

Call for applications

OSF EURASIA PROGRAMME FELLOWSHIPS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

The [University of Tartu](#) (Estonia) announces a call for applications for **doctoral candidates** and **PhD-holding academics** in the Social Sciences for a five-month fellowship at the [Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies](#), supported by the [Eurasia Programme of the Open Society Foundations](#). The call is addressed to citizens of **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan**.

The purpose of the fellowship programme is to enable scholars from the target countries to develop analytical and research skills and build international networks by participating in a **five-month resident fellowship programme** at the [Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies](#) at the University of Tartu.

FELLOWSHIP PERIOD: February 3, 2020 – July 2, 2020

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: November 14, 2019.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

The fellowship programme focuses on **political and societal transition in Eurasia and Eastern Europe** in a comparative perspective. Post-communist transformation processes in the region have produced a variety of political outcomes, ranging from dictatorships to hybrid regimes to consolidated democracies. The record on governance and quality of public institutions is equally mixed: while some countries are plagued by endemic corruption and inefficient governance, others have succeeded in building accountable, open and innovative public institutions. The region remains dynamic, as authoritarian regimes face public demands for democratic change, greater accountability and better performance – and sometimes react by further constraining dissent. In countries that have succeeded in building well-functioning democratic institutions, backsliding remains a possibility, as democratic institutions face economic pressures and are challenged by populists promising simple solutions to complex problems. Finally, transformation processes in Eurasia and Eastern Europe continue to unfold in a complex international environment, and are influenced by external actors pursuing different – and often competing -- interests and agendas.

The fellowship programme is premised on the idea that there are valuable lessons to be learned from a comparative analysis of political and societal transition in Eurasia and Eastern Europe, and that such analysis has the potential to lead to better policies and positive change. We invite doctoral candidates and young scholars to propose research projects relevant to this general theme. **Specific sub-topics on which the host institution is prepared to provide research supervision include:**

- Democracy, democratization, elections;
- State- and nation-building, governance, political institutions;
- E-governance, e-society, e-services, e-voting;
- Ethnic diversity, minority politics and policies;
- Political memory, memory politics, transitional justice;



- Identity, values, public opinion;
- European integration, including the Eastern partnership; other regional integration projects and initiatives;
- International relations in Europe and Eurasia
- International Political Economy of Transition
- Energy regimes
- Sovereignty, security and international order
- Frozen conflicts and de facto states in Eurasia
- Baltic transition and reform experiences

[Fellowship structure](#)

The project will support **two fellows** (one PhD candidate and one Post-doctoral Fellow) for a five-month period (February 3, 2020 - July 2, 2020). Fellows will be resident scholars at the Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies at the University of Tartu (see also Host Institution, below.) They will work on their individual research projects under the supervision of a senior academic. During the fellowship they will have the opportunity to improve their analytical skills, research methodology and writing by making use of resources, supervision and training provided by the host institution. Upon each fellow's acceptance, relevant interests and training needs will be assessed, and an individual work plan will be agreed upon by the fellow and a host institution, detailing activities and outcomes to be achieved. The fellows are expected to write one or several research or policy papers and present this work at a conference, workshop or research seminar. Fellows will have access to training opportunities (including graduate-level courses on a range of topics) and research infrastructure such as libraries, databases and computing facilities. In addition, fellows are expected to actively participate in the academic life of the host institution, attending research colloquia, conferences, workshops, and other events organized by the Skytte institute.

[Financial terms and conditions](#)

The fellows are supported by a grant from the [OSF Eurasia programme](#), administered by the University of Tartu. The grant covers travel, visa, accommodation, health insurance and living costs during the fellowship period. Specifically, the PhD candidate will receive a monthly scholarship of 1200 euros, while the Post-Doctoral Fellow will receive a net salary of 1500 euros per month.

The fellows are expected to cover accommodation and living costs from the monthly income specified above. The host institution will provide assistance in arranging suitable accommodation (options include single room in a modern dormitory or hostel, or a small rental apartment).

Additionally, expenses for one-time roundtrip travel to Tartu will be covered along with relevant visa and insurance fees. Air tickets will be arranged and covered directly by the University of Tartu. Visa and insurance fees must initially be incurred by the Fellow but will be reimbursed upon the Fellow's arrival to Tartu. In addition, limited funding will be available for professional travel in the region (e.g. attending a conference outside of Estonia during the fellowship period).

The programme does not provide any support to the fellows' family members. The fellow is expected to be present in Tartu for the entire duration of the fellowship, with the exception of professional travel (e.g. conference attendance, visits to partner institutions) approved by the host institution.

Host institution

The [University of Tartu](#) is a leading research university in New Europe. [QS University Rankings: Emerging Europe and Central Asia 2019](#) ranks the UT in the top 5 best universities in the entire post-communist region. Founded in 1632 and located in the lively yet peaceful city of [Tartu](#) in South Estonia, the UT has four faculties, including Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Medicine, and Science and Technology, and approximately 13,000 students (including over 1000 international students from 70 countries).

[Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies](#) at the University of Tartu combines top-level research with a dynamic, international learning environment at all three levels of higher education. The Institute belongs to the top 10 best departments of politics in the Nordic-Baltic region and 101-150 Politics & International Studies departments in the world (according to QS World University Rankings 2019). The Institute has built up considerable competences in Eastern European Studies. Since 2011, the Institute has been a home to the Centre for EU-Russia Studies ([CEURUS](#)) which pools relevant competences from a range of disciplines, including the Social Sciences, Economics and Law. Ongoing, thematically relevant projects implemented by the Centre and the Institute include an ERA chair in E-Governance and Digital Public Services (2019-2024); Horizon 2020 Twinning project "Building Research Excellence in Russian and East European Studies at the Universities of Tartu, Uppsala and Kent" ([UPTAKE](#), 2016-2019) and a Horizon 2020 MSCA Innovative Training Network project [FATIGUE](#): "Delayed Transformational Fatigue in Central and Eastern Europe," (2018-2021). The UT hosts the [Annual Tartu Conference](#) in Russian and East European Studies, a major meeting of academics and experts working on the region.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be a citizen of one of the Eurasia Programme target countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine or Uzbekistan) and be permanently residing in one of these countries;
- Applicants for the doctoral fellowship must be doctoral students enrolled in a PhD programme* in the Social Sciences (preferably in Political Science or International Relations) at an institution of higher education in one of the programme countries (for at least one year at the time of applying);
- Applicants for the postdoctoral fellowship must be young scholars who have been awarded a PhD (or candidate degree)* in the Social Sciences (preferably in Political Science or International Relations or a closely related field) during a period of six years preceding the application deadline;
- Applicants should have a very good command of English (be able to follow lectures and write academic or policy papers in English);
- Preference will be given to individuals whose work has potential to make a significant contribution to the public interest and to building open societies, as well as to individuals who

face the risk of isolation or marginalization in their home country. Individuals who have already spent considerable time in the EU or North America, and have extensively benefited from comparable fellowship programs, will, as a rule, not be selected for support.

*For the purposes of this programme, a candidate degree (*kandidatskaya*) awarded in several Eurasian countries is considered to be an equivalent of a doctoral degree awarded in the Western system. Thus, the definition of a doctoral candidate includes those working towards their candidate degree.

[Application process](#)

The deadline for applications is **November 14, 2019**.

Application documents should be sent electronically to eurasiafellows@ut.ee by **23:59 PM Estonian time (GMT/UTC+02:00) on November 14, 2019**. All documents should be **in English**. Academic transcripts may be in a language other than English but should be accompanied by a translation provided (and signed) by the applicant.

Applicants for the doctoral fellowship must submit the following documents:

- completed application form, [available here](#);
- a cover letter, explaining the candidate's motivation for applying (max 1 page);
- description of the research project to be undertaken during the fellowship period (max 3 pages), detailing the objectives and relevance of the project, main research questions, theoretical and empirical approaches and data used. Please indicate what the concrete research output will be (academic article, chapter of a dissertation or a book; policy paper, etc.). Feel free to indicate what kind of assistance and advice you need with this project;
- CV detailing education, professional experience, and any publications;
- official letter from home university proving enrollment in a PhD programme, together with an academic transcript (if applicable) detailing coursework completed;
- copy of the identification pages of the applicant's passport.

Applicants for the post-doctoral fellowship must submit the following documents:

- completed application form, [available here](#);
- a cover letter, explaining the candidate's motivation for applying (max 1 page);
- description of the research project to be undertaken during the fellowship period (max 3 pages), detailing the objectives and relevance of the project, main research questions, theoretical and empirical approaches and data used. Please indicate what the concrete research output will be (academic article, chapter of a dissertation or a book; policy paper, etc.). Feel free to indicate what kind of assistance and advice you need with this project;
- CV detailing education, professional experience, and any publications;
- copy of PhD (or candidate degree) diploma and academic transcript (if applicable) detailing coursework completed;
- copy of the identification pages of the applicant's passport.

Applications will be reviewed by a three-member selection committee.

Selection criteria include:

- quality and feasibility of the research proposal, including the extent to which it corresponds to the thematic focus and specific sub-topics of the programme as well as the competences of the host institution (as described above);
- academic and professional qualifications and abilities of the candidate;
- candidate's potential to contribute to academic and policy debates in home country/the broader region;
- candidate's command of the English language.

Please note that the selection committee may decide to conduct phone or Skype interviews with short-listed applicants in order to verify English language proficiency and academic qualifications, and to discuss the proposed research.

All applicants will be notified of the results of the selection process within three weeks of the application deadline.

Please address any questions about the programme or the application process to eurasiafellows@ut.ee.