The Faculty of Social Sciences (Department of Government) of the University of Vienna is advertising

Postdoc in Political Text Analysis

Overview:

The position is offered within the MULTIREP project funded by a Starting Grant from the European Research Council (September 2023 – August 2028) and led by Assoz. Prof. Christopher Wratil (personal website).

MULTIREP – "Multidimensional Representation: Enabling An Alternative Research Agenda on the Citizen-Politician Relationship" aims to expand quantitative scholars' understanding of political representation beyond the traditional conceptions of substantive and descriptive representation. The project will develop novel quantitative text-analytical models and tools to measure how politicians represent citizens in legislative speeches and, to the extent that data access is obtained, social media posts. Thereby, MULTIREP aims to reshape the scope and depth of quantitative empirical research on representation and enable an alternative research agenda on the citizen-politician relationship. A description of the project can be found here.

The postdoc will co-lead (together with another postdoc and the principal investigator) the development, validation, calibration and application of models that can automatically scale different dimensions of representation from politicians' texts in several languages. This will involve methodological contributions as well as works that apply the models to substantive questions (e.g. of special interest to the postdoc). A key deliverable is an R package that makes the models usable for the academic community.

The project is hosted by the Department of Government at the University of Vienna, a vibrant research environment with currently several European Research Council and other third-party funded projects, providing for an international community of PhDs, postdocs and faculty. Key research areas of the Department include political representation, party competition, political institutions and political behavior. For many years, Vienna has been ranked as one of the most livable cities in the world in several international rankings.

Postdoc in Political Text Analysis

Job description:

- Develop, validate, calibrate and apply (new) quantitative text / natural language processing models that can infer how politicians aim to represent citizens from legislative speeches (and, where available, social media posts)
- Publish methodological and substantive research on politicians' representation styles (together with other team members), aiming for manuscript placements in leading political science outlets
- Share responsibility for data collection, data documentation and data management as well as the ethical implementation of research activities
- Co-lead the development of an *R* software package providing easy-to-use access to calibrated models, overseeing and supervising research assistants as well as collaborating with another postdoc
- Starting date: Any starting date between February and August 2026 (please indicate preferred date in your cover letter)
- Contract length: 2 years, depending on overall project finances an extension by a few months may be possible at the end of the contract period
- Salary: from €69,060 to €75,000 p.a. gross, depending on relevant experience and assuming the PhD degree has been awarded by start date, otherwise ca. €61,650 p.a. gross until PhD award is confirmed (Austrian take-home pay calculator)
- Benefits: paid annual leave, social insurance (incl. healthcare, pension), flexible working hours, home office arrangements, funds to attend further methods trainings and collect large amounts of research data in the framework of the project, career development support (e.g. for job talks, funding applications)

Your profile:

- Doctorate/PhD in political science, computational social science, data science or another relevant discipline (completed or close to completion)
- Emerging research agenda on a topic broadly connected to the themes of MULTIREP with a strong methodological/technical focus
- Substantial experience with quantitative content/text analysis
- Emerging publication record (e.g. first articles in high-quality disciplinary or methodological journals) or demonstrated potential thereof (e.g. manuscripts with R&Rs, prizes)
- Excellent command of and advanced programming skills in R; willingness to learn new programming languages (e.g. on training courses)
- Interest in political representation
- Strong communication skills, ability to organize and contribute to team work, high reliability, attention to detail, pro-active and responsible attitude, intellectual independence and originality
- Excellent command of English (knowledge of German is not necessary)
- *Desirable* experiences and skills (ANY of this would be an asset):
    - Experience with the analysis of political texts, especially legislative speeches or social media posts of politicians
    - Experience with developing software packages in R

- Programming skills in Python, JavaScript, C++, Stan or other statistical/programming languages
- Experience in developing new methods in a social science discipline
- Analysis skills regarding other modes of human behavior (e.g. visuals, voice)

Application

Applications should consist of:

- **Cover letter** (incl. discussion of "desirable experiences and skills"; please also indicate your preferred starting date)
- **Curriculum vitae** (incl. list of publications where applicable)
- **Full transcripts of record** from undergraduate and postgraduate study
- **Contact details** of two potential referees

These documents should be compiled in a single PDF file and sent via e-mail to multirep.staatswissenschaft@univie.ac.at as well as christopher.wratil@univie.ac.at by 23:59 CET on **15 December 2025**. Please use the **e-mail title "Application MULTIREP CSS"**. Interviews with short-listed candidates will be held in January 2025.

For informal inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the principal investigator, Christopher Wratil, via e-mail: christopher.wratil@univie.ac.at

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