

The Unit of Social Anthropology at the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) is inviting applications for a

Postdoc position (50-55%) in the research project « «Maintaining Relations: Community-owned Hydropower Infrastructure Through Time»

Starting date: 1 January 2025 (or by agreement). The position is limited to three years.

This position is part of the research project «Maintaining Relations: Community-owned Hydropower Infrastructure Through Time» funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. The project is headed by Prof. Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi. It focuses on fundamental questions of how the production and distribution of electricity can be organized more fairly and democratically. It aims at contributing to designing empirically substantiated visions for alternative energy futures. Regionally and thematically, the team will focus on the experiences of communities in Central America (PhD) and the Alps (Postdoc and PI) that have managed their own hydropower production for many decades. The project brings innovation to the debate on electricity infrastructure by pulling together two strands of research: anthropological research on infrastructure, and the persistent anthropological interest in kinship and gender. We ask: What kinds of labor and which relationships play a role in maintaining decentralized hydropower infrastructure over time? Which roles do kinship and gender play in building and maintaining community-owned energy infrastructure? The project's hypothesis is that as a set of transgenerational relationships and a basis for claims to land, kinship is an important force in imagining, establishing and maintaining both 'communities of energy' and their infrastructures.

Requirements:

- PhD in Social or Cultural Anthropology, Human Geography, Science and Technology Studies, Sociology, or related fields
- Familiarity with the ethnographic research approach, experience in the application of ethnographic methods
- Proved teaching or research experience in the fields of either anthropology of kinship or infrastructure is an asset
- Proficiency in German and English
- Interest in the project's research questions and in devising scenarios for more sustainable and fair energy futures
- Ability to work independently as well as in collaboration with the team
- For the duration of the contract, the Postdoc researcher must be resident in Fribourg or another place in Switzerland; weekly presence at the Department is expected.

Tasks:

- Planning and realization of a research project, including 5 months of ethnographic fieldwork (possibly in the Swiss or Austrian Alps)

- Organizational and administrative tasks in the framework of the project, contribution to the overall aims of the project by co-organizing and participating in regular meetings and workshops
- Active participation in the Unit's and Department's activities (colloquia, collaboration in media outreach, co-teaching)
- Presentation of research results at workshops and international conferences
- Publishing
- Collaboration with institutions and stakeholders in the field of decentral energy production in Switzerland and beyond
- Contribution to science communication for a non-academic audience.

We offer:

- A welcoming academic home in the Unit of Social Anthropology in Fribourg
- The possibility to work in an innovative and dynamic team and in the vibrant academic environment of the bilingual University of Fribourg
- The opportunity to develop teaching, administrative and managerial skills through University-provided further education
- Flexible working hours
- The opportunity to become integrated in national and international research networks, including research visits at our partner universities
- Secure employment for three years including funding for fieldwork, workshops and conference visits abroad
- Additional funding for childcare costs and OA publishing can be obtained via the SNSF; additional funding for conferences and other smaller projects can be obtained through the grants of the University of Fribourg.

Employment conditions:

The employment is limited to three years. The salary is calculated individually based on the CV and the previous work experience. The gross salary for a 50% postdoc position in the first year of employment ranges between 42.260 and 43.500 CHF, and increases over the next two years.

Applications should be submitted electronically in a single PDF-file by 17 October 2024 to agnieszka.joniak@unifr.ch and include a motivation letter, CV, degree certificates, contact details of two references persons, and two published articles or a PhD thesis (or an equivalent sample text).

Interviews with selected candidates will be held in person or online on 13 November 2024.

For more information about the Unit of Social Anthropology, see here <https://www.unifr.ch/anthropos/de/>. For further information on the advertised position please contact the PI Prof. Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi agnieszka.joniak@unifr.ch