



The Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe, KFG) '[Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History](#)' at [Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich](#) (LMU) is seeking to appoint

3 Junior Fellowships

with a **research topic** focusing on the **economy or human rights or religion/secularity in contemporary European history**. Applications with

other research topics, connected to the overall agenda of the KFG, are welcome.

The Center is seeking for three junior fellows for the **summer term 2026** (April-September), with a preferred starting date on **1 April 2026**.

Project description

The Center for Advanced Studies (Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe, KFG)

Centers for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (KFG), funded by the [German Research Foundation](#) (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) are interdisciplinary research groups with exceptional funding conditions. They have an initial funding period of four years, with the possibility of prolongation for a second funding period, and offer an international fellowship program, which allows a large number of leading experts to convene and explore an innovative research topic over a long period of time.

The KFG 'Universalism and Particularism' investigates **universalist and particularist models of order in European contemporary history from the 1970s to the present**. Universalist claims aim to validate universally applicable rules. However, demands for such rules usually grow out of concrete interests. In contrast, particularist models reject any general claim and justify guiding principles that are oriented towards the construction of individual or group-related needs. The KFG research program asks how universalist and particularist claims were constructed in contemporary history and investigates the ways these claims helped conceptualize, justify, promote, or even prevent socio-political change. The goal of the Center is to better understand the complex ways in which universalist and particularist models of order were transmitted and layered on each other in European contemporary history.

Research Focus 'Religion and Secularity'

Religious concepts are used in designing both universalist and particularist models of order. This research focus analyzes religious and secular models of order, with the presumption that they are ambivalent and open to interpretation. It is especially interested in those religious or secular concepts that have gained political relevance in recent contemporary history, e.g., in the transformation of East (Central) European societies after 1989, the global financial crisis, or in the context of worldwide migration. At the same time, the research project also examines intersections of religion and particularist ideologies such as nationalism.

Research Focus 'The Economy'

Economic ties are thought to be able to reduce the risk of interstate conflicts. However, economic activity is always space- and time-dependent, and markets only arise in certain social orders. In the history of Europe since the 1970s, the universal and the particular in economic activity often overlap. In Western Europe, economic integration developed as a balancing act between the opening of internal borders and greater closure to third states. In Eastern Europe, economic integration projects extending beyond the EU, some of which are based on pre-1989 market structures, are also developing. The validity of the idea of a liberal, open economic order is severely limited by both internal developments in the EU and external challenges. The research focus also examines the interaction of economic discourses with economic practices, with a special emphasis on academic discourses.

Research Focus 'Human Rights'

The postulate of human rights became attractive as a concept throughout the world in the 1970s and was a major driver of political protest in the pre-1989 dissident movement. With the democratization of post-communist societies, the issue of human rights seemed to become less important. On the other hand, recourse to human rights formed a decisive element in the universalistic draft of the world order of liberal internationalism that triumphed in 1989–91. At the same time, this policy increasingly met with opposition. Since the 2010s, the EU has been confronted with the serious problem of maintaining a uniform standard of civil rights in Poland and Hungary. The modern authoritarian and populist regimes of East (Central) European countries question the universality of human rights by trying to unmask them as a particular ideology that is directed against traditional family or cultural values.

Fellowships

The KFG fellowships are awarded for **3-6 months** in the **summer term 2026 (April-September)**. We offer **a stipend of €2,400 and a rent subsidy of up to €1,800 on a monthly basis** as well as **travel costs reimbursement** for a single trip to Munich at the beginning of the fellowship period and a single return trip at the end.

Apart from engaging in their individual research, fellows are expected to actively participate in the Center's weekly colloquia and to contribute to the development of a methodological anthology on the main concepts of historical and political sciences connected with universalism and particularism in European contemporary history. The Junior Fellows are also expected to jointly organize a two-day workshop in Munich in cooperation with the KFG team (funded by the Center).

During the research stay in Munich, Junior Fellows will have the opportunity to exchange with the KFG directors and co-applicants [Martin Schulze Wessel](#), [Kiran Klaus Patel](#), and [Andreas Wirsching](#), the Distinguished Fellows [Marta Bucholc](#), [Alexander Libman](#), and [Angelika Nußberger](#), as well as Senior Fellows Dorothee Bohle, Zuzanna Bogumil and Claudia Kraft.

Interdisciplinarity plays a significant role for the KFG's research, so that applications are possible with topics contributing to any of the three research foci, or to the overall agenda of the Center.

Junior Fellow Workshop

As part of their fellowship, the Junior Fellows are expected to organize a joint two-day workshop in teamwork. The topic should correspond to the overall subject of universalism and particularism in European contemporary history and preferably be open to contributions from different disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, so that other members of the Center can also benefit from the output. The Junior Fellows team elaborates the workshop concept in consultation with the KFG directors and co-applicants, while the coordination office offers administrative support.

Requirements

- Applicants must have a PhD in a respective field;
- The working languages of the KFG are English and German, therefore excellent spoken and written knowledge of one of the languages is required;
- Regular presence at the Center in Munich is obligatory.

The KFG offers

- Participation in an interdisciplinary, innovative und prestigious DFG-funded joint research project;
- Access to extensive international networks of high-profile researchers in the social sciences and humanities;
- An open-minded, cooperative team;
- A monthly stipend and rent subsidy;
- Funding for a joint two-day Junior Fellow workshop;
- Flexible working hours and family-friendly working time schemes;
- A fully equipped workplace.

Applications

Applications must be sent in English or German **in one PDF file** to the KFG coordination office: kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

Applications should include:

- Signed application cover in English or German (attached)
- Letter of motivation describing the applicant's career path and current research interests;
- CV including list of publications;
- Outline of the planned research project and how it contributes to the agenda of the KFG (approx. 10.000 characters);
- Outline of the planned two-day workshop incl. topic, abstract, possible speakers (approx. 6.000 characters);
- Work sample (2-3 publications), preferably in English or German;
- Names and contact details of two potential referees.

The latest submission date for applications is **15 June, 2025**. The preferred starting date for the fellowship is 1 April 2026.

Please note that any costs arising in connection with your application cannot be reimbursed.

In its pursuit of academic excellence, LMU is committed to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture and values diversity. LMU is a family-friendly employer and is also responsive to the needs of dual career couples.

For further details about the fellowships, please contact the KFG coordination office: kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

Jury

Directors and co-applicants

- [Prof. Dr. Martin Schulze Wessel](#)

professor of Eastern European History at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, director and spokesperson of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences 'Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History', and director at [Collegium Carolinum](#), a Munich research institute for the history of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

- [Prof. Dr. Kiran Klaus Patel](#)

professor of Modern European History at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, director of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences 'Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History', and director of [Project House Europe](#).

- [Prof. Dr. Andreas Wirsching](#)

professor of Contemporary History at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, co-applicant of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences 'Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History', and director of the [Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History](#) in Munich and Berlin.

Distinguished Fellows

- [Prof. Dr. Marta Bucholc](#)

professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, University of Warsaw and Chercheuse Associée at the Centre de recherche en science politique, University of Saint-Louis, Brussels.

- [Prof. Dr. Alexander Libman](#)

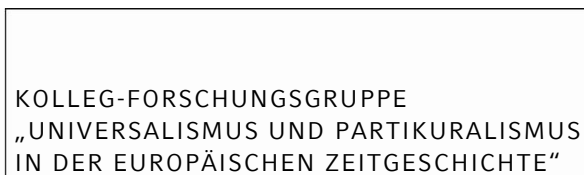
professor of Russian and East European Politics at the Free University of Berlin since October 2020.

- [Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Dr. h.c. Angelika Nußberger](#)

professor at the University of Cologne, where she has headed the Institute for Eastern European Law and Comparative Law since 1 October 2002.

More information on the KFG and its research agenda can be found here:

- [Website of the KFG "Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History"](#)
- [Wissenschaftsportal L.I.S.A.: Interview with Martin Schulze Wessel on the KFG](#) (in German)
- [Wissenschaftsportal L.I.S.A.: Interview with Kiran Patel on the KFG](#) (in German)
- [Wissenschaftsportal L.I.S.A.: Interview with Andreas Wirsching on the KFG](#) (in German)
- [Wissenschaftsportal L.I.S.A.: Interview with Angelika Nußberger on the KFG](#) (in German)



Application as Junior Fellow of the KFG “Universalism and Particularism”

Cover

Personal Information

Surname	
Given Name(s)	
Academic Title	

Alma Mater

Name	
Faculty/Department	
Address (incl. Country)	

Information About Home Institution

Name	
Faculty/Department	
Address (incl. Country)	

Information About Planned Project

Title of Planned Project		
Planned Stay	from:	to:

I hereby apply as a Junior Fellow and confirm that all the data provided is correct and complete.

Location, Date

Signature of Applicant