internationally recognized academic presses
- Very good English language skills, both written and spoken
- Experience in teaching political theory and/or philosophy at university level
- Experience in working in teams

Our offer

The Gerda Henkel Foundation will pay the postdoc a stipend of €2,300 per month (plus, if applicable, €400 for a first dependent child and €100 for each additional dependent child). The stipend is initially granted for one year and will be extended twice by the Gerda Henkel Foundation on production of a short yearly interim report, for a maximum of 36 months total. The stipend would not constitute an employment relationship with the Gerda Henkel Foundation. The stipend does not come with health care or pension entitlements.

In addition to the stipend paid by the Gerda Henkel Foundation, the Munich School of Politics and Public Policy (HfP) offers the postdoc the opportunity to take on a separately paid teaching assignment in the field of political theory.

The postdoc will have the opportunity to conduct research with a great deal of creative freedom and opportunities for scientific collaboration in a vibrant scientific environment. The project offers the opportunity for a short research stay abroad.

The position is suitable for people with severe disabilities. Severely disabled applicants will be given preference in the case of otherwise substantially equal suitability, qualifications and professional performance. Applications from women are expressly welcome.

Your contact persons

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Your application

We ask applicants to explain their relevant expertise in a cover letter (2 pages max.) and expand on their envisaged postdoctoral research programme and how it would advance the project in a research statement (2 pages max.). Please also submit a CV and a writing sample (30 pages max.). Please send these by email in a single PDF document to personal@hfp.tum.de by **February 16, 2025** at the latest. Interviews will be held online and take place on February 26, 2025.

Information on the processing of your data can be found at:

<https://www.hfp.tum.de/aktuelles/stellenangebote/datenschutzhinweise>