



Job Advertisement

The Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS) in Erkner near Berlin, a non-university research organisation and member of the Leibniz Association, is looking for a

PhD researcher (f/m/d, 65%, TV-L E13).

in the project “Caring – Valuating – Transitioning” in the Research Area “[Economy and Civil Society](#)”. The position is initially limited to twelve months, an extension for a further three years on the basis of a convincing exposé for a doctoral project is expressly sought.

Project Description:

The flagship project examines mission-oriented organisations that develop alternative economic or civil society solutions to shape what they believe to be a better future. These organisations, e.g. in the form of collective enterprises, social enterprises or cooperatives, question and negotiate values, values and visions of the future, which is particularly relevant in times of crisis. Value negotiations (valuation) are central to the development of innovations and community structures, but have so far received little attention, for example in sustainable transition research (STR), which is interested in the transition between niche innovations and regime changes. A better understanding of these processes therefore complements existing debates on the relationship between niche innovations, local initiatives and overarching spatial transformation processes. Theoretically, the project ties in with research on spatiotemporal innovation processes, the relational multiscalarity of space and its materiality as a site of social practice, social entrepreneurship and volunteerism research at the FS. It takes up and expands on concepts such as the multi-level perspective (MLP) and the social construction of value and valuation processes. Methodologically, the project is based on comparative case studies using qualitative methods.

The project will start in January 2026. The future job holder is expected to actively participate in all phases of the project. In addition, the first 12 months should be used to draft a viable exposé for a doctoral project. This will serve as the basis for the explicitly planned extension for a further three years.

Your Tasks:

- Theoretical-conceptual and empirical collaboration in the lead project
- Preparing, planning, implementing and analysing empirical work as part of the project outlined above
- Collaboration on organizational tasks in the entire research process of the lead project
- Preparation of an outline for a PhD-project associated with the advertised project
- Publication of research results in peer-reviewed international journals
- Presentation of research results at national and international events
- Preparation of the research results for an extended target group (contribution to science communication, involvement of practitioners)

Your profile:

- Very good university degree (Master's level) in a social science discipline, for example human geography, spatial sciences, organizational sciences or other disciplines with a spatial focus
- Proven knowledge of qualitative empirical social-spatial research methods, Knowledge of mapping and visual spatial analysis
- Knowledge in the field of new forms of work and economies, e.g:

- Social entrepreneurship, alternative / solidary forms of work and economies
- Sharing and participation
- Regional Transformation processes
- Intersectional research perspectives
- Theoretical knowledge of topics such as relational spaces, creativity, (knowledge) work, digitalization, transition theory, valuation theory
- Very good written and spoken German and English (further language skills are welcome)
- Independent working style, openness to interdisciplinary collaboration, very good communication skills
- Initial experience and/or interest in participatory and transdisciplinary research and transfer formats

Our offer:

The IRS offers varied position with an innovative and interdisciplinary team in a dynamic scientific environment. Working in an interdisciplinary scientific team gives you the freedom to design and carry out your own PhD-project, which is thematically linked to the above outlined lead project or the research topics of the Research Group "[Creativity and Work](#)". A self-organized group of doctoral students organizes regular meetings, scientific exchange and an annual retreat. Through various, national and international cooperation with other researchers and research organisations as well as event series of the IRS, the potential candidate finds good networking opportunities as well as opportunities for research and exchange stays abroad. The IRS also offers a wide range of opportunities for continuous professional development and is committed to the health care of its employees.

Further points are:

- Remuneration and social benefits in line with TV-L
- Flexible working hours and the option of mobile working
- Family-friendly working conditions - IRS has been awarded the "berufundfamilie" certificate as a family-friendly employer since 2015
- Employer subsidy for the job ticket

The IRS guarantees professional equality for all persons in accordance with the Federal Equal Opportunities Act (BGleG) and strives for an open and non-discriminatory work culture. We expressly welcome applications from women. If equally qualified, applicants with special needs will be given preference.

If this job advertisement appeals to you, please send your application documents (motivation letter, CV, certificates (of degrees), references, a one-page outline / idea description of a potential PhD project, stating the **reference number 1225** in a PDF file by e-mail by **14.12.2025** to bewerbung@leibniz-irs.de.

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For questions, please reach out to Prof. Dr. Suntje Schmidt: suntje.schmidt@leibniz-irs.de,
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The Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space takes the protection of personal data seriously. We collect, use and store your personal data exclusively within the framework of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Visit the IRS website for more information.