



STIFTUNG
EUROPA-UNIVERSITÄT
VIADRINA
FRANKFURT (ODER)



Call for Applications

The European New School of Digital Studies (ENS) of the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) is seeking to fill in at the earliest opportunity:

**Three PhD Researchers (m/f/d) (identification number 1500-21-03)
(65%, pay group 13 TV-L, 25 hrs/week)**

The contract is limited to a term of three years with the option to extend.

The [European New School of Digital Studies](#) is an innovative and transdisciplinary academic institution that combines business, law, cultural studies, and computer science with the goal of developing an understanding of the emerging European digital society. ENS combines outstanding research with project-based teaching. Candidates will be part of a research training group with a focus on "**Datafying Europe**" - analyzing the practices, processes and challenges of **datafication in, of and by European societies**. This crucially implies observing, criticizing and intervening in projects of defining a European way of regulating, governing and engineering the collection, processing and use of data. In doing so, we engage with global perspectives on datafication and the digital transformation as well. Applications are expected to tackle this overall topic in at least one of the following dimensions:

- **Entrepreneurship/Organization**: New and altered **organizations** and **institutions** play a crucial role in datafication, specifically in Europe's single market initiatives. Global companies with a US or Chinese background such as Facebook, Google, and Baidu are key players in the contemporary economy. Likewise, a plethora of relatively **new ventures** have developed successful businesses by offering data-driven services. How do entrepreneurial organizations achieve or destroy legitimacy in industries and society? And how does digital entrepreneurship relate to existing institutions? What role do algorithms and machine learning models play in the entrepreneurship process? What are critical perspectives on digital entrepreneurship such as power dynamics, gender issues, as well as discriminatory dynamics that can arise during and from digital entrepreneurship and organizing data?
- **Governance/Regulation**: Concepts such as **accountability**, **responsibility** and **contestability** are at the core of many of the current EU proposals for AI policy, but also a hot topic in research in data analytics and machine learning. How can various forms of contestation (discursive; legal etc.), which are core to a liberal society and the rule of law, be implemented within or raised against ascriptions by or actions through digital technology in increasingly complex, opaque and interconnected environments? Can or should this be

embedded in the technologies themselves, or at least in their design process? How are traditional forms of contestation altered by AI or new human-machine interactions?

- **Knowledge/Communication**: *Reason*, *truth*- and *trustworthiness* are core ideas of Europe`s enlightenment history; their pursuit is also inscribed in the genetic code of its imaginaries and institutions. How do data-heavy environments such as large online platforms, but also the development and use of machine learning, alter our understanding of truth and uncertainty? In how far does the inherently probabilistic nature of predictions by machine learning represent a challenge to the idea and paradigm of truth in various disciplines and practices, and how can it be squared with, e.g., demands of falsifiability, communicability, and knowledge "beyond reasonable doubt"?
- **Engineering/Design**: Efforts are underway on a global scale, but particularly also in the EU, to unleash the technical potential of the digital transformation while simultaneously inscribing key *political, ethical* and *legal values* into technologies *by design*. How can co-design between different stakeholders unlock novel engineering solutions? What are the limits of privacy by design in increasingly connected environments? To what extent can engineering and software development contribute to the solution of key European societal challenges?
- **Politics/Legitimacy**: The quest for *transparency, explainability* and *openness* is a hallmark of political desiderata vis-à-vis various dimensions of digital technology. How do these demands relate to previous calls for transparency of opaque systems (the state; industrial machinery, bureaucracy) or contemporary calls for it in less technical fields such as political decision making in democratic institutions? Is there anything that can be learned from situating digital transparency in historical or political and social contexts? Does transparency continue a worthwhile enlightenment tradition, or are we "blinded by the light"?
- **Democracy/Public Sphere**: Digital communication and platforms are transforming core *democratic processes* throughout Europe, from new, data-based political *campaign strategies* to algorithmic curation in political discourses. How do digital platforms and algorithmic curation change opinion-formation? How does data and automated content creation transform *journalism and journalistic practices*? How can European societies improve the media and *data literacy* of their citizens?

Your tasks include:

- Scientific qualification, e.g. dissertation
- Academic teaching (2) hours/week (SWS), exclusively English-language teaching, no German required)
- Participating in ENS colloquia and scientific discussions

Your profile:

- University degree (M.A., M.Sc., M.B.A. or state examination)

- Major field of study or profound knowledge in one of the above mentioned ENS research areas
- Strong ability to work independently and on your own initiative
- Very good command of written and spoken English
- Ability to work in a team and social competence

What we offer:

- An innovative and interdisciplinary working environment
- A lively and international research community at the European New School of Digital Studies
- Early insights into international and interdisciplinary research projects
- Working in a young team with flat hierarchies
- Flexible working hours and independent work

Within the framework of its gender equality concept, the European University Viadrina pursues the strategic goal to significantly increase the proportion of women in research and teaching. Participating in the DFG's research-oriented equal opportunities standards, it therefore explicitly welcomes applications of female researchers. Female applicants can contact the Gender Equality Office (www.europa-uni.de/gleichstellung).

The university supports its members in balancing work and family life. It offers family-friendly study and working conditions.

More information can be found at: (www.europa-uni.de/familie)

People with disabilities are given priority in case of equal suitability and qualification. It is advisable to mention a possible disability already in the application.

Please send your application including a CV, a PhD proposal of up to 5 pages and a reference to ens@europa-uni.de. We will accept and review all applications received up **until and including September 12, 2021**.

If you have questions about the application procedure please contact ens@europa-uni.de.