

1 PhD and/or post-doc RESEARCH POSITION at Ghent University

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Deadline for application	15 July 2020
Foreseen starting date	1 October 2020 or as soon as feasible thereafter
Department	Faculty of Law and Criminology, Human Rights Centre
Contract	Limited duration
Degree requirements	PhD in law or a relevant social sciences discipline - for a post-doctoral researcher position; Master's degree in law or a relevant social sciences discipline - for a PhD position
Occupancy rate	100%
Vacancy type	Research

JOB DESCRIPTION

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

This position will be filled at either **doctoral or post-doctorate** level, as appropriate in view of the CV and experience of the selected candidate. If the position is offered for doing a PhD, the post is for 48 months. If the selected candidate is a post-doctoral fellow, the post is for a maximum of 36 months (or less if the fellow is able to complete the project in a shorter period).

If you apply for a PhD position, you will have a MA in Law (or possibly a relevant Social Sciences discipline).

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

The postholder will become a member 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 both a legal and a social perspective, the **evidence regime** developed at the **African Court of Human and People's Rights**.

You will have good prior knowledge of the Court's case law and use and extend it in order to identify legal issues such as the burden and the assessment of proof.

You will conduct fieldwork including interviews with judges, legal representatives, applicants and other parties, in order to explore the concrete conditions of the evidence regime.

You will devise methods of enquiry in collaboration with the other members of the research team (who are pursuing different but nonetheless related objects of enquiry) and share your findings with the research team on a regular basis.

If you are a doctoral candidate, you will write a PhD thesis under the supervision of Professor Dembour. If you are a post-doctoral fellow, you will write academic publications under Professor Dembour's mentorship. 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.

SOUGHT PROFILE

In order to be eligible, applicants must:

- Have obtained their degree (Masters for PhD position; PhD for senior research position) at the time of the application or demonstrate convincingly that they will have that degree in hand by 1 September 2020;
- Demonstrate prior familiarity with the African Court of Human and People’s Rights;
- Have a deep interest in the study of power and society;
- Be fluent in English as their main working language;
- Be in a position to spend periods of time abroad to conduct twice 3-month-long fieldwork and to participate in international conferences.

The following attributes are also highly desirable:

- Direct experience of the African Court;
- In-depth knowledge of the case law of the African Court;
- Experience in conducting ethnographic fieldwork or qualitative interviews, or interest in conducting these;
- An academic background that helps to interrogate questions of evidence;
- Experience in writing academic studies of publishable quality;
- 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 presentation skills;
- Contribute towards the general well-functioning of the team;
- Have the ability to reach out to different audiences, including through the 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 why you wish to be part of the DISSECT research project, what you would bring to it and, if you wish, any preliminary idea as to how you would conduct your part of the project;
- 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 – AFRICAN COURT – [your name]

As an illustration, this could read:

Application – AFRICAN COURT - Marie-Bénédicte Dembour

The deadline for submission is **15 July 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 the first fortnight of August 2020.

On the basis of this assignment, a shortlist of applicants will be invited for a recruitment interview held through video conferencing and likely to take place towards the end of August 2020.

This interview will assess the quality and feasibility of the proposed research project as well as the relevance of the candidate's experience for DISSECT, and gauge whether the requirements and desirable attributes are met.

If possible, the starting date is **1 October 2020**. If this is not possible (for example due to time being needed to obtain a visa or to arrange re-locating to Ghent), this will be as soon as possible afterwards.

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](#) [link: <https://hrc.ugent.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/QA-Dissect-African-Court-vacancy.pdf>]

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