

The Institute of Political Science at Heidelberg University invites applications for a

Doctoral Researcher in Politics of Climate Change (f/m/d)

Focus: Qualitative Research and Group Formation

The doctoral researcher position is part of the DFG Emmy Noether project “The New Climate Divide” (Principal Investigator: Jun.-Prof. Dr. Endre Borbáth). **The position is initially funded for two years, with the possibility of an extension for an additional two years**, contingent upon the successful evaluation of the overall project. The position is based at Heidelberg University and remunerated according to **TV-L E13 at 75%**, provided that the personal and collectively agreed requirements are met.

The preferred **starting date is 21 September 2026**, with some flexibility. The application **deadline is 21 June 2026**. Interviews are expected to take place between 6 and 8 July 2026.

Project Description:

The research project, funded by the Emmy Noether Programme of the German Research Foundation (DFG), investigates the dynamics of emerging polarization on climate change in the electoral and civil society arenas. ClimateDivide combines computational social science methods, survey experiments, and qualitative analysis of in- and out-group identity formation using focus groups. The project covers seven European countries: France, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Hungary, and Romania.

The advertised position is located in Work Package 3: Group Formation. WP3 examines how in-group and out-group identities are shaped by mobilization and participation on the emerging climate divide in a geopolitically charged polycrisis context. It relies primarily on focus groups with mobilizing organizations and individual participants in four country cases selected from the seven countries covered by the project: France, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Hungary, and Romania. **The doctoral researcher will contribute to the design, preparation, implementation, analysis, and publication of the WP3 research agenda and will write a dissertation connected to the work package.**

For more information about the project, please visit: <https://climatedivide.eu/>

Your Tasks:

- Contribute to the conceptual development and implementation of Work Package 3 on group formation
- Prepare and organize qualitative fieldwork in selected European country cases
- Identify and contact relevant political parties, social movements, civil society organizations, activists, and participants in climate-related mobilization
- Contribute to the design of focus group protocols and interview guides
- Conduct focus groups with representatives of mobilizing organizations and individual participants
- Organize, document, and manage qualitative data collection, transcription, anonymization, and data protection procedures
- Analyze qualitative data using appropriate methods, such as qualitative content analysis, discourse analysis, or interpretive approaches to identity formation
- Contribute to the preparation of publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Present project results at international conferences and workshops
- Write a doctoral dissertation related to the research agenda of Work Package 3
- Participate actively in the intellectual life of the ClimateDivide project team and the Institute of Political Science

Your Profile:

- A very good master's degree, or equivalent, in political science, sociology, social sciences, or a related discipline
- Strong interest in comparative politics, political sociology, social movements, political participation, climate politics, political polarization, or collective identities
- Good knowledge of qualitative methods in empirical social science research
- Experience with interviews, focus groups, qualitative coding, ethnographic approaches, discourse analysis, or interpretive methods is an advantage
- Interest in conducting comparative qualitative fieldwork across European country cases
- Excellent English proficiency, written and oral
- Good knowledge of German is strongly preferred
- Fluency in additional project-relevant languages, especially French, Swedish, Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, or Romanian, is an advantage
- Ability to work independently and as part of a collaborative research team
- Availability to work on-site in Heidelberg is preferred

We offer:

- A doctoral researcher position in a DFG-funded Emmy Noether research group, initially for two years, with the possibility of an extension for an additional two years, contingent upon the successful evaluation of the overall project
- A position focused primarily on research, with no regular teaching obligations
- Remuneration according to TV-L E13 at 75%
- Funding for conference and workshop participation in Germany and Europe
- Close supervision by the Principal Investigator and integration into the ClimateDivide research team
- A collaborative and interdisciplinary research environment at Heidelberg University, including links to the Heidelberg Center for the Environment
- Opportunities to contribute to an ambitious cross-national research project and to develop an independent doctoral dissertation

Application Procedure:

Please send your application, consisting of a **motivation letter (max. 2 pages)**, **CV**, **writing sample (max. 8,000 words)**, **relevant degree certificates with transcripts**, and **the contact information for two potential referees**. The motivation letter should clearly indicate which position you are applying for and outline the kind of research you would like to contribute to the work package. Recommendation letters are not required at the application stage.

Applications should be submitted **as a single PDF via email to endre.borbath@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de by 21 June 2026**. Please name the file **LastNameofCandidate_WorkPackageAppliedFor.pdf**.

Interviews are expected to take place between 6 and 8 July 2026.

Please note that application documents will not be returned. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide feedback on individual applications. If you have questions about the position, please contact Jun.-Prof. Dr. Endre Borbáth (endre.borbath@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de) or Dr. Dino Noah Wildi (dino.wildi@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de).

Heidelberg University stands for equal opportunities and diversity. Qualified female candidates are especially invited to apply. Persons with severe disabilities will be given preference if they are equally qualified. Information on job advertisements and the collection of personal data is available at www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/job-market