

Call for Applications

The Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) offers up to four PhD positions in its Junior Research Group “Global Armenia/ns. Entangled Histories of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus“(subject to the available funds).

Deadline for application: 31.01.2025

Research Program:

The Armenian diasporas have spanned the globe and impacted societies around the world. The junior research group explores their multiple entanglements with societies and states in Central and Eastern Europe, and the lasting effects of these ties in local, regional and international contexts. Using methods from global and comparative area studies, as well as approaches from the interdisciplinary field of Armenian Studies, we examine dynamics, scope and depth of the transregional relations. Proposals for research projects leading to a doctoral degree should address one of the following five thematical fields:

(1) The Role of the Armenian Diaspora

Armenians have lived in Central and Eastern Europe for centuries and are still an important part in its societies. The project shall explore the social, cultural, economic and legal place of Armenian diaspora groups in the region, preferably with a focus on the 20th century or the contemporary period. In several Central and Eastern European countries (e.g. in Poland, Hungary and Romania) Armenian diasporic communities are officially recognized national minorities, which invites for comparison both with other ethnic communities and/or across regions. The current rediscovery of the multi-ethnic past in Polish society, for example, has linked to the question of how Armenian heritage fits into the broader self-image of the host-country. Similar lines of investigations for other societies and states of the region are welcome, too. Overall, we are interested in studies of self-perceptions and identifications, including relations to homelands, of local practices of heritage preservation and socio-political engagement, and the perceptions and responses of Central and Eastern European societies.

(2) Armenian Representation in Cultural Production

Armenian history and culture have been frequently represented and co-produced in literatures, in film productions and graphic arts. We invite proposals for research on the expression and interpretation of the diversity that characterizes Armenian life in both the Caucasus region and in Europe as well as on the continuities and changes in this cultural and artistic representation, including but not limited to the impact of World War I and the Armenian genocide. While the focus shall be on practices and trends in in Central and Eastern, we strongly encourage studies proposals which include comparisons with other regions within Europe and beyond and/or investigate transfers and connections. Overall, we aim to better understand how representations of Armenians figure in a dominant culture, society and historical narrative, how this has reflected or staged their experiences or identifications, and what the perspective of literature, film and visual arts can offer for a broader understanding of the representation of Armenia/ns?

(3) Armenian Religious Communities and Churches

For centuries Armenian religious communities have situated themselves in the religious landscapes of Central and Eastern Europe, building their own institutions while adapting and connecting locally. The Armenian Apostolic Church and numerous Catholic communities, among others, have experienced the political changes in the region, the shifting borders, and the destruction caused by violent conflicts and

war. Through their presence and a long-standing practice of sheltering refugees and migrants from Armenian lands, they have become an integral part of the region's societies. At the same time, they have remained closely connected to transnational religious networks and the global Armenian diaspora. We aim to explore the local and transnational positioning of religious communities. Studies may focus either on specific ecclesiastical institutions, such as the Armenian Apostolic Church or the Roman Catholic Church, and the Armenian groups within them, or on the transnational networks of local Armenian communities and churches in Central and Eastern Europe. Inquiries of how Armenian religious institutions wielded global social and political agency across political and ideological divides are also welcome.

(4) Armenians in International Politics

The history of international politics in the 20th century is firmly rooted in the principle of sovereignty and state representation. Organizations such as the League of Nations and the United Nations have played a key role in governing international affairs along these lines. This project aims to explore how Armenian political actors in Central and Eastern Europe and other regions of the world have participated in and shaped the multifaceted internationalism of the last century without the backbone of a state of their own. What were their concerns, what international institutions did they use, what organizations did the global Armenian diaspora establish, and how did Armenian internationalism shape international politics? These questions can be analyzed from the perspective of policy making, in fields such as international humanitarianism and disarmament, technical cooperation or gender issues, or for networks and institutions of Armenian internationalist actors and groups.

(5) Armenian Environmental History

To date, Armenian environmental history can be discussed from a state-based perspective, in the context of the Ottoman Empire, Russian Empire, and as a republic within the Soviet Union. Additionally, environmental history and the environmental humanities can offer much broader perspectives. These include studies of the actual economic and technological practices of Armenian actors with their environment and the nature of their region, representations and ideas related to nature and the environment, and more recent legislation and government policies on nature and the environment since the 1990s, including issues related to pollution and climate change. For this field, we are particularly interested in comparative and transnational studies on Soviet and post-Soviet transformations of the nature and environment in Armenia, Armenian agriculture, such as wine production, or the international responses to natural disasters, such as the 1988 Spivak earthquake, as well as the links of the perceptions of nature and the environment with the tourist industry in Armenia.

With this range of topics, the junior research group aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the influence of Armenia/ns in the societies and states of Central and Eastern Europe, and to inscribe these entangled histories into the global history of the region.

Funding and Structure of the PhD Training

The PhD positions are funded by a stipend of 1,500 EUR, plus 200 EUR for literature and language training per month, for a period of three years, with the possibility of extending it by an additional year. The programme is to start on 01 April 2025. The scholarships are to be provided by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the GWZO (pending final approval). In addition, the Junior Research Group "Global Armenia/ns" is to be partially supported by Higher Education and Science Committee of the MESCS Republic of Armenia. The GWZO aims to secure additional funding for research-related expenses.

The PhD candidates in the humanities or social sciences will be offered doctoral training at the GWZO in cooperation with Leipzig University. Double degrees (Cotutelle) between Universities in Leipzig, Yerevan and Budapest are possible. Doctoral students will be fully integrated into the GWZO and its research departments and will benefit from the networks and infrastructure of the Institute. They will also participate in the structured doctoral program of the Graduate School Global and Area Studies (GSGAS) at Leipzig University.

How to apply

Applications must be submitted electronically in one PDF document and should include: a letter of motivation, curriculum vitae, diplomas and language certificates, an exposé of no more than 3 pages on the proposed study in one of the areas outlined, and the names of two referees. The deadline is 31.01.2025. Please send your application by email to Prof. Dr. Maren Röger: foerderung@leibniz-gwzo.de. An application by e-mail is questionable in terms of data protection. The sender bears full responsibility for this.

For further information, please contact the heads of the Junior Research Group:
Dr. Bálint Kovács (GWZO Leipzig /PPCU Budapest) balint.kovacs@leibniz-gwzo.de
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The **Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe** (GWZO) conducts comparative research into historical and cultural developments and processes in the region between the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and the Adriatic from late antiquity to the present day. The GWZO employs around 80 staff from Germany and abroad and has been based in Leipzig's city centre since 2010. From 2025 onwards, it will also have a representative office in the city centre of Prague. Research and publication on Armenian History and Culture in Eastern Europe is one of the pillars of the research program of GWZO, for more information see: <https://www.leibniz-gwzo.de/de/forschung/informationen-zu-armeniern>

Since July 2021, the GWZO has been the holder of the TOTAL E-QUALITY award for equal opportunities. The GWZO pursues the goal of professional equality between women and men and therefore strongly encourages women to apply. Applications from severely disabled persons are expressly encouraged.