

Call for Applications

UP TO 20 FELLOWSHIPS FOR SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS OF LAW

Closing Date: 6 June 2019

re:constitution: Exchange and Analysis on Democracy and the Rule of Law in Europe

Scholars and practitioners of law from member states of the European Union are invited to apply for up to 20 fellowships provided by **re:constitution**, a new programme that aims for a European exchange on constitutional law and values that leads from common words to shared concepts.

re:constitution is a joint programme of the Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien and Democracy Reporting International (DRI). It is led by its Academic Director, Christoph Möllers (Professor of Public Law at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin / Permanent Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin), and a Collegium of legal scholars from different European countries that include Austria, France, Italy, Hungary, Spain, and the United Kingdom. **re:constitution** is funded by Stiftung Mercator.

THE PROGRAMME

In democracies the people's will is expressed and limited by law: "Democracy" and "Rule of Law" address the same issue from different sides. Political dynamics in the countries of the European Union have shifted their intersection in a way that merits discussion and analysis.

The challenges of democratic self-government and Rule of Law institutions within the EU and its member states are well described and much bemoaned. Many of these are at the core political issues. Yet, law matters. At a minimum, governments want to be seen to act lawfully. Many believe to have the law on their side. All have freely committed to uphold democracy and the Rule of Law in their constitutions, in EU law and in other frameworks.

The conflicts are not between states, but they split societies of many member states and increase political polarisation. Legal researchers and practitioners have nuanced opinions. However, there are few fora in the EU for a more personal, in-depth exchange on these challenges and possible solutions.

re:constitution intends to establish such a forum. The programme promotes mutual, personal exchange and information between relevant legal actors from the member states of the EU focusing on the relation between law, politics and administration. It operates without the restrictions and formality of institutionalised legal exchange.

As the context is not static, but constantly evolving, **re:constitution** will also publish topical analysis to inform the public debate and to inspire the debate in the programme.

Topics like the independence of the judiciary, the separation and balance of powers, the merits and dangers of administrative discretion or the institutional protection of democratic participation could be on their agenda. To realize this idea, we will offer a tripartite programme:

- **re:constitution** fellowships for younger scholars and practitioners of law,
- **re:constitution** seminars for experienced scholars and practitioners,
- Regularly published analysis (by DRI).

THE FELLOWSHIPS

re:constitution fellows will gain and share new experiences, reflect on topical developments and learn from each other to make comparative judgments on how to organize and protect institutions of democratic constitutionalism. Furthermore, they should try to (re-)build consensus on how to describe current institutional problems, if not on how to solve them.

Who Can Apply

- Legal practitioners (i.e. in courts, public administration or NGOs) and (postdoctoral) scholars of law and neighbouring disciplines at an early career stage who want to carry out projects of their own choice on questions related to the **re:constitution** programme.
- All applicants need to be residents of the European Union (including the United Kingdom) for the duration of the fellowship. Furthermore, applications from Switzerland are also welcome.

What We Offer

- **re:constitution** fellowships for one academic year, starting from 1st October 2019 until 31 July 2020.
- Within the fellowship, a six month stage at an institution of legal scholarship or practice of the fellow's own choice in a different EU country from the one they usually reside in; the stage can be divided between a research institution and an institution of legal practice.
- During the stages, a monthly stipend of €2.500 (plus supplements depending on personal circumstances) is granted.
- Personal exchange meetings: In the course of the academic year, the fellows will come together for three exchange meetings of 3 to 5 days. The first meeting will take place from 23 to 25 October 2019 in Berlin, the second and third in March and June 2020 in other EU member states. The curriculum of these meetings will be developed mutually by the fellows and in consultation with the coordinator of the programme.
- Digital exchange formats for the fellows: The exchange between the fellows will be supported by a secure digital working space provided by the Forum Transregionale Studien.

- New opportunities to pursue their own projects and participate in the exchange on democracy and the Rule of Law in Europe.
- Access to a European network of scholars and practitioners concerned with the Rule of Law.
- Continuous support throughout the fellowship in all organizational matters provided by the programme coordination team.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

An application should consist of:

- **Letter of motivation**, including
 - the names of one or more cities, and ideally indicate a preference of two or more institutions of legal research or practice in a member state of the EU where the applicant would like to pass the stage(s),
 - the possible dates of the stage(s),
 - indication of existing personal contacts to the preferred institution(s) or of required support of the coordination team of **re:constitution**,
- **Description of a project** (e.g. an essay, an academic article, a policy paper or a book), stating what the practitioner or scholar will work on if granted a fellowship (2-3 pages),
- **Curriculum vitae** including publications (2-3 pages),
- **Names of two references** (university faculty members or practitioners in a field relevant to the applicant's project) who can serve as referees (no letters of recommendation required).

The working language of **re:constitution** is English. The application should be submitted by e-mail as **one PDF file (max. size 5 MB)** and should be received by **6 June 2019**, sent to:

reconstitution(at)trafo-berlin.de

The applications will be evaluated by the Collegium of **re:constitution**. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection process by early July.

The Berlin-based **Forum Transregionale Studien** is a research organization that promotes the internationalization of research in the humanities and social sciences. The Forum provides scope for collaboration among researchers with different regional and disciplinary perspectives and appoints researchers from all over the world as fellows. In cooperation with universities and research institutions in Berlin and outside, it carries out research projects that examine other regions of the world and their relationship to Germany and Europe systematically and with new questions. Apart from **re:constitution** the Forum supports four research programmes and initiatives: ART HISTORIES AND AESTHETIC PRACTICES, PRISMA UKRAÏNA—Research Network Eastern Europe, ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship, and EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST—THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME).

www.forum-transregionale-studien.de

Democracy Reporting International (DRI) is a non-partisan, independent, not-for-profit organisation registered in Berlin, Germany. DRI supports and engages people who are working to build, preserve and defend democratic and accountable institutions. DRI believes that institutions play a critical role. People make change, but institutions preserve it. In a polarised world, DRI helps local actors to protect and expand the democratic space that all share, independent of political opinions, religious beliefs or personal preferences. DRI's Berlin team works with country offices to implement projects in different countries (Tunisia, Lebanon, Libya, Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova) and undertake policy-oriented research. Global projects and smaller country projects are also implemented directly from headquarters. Furthermore, DRI works thematically on democratic discourse, including social media & democracy, as well as rule of law in Europe. DRI's projects are funded by the European Union, European Ministries of Foreign Affairs and private foundations.

www.democracy-reporting.org/

Stiftung Mercator is a private and independent foundation. Through its work it strives for a society characterized by openness to the world, solidarity and equal opportunities. In this context it concentrates on strengthening Europe; increasing the educational success of disadvantaged children and young people, especially those of migrant origin; improving the quality and impact of cultural education; driving forward climate change mitigation and promoting science and the humanities.

<https://www.stiftung-mercator.de/>