

3 PhD and/or post-doc RESEARCH POSITIONS at Ghent University

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Deadline for application	February 20, 2020
Foreseen starting date	October 1, 2020
Department	Faculty of Law and Criminology, Human Rights Centre
Contract	Limited duration
Degree requirements	PhD in a relevant social sciences discipline or law - for a post-doctoral researcher position; Master's degree in a relevant social sciences discipline or law - for a PhD position
Occupancy rate	100%
Vacancy type	Research

JOB DESCRIPTION

We are seeking to fill three full-time positions as part of the ERC-funded research project **“DISSECT: Evidence in International Human Rights Adjudication”** (ERC-AdG-2018-834044).

These positions will be filled at either **doctoral or post-doctorate** level, as appropriate in view of the CV and experience of the candidates. If the selected candidate is a PhD candidate, the post is for 48 months. If the selected candidate is a post-doctoral fellow, the post is for a maximum of 36 months (less if the project is realisable in a shorter period).

If you apply for a PhD position, you will have a MA in a relevant Social Sciences discipline and/or Law.

If you apply for a post-doc position, you will have a PhD in a relevant Social Sciences discipline and/or Law.

The postholders will become members of the **Human Rights Centre at the Faculty of Law and Criminology**.

As part of a research team that explores together evidence in international human rights adjudication, your task will be to investigate, from a truly **interdisciplinary perspective**, an **intricate problem of evidence** which arises in, or is relevant to, international human rights adjudication. If appropriate, you will conduct fieldwork.

Examples of possible projects include:

- Studying the impact of the current digitalisation of evidence (thus bringing a Science and Technology Studies perspective);
- Exploring the way unconscious bias may enter the reasoning of the judges (bringing e.g. a Social Anthropology perspective).
- Looking at how judges make evidential inferences which are scientifically dubious or even positively incorrect (bringing e.g. a Critical Criminology expertise);

These are examples only. Applicants are encouraged to submit their own proposal for a project which interrogates evidence in an original and interdisciplinary manner.

You will be part of the DISSECT research team and will share your findings and/or insights with the team on a regular basis.

If you are a doctoral candidate, you will write a PhD thesis. If you are a post-doctoral fellow, you will write academic publications. You will also attend academic conferences and participate in the dissemination of the findings of the research project.

English will be your main language of work.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BROADER RESEARCH PROJECT

Evidence is at the heart of adjudication, and adjudication at the heart of the international protection of human rights. Yet evidence in international human rights (IHR) adjudication remains to be comprehensively studied.

DISSECT captures the evidentiary regimes in place in the world's three regional human rights courts and in UN human rights quasi-judicial bodies. It sets itself four main tasks:

1. To examine from a purely legal perspective the formal and informal rules and practices ('regime') which govern the treatment of evidence in IHR adjudication.
2. To examine the political underpinnings and uses of the IHR evidentiary regime.
3. To identify 'best' and 'worst' practices and generate specific recommendations for use in IHR adjudication.
4. To develop new insights on evidence, truth and power and thus to create a new strand in Critical Legal Studies.

DISSECT's overall intention is to support international human rights adjudicatory bodies who are always at risk of losing their legitimacy if they cannot demonstrate that they are acting logically, consistently and fairly. It also seeks to benefit victims of human rights abuse who seek international redress without knowing exactly what evidence is required of them.

Current concerns about 'alt-truth' and 'truth decay' make DISSECT's subject of enquiry particularly timely. This recruitment wave is designed to help DISSECT deliver especially its fourth aim, although some projects may also contribute to the realisation of the other aims.

SOUGHT PROFILE

In order to be eligible, applicants must:

- Have obtained their degree (Masters for PhD position; PhD for post-doc position) at the time of the application or demonstrate convincingly that they will have that degree in hand by September 1, 2020;
- Demonstrate a real interest in, and ability for, interdisciplinary research;
- Be fluent in English as their main working language;
- Be in a position to spend periods of time abroad to conduct periods of fieldwork as appropriate to their project as well as to participate in international conferences.

The following attributes are desirable:

- A second degree in a discipline other than that of the first degree, with both disciplines relevant to the proposed project;
- Practical experience in the type of problem the project proposes to investigate;
- Some familiarity with international human rights law;
- Pre-existing networks relevant to the research.

In addition to these project-specific elements, candidates are expected to:

- Have the ability to work independently and in a team;
- Have excellent academic writing/presentation skills;
- Contribute towards the general well-functioning of the team;
- Have the ability to reach out to different audiences, including through use of social media;
- Work in a meticulous way and be able to manage deadlines.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please send, in **one single pdf file** and in the listed order, the following documents:

- A **cover letter** (double-space, font 12, maximum four pages) outlining what project you propose to conduct, why you wish to be part of DISSECT, and what you would bring to it;
- A **detailed CV** (including publication list if available);
- **Your degree(s)**, including transcripts - if these documents are in a language other than English or one of our three national languages (Dutch, French or German), please add a translation into one of the aforementioned languages.
- Two **letters of recommendation**, and
- A **writing sample** on a related topic (10,000 words maximum, in English, ideally an academic or research paper).

This **one-file** document is to be sent via email to dissect.vacancies@ugent.be

The subject line of your application email message should be written in the form of:

Application – [DISCIPLINE 1 and DISCIPLINE 2] – [your name]

As an illustration, this could read:

Application – LAW and SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY - Marie-Benedicte Dembour

The deadline for submission is **February 20, 2020**.

For inquiries, please contact prof. dr. Marie-Bénédicte Dembour at mariebene.dembour@ugent.be

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

Long-listed applicants will be invited to complete a short assignment, probably in early March 2020.

On the basis of this assignment, a shortlist of applicants will be invited for an interview. This is likely to take place towards the end of March 2020. This will be held either at the Human Rights Centre in Ghent or through video conferencing.

This interview will assess the quality and feasibility of your proposed research project as well as the relevance of your experience for DISSECT, and gauge whether you meet all the requirements.

The foreseen starting date is **October 1, 2020**.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Several elements, including prior experience and family situation, will be factored into the calculation of the salary offered.

An indicative starting salary for a person with six years of previous relevant experience and no family would be € 2334,88 net per month for a PhD candidate and slightly more for a post-doc researcher.

The University also offers several social benefits to which the candidate has access, such as commuter allowances and access to university restaurants.

The position must result in a PhD thesis (for the PhD position) or a major academic publication or publication portfolio (for the post-doc position) within the contract period.

The selected candidates will be based in Ghent, where you will be part of a small research team working on evidence in international human rights adjudication. This team is embedded in the Human Rights Centre of the Faculty of Law and Criminology of Ghent University (see below).

OUR DEPARTMENT

[Ghent University](#) is a top 100 university and one of the major universities in Belgium. Our 11 faculties offer a wide range of courses and conduct in-depth research within a wide range of scientific domains.

Ghent University occupies a specific position among the Flemish universities. We are a socially committed and pluralistic university that is open to all students, regardless of their ideological, political, cultural or social background. In its mission statement, Ghent University identifies itself as a socially committed university. This implies that the institution reflects about the positive impact that its activities can have upon society, and that it attempts to optimize that impact. It also implies the reflection about the potential negative impact of activities upon society, and the attempt of minimizing such impact.

Ghent University dares to think; research is its motor. It pushes boundaries. Researchers make discoveries, and these discoveries impact people worldwide, give new impulses to teaching, and provide a foundation for a knowledge society.

Over the course of its 200-year history Ghent University has built a strong scientific reputation. Ghent University invests both in fundamental, high risk science and in applied research. The university is known for its scientific expertise in life sciences and medicine, materials and agricultural science, veterinary medicine, psychology and history, and many other areas, including human rights law.

Faculty of Law and Criminology

The Faculty of Law and Criminology provides academic teaching and services based on innovative scientific research. The education within these programmes is supported by the innovative scientific research performed within three Faculty departments which encompass all possible disciplines within the fields of law and criminological sciences.

The Human Rights Centre

Embedded within the Faculty is the [Human Rights Centre](#), whose dynamic international team offers broad research and teaching expertise, covering from a variety of perspectives international, regional, national and comparative human rights law. The members of the Human Rights Centre work on a range of thematic issues, including legal pluralism, freedom of expression, gender, indigenous peoples' rights, transnational justice, and the European Court of Human Rights. Members also actively engage with human rights practice by supervising clinical projects and submitting third-party interventions to the European Court of Human Rights.

DIVERSITY

We ensure equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal access to the vacancies for all who apply. We ensure an objective and non-biased assessment procedure. Origin, ethnicity, gender, age, employment disability, sexual orientation and other identity factors will not be a factor in assessing the competences. Candidates belonging to vulnerable or minority groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See Q&A document [here](#).

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