



Guidelines for Applicants

Applications for a position as a Research Fellow or Senior Research Fellow at the Institute are welcome at any time and are not dependent on a specific job advert.

The Institute employs an international mix of Research Fellows. Additionally, researchers in the Global Knowledge Transfer Projects of the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law cooperate with the Institute.

Research topics

The focus of the research conducted at the Institute ranges from the doctrinal and theoretical analysis of fundamental issues to the systematization or systematic comparison of legal norms, the development of the law and the solution of current legal problems. All research is characterized by its thematic, theoretical and methodological pluralism. The Institute is not organized along departmental lines. Instead, each researcher is assigned to one of the directors, who establish and pursue several projects in their respective areas of interest. In the field of Armin von Bogdandy, these projects comprise EU constitutional law, the project on the Exercise of International Public Authority, and research analyzing public law in the European legal space. In the field of Anne Peters, long-term projects concern the status of the individual in public international law, the constitutionalization of public international law, and global animal law.

Research structure

As a Research Fellow, you work in projects of one of the directors while simultaneously pursuing your Ph.D. or postdoctoral research, or another research project of your own. In most cases, the director's project and the personal project will be linked to each other to produce synergy. If Research Fellows are interested, they can also become involved in teaching.

Depending on qualifications and interest, the Institute offers different work schemes. Research Fellows on full-time position (39 hrs./wk.) usually hold a German Second State Exam (Zweites juristisches Staatsexamen) or a comparable degree. Researchers on a part-time position (19.5 hrs./wk.) hold at least a German First State Exam (Erstes juristisches Staatsexamen) or a comparable degree. Smaller positions are combined either with the German legal traineeship (Rechtsreferendariat) or with an external scholarship. Salaries and social benefits are provided according to the German Public Sector Collective Agreement (TVöD). Furthermore, it is possible to work at the Institute based entirely on third-party funds, e.g. with a European Union Marie Curie Fellowship.

Research environment

At the Institute, researchers have access to outstanding resources and profit from a vibrant exchange and discussions across territorial and disciplinary borders. With its more than 600,000 volumes, our library is the biggest of its kind in Europe. The Institute's reputation and its lively research community attract a large number of researchers from all over the world each year. Additionally, the Institute cooperates with a variety of renowned research institutions both in Germany and abroad. This open atmosphere enables researchers to establish international academic contacts and receive valuable input for their personal research projects beyond the Institute. The Institute itself does not only employ German lawyers but also lawyers with foreign degrees and researchers from other disciplines.

Beyond these personal exchanges, the Institute hosts a number of events geared toward the academic formation of its researchers as well as promoting exchanges of ideas. Among those events are a weekly research staff meeting where researchers present on current developments in their field, weekly seminars of the research groups of both directors, Ph.D. retreats, an annual Master Class, and a wealth of smaller discussion groups focusing on specific topics such as legal developments in Latin America, human rights, the law of development, foundations of public law or legal philosophy.

Ph.D. theses and postdoctoral research

The Institute cannot issue Ph.D.s on its own. However, a Ph.D. thesis can be submitted at the university at which the directors hold their professorship. Currently, these are the universities of Frankfurt, Basel (Switzerland) and Heidelberg (starting in spring 2014). This also applies to Habilitationen (German postdoctoral theses). Depending on the policy of the university, it may be possible to submit theses in a language other than German.

Applying

You are interested in applying to become a Research Fellow at the Institute? Applications are welcome at any time.

To apply, you must at least hold a First State Exam (Erstes juristisches Staatsexamen) or comparable degree (Magister, M.A., LL.M., etc.) which should rank above average. Most importantly, applicants must demonstrate an interest in the areas of research of the director to whom they apply. Applicants with a degree in neighboring sciences such as political science and international relations, and with non-German degrees are welcome. Not all projects require German language skills. However, good listening and reading abilities in German are an advantage. It is expected of all researchers that they will familiarize themselves as far as possible with the basics of the German language.

Applications including CV, exam certificate/s and other relevant certificates should be directed to the Office of Professor von Bogdandy (sekreavb@mpil.de) or Professor Peters (Apeters-office@mpil.de). Certificates available in English, French, Spanish or Italian do not need to be translated. Applicants for a postdoctoral position need to enclose a short research proposal (1 page).

The Max Planck Society seeks to promote gender equality and therefore explicitly encourages women to apply. Moreover, the Max Planck Society is committed to employing more handicapped individuals and especially encourages them to apply.