

PhD Candidate in political science and comparative politics (ERC POLLOT project)

The CEE (Centre of European Studies and Comparative Politics) at Sciences Po in Paris invites applications for a PhD fellowship as part of the Horizon Europe ERC Starting Grant POLLOT of Dr Brenda Van Coppenolle (PI), “Political Lotteries in European Democratisation”.

Applicants should hold a Master degree in political science, history, economics, social science research methods, or a related field, completed or close to completion.

The position is funded on a full-time basis for a period of 3 years with no teaching obligations. Yet, a daily involvement in the project’s and research center’s activities is expected. The starting date for the fellowship is 1 September 2024.

Job description

The tasks include:

- Conduct research towards own scientific qualification (PhD)
- Involvement in collecting the (quantitative) data relevant to own PhD research
- Supporting the organization of team meetings and workshops
- Assistance with project reports and publications

Project POLLOT and PhD project Political lotteries in Europe

POLLOT will study past natural and present-day experiments with lotteries. The project started in May 2023 and will run until April 2028. POLLOT studies past experiments with political lotteries within legislatures during 19th century democratisation in Europe. In addition, new experiments with lotteries in online assemblies today will be designed. Political lotteries randomly draw citizens or legislators to take a political decision. Such lotteries could safeguard political equality in democracies straining under increasing economic inequality and polarization. How precisely can these increasingly promoted lotteries work as an institutional fix for polarization, disaffection, and misinformation? To what extent did lotteries widen access to new groups, change policy, and create trust within a new democratic establishment in the past? By their very nature, lotteries equalise opportunity of access to all. However, introducing lotteries with real policy influence, whether at the local or the national level, involves extensive institutional change, is often unfeasible, and could have unexpected effects. Luckily, we can learn from past experiments with lotteries to understand their potential in sustaining inclusive societies.

The ideal candidate for the PhD fellowship will have a keen interest in empirical research, and in quantitative research methods, to answer questions in Comparative Politics and Historical Political Economy. Their research will benefit from drawing on newly digitised, historical data from various resources, libraries and archives, compiled as part of the POLLOT research project. The student will develop and conduct novel empirical analysis under the theme of the POLLOT project. They will benefit from the supervision of Dr Brenda Van Coppenolle (PI), from interactions with the broader POLLOT project research team, from the

doctoral programme and support of the CEE at Sciences Po, and from insertion in a wider international research network. Candidates may be particularly interested in quantitative research methods to analyse historical natural experiments, as well as in designing and managing present-day online experiments.

The PhD research proposal should focus on one or several of the key historical cases of the POLLOT project, and/or on experimental research (<https://www.sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/fr/node/38676.html>). Within these broad parameters, the candidate may design an original research proposal and may also focus on related questions.

Supervision

The PhD fellow will be part of a research team led by PI Dr Brenda Van Coppenolle at Sciences Po, CEE, who will co-supervise the dissertation along with a senior member of the Political Science department.

PhD Programme

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the PhD programme of Sciences Po (School of Research/Ecole de la Recherche) and the work will result in a doctorate in political science.

About the CEE

Directed by Florence Faucher since September 2022, the Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics is a multidisciplinary research centre affiliated with Sciences Po and the CNRS (the French National Centre for Scientific Research). Its focus is on the comparative analysis of politics in its various dimensions.

Europe, both as a geographical and institutional space, provides the backdrop for the centre's comparative work, whose aim is to shed light on the changes in contemporary societies in Europe. Characterised by a plurality of approaches, the research is structured around four main key themes: Transformations of capitalism; Cities, borders, and mobilities; State and public policies; Strain in representative democracy.

The research conducted by the Centre covers a wide range of themes, including major themes in politics and polity (institutions, elections, political parties and competition, activism, social movements, crisis of representative democracy, populism), public policies (healthcare and social protection, environment, migration, inclusion and anti-discrimination efforts), political economy (globalisation, tertiarisation, financialisation, regulations), transformations of the state (decentralisation, administrative reforms), European Union (EU institutions and public policies, European integration, EU relations), urban studies (urbanisation, metropolises, segregation, conflicts), digital and ecological transitions, sociology of elites, and sociology of crime.

The candidate will benefit from all the facilities at Sciences Po, including a workplace, an extended access to the library and the electronic resources and scientific support within the research centre.

For more information:

<https://www.sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/en/content/presentation-cee.html>

Requirements:

Essential:

- A Master's degree in Political Science (or a closely related discipline in the social sciences, e.g. Economics, history, social science research methods) with a substantive and methodological focus relevant to the project, completed or close to completion.*
- Excellent academic track record
- Advanced-level quantitative analysis skills: Demonstrable training and experience using quantitative research methods and techniques.*
- Advanced-level data processing skills: Proven ability of social science data entry, management and analysis skills with Stata or R; General digital literacy and experience with Python is desirable.*
- A keen interest as well as some research experience in some of the relevant subjects is desirable: historical political economy, historical empirical research, (natural) experiments in political science, political representation, political inequality, political institutions, elections, lotteries, or political parties.*
- Proficiency in English: Good oral and written communication skills (for academic research).*
- Experience with writing up research findings.*
- Ability to take initiative, self-manage and contribute intellectually to the project.
- Ability to work as part of a team, and independently.
- Attention to detail.*

Desirable:

- Some knowledge of French (the PhD candidate will be based at Sciences Po in Paris).
- Reading proficiency in at least one more of the following languages would be an advantage: French, German, Danish, or Dutch.
- Some experience with (designing and conducting) experiments or moderating focus groups would be an advantage.
- A good qualitative understanding of the historical cases under study in the project, or a willingness to learn.
- Some experience with Python; general digital literacy (including for example knowledge of LaTeX)
- Experience in writing reports for funders.

(*Criteria to be used to shortlist candidates for interview)

We offer

In addition to the benefits of forming part of the POLLOT research team, Sciences Po offers:

- Internationally competitive salary for 36 months
- Funding for international conference attendance to present project results
- Optional teaching opportunities
- An academically stimulating working environment

- Workspace in Paris
- A vibrant, integrated and international research community

Assessment

In assessing the candidates, particular emphasis will be placed on the quality and originality of the research proposal as well as the individual project's fit within the overall research project. Academic qualifications, writing skills, language proficiency and other qualifying experience will also be of key importance.

- Application deadline: **10 January 2024**
- Interviews: expected to take place between 22 January and 9 February 2024

Final decision expected by mid-March 2024.

Application procedure

The application procedure consists of **two required steps**:

- 1) Online Admission: The application **must** be submitted [online](https://www.sciencespo.fr/ecole-doctorale/en/content/admission-phd.html), according to the Admissions conditions and calendar of Sciences Po.
<https://www.sciencespo.fr/ecole-doctorale/en/content/admission-phd.html>

The application must include the following documents:

- Two academic recommendations (an optional professional recommendation may be added)
- Copy of ID
- Letter of motivation
- Outline of ideas for the doctoral project (2,000-3,000 words)
- Copy of BA and MA (if already available) degree diplomas. For candidates currently in the process of obtaining the requested diploma, please attach all the transcripts available at the time of your application.
- CV with full summary of education, practice, academic and non-academic work experience, language proficiency, positions of trust, and other qualifying/extra-curricular activities. The period of enrolment (admission-completion) in the Master's study programme must be specified
- If applicable: up to two academic research outputs (such as a Master thesis or published articles)

- 2) Applications must also be submitted through the Centre of European Studies and Comparative Politics.

When the first step of your application has been completed, please send an email to recruitment@sciencespo.fr and pollot@sciencespo.fr with the following documents:

- Cover Letter of Motivation
- CV

- Outline of ideas for the doctoral project (2,000-3,000 words): A draft research proposal for the PhD that fits into the remit of the POLLLOT project as described above
- If applicable: up to two academic research outputs (such as a Master thesis or published articles)
- Optional: Master thesis, or thesis proposal

The deadline for completing both steps is **10 January 2024**.

Team

[Brenda Van Coppenolle](#), Senior Research Fellow, Sciences Po, CEE (Principal Investigator)

More

Equally well qualified disabled persons will be given priority. Women and people with an immigration background are expressly invited to apply.

If you have any questions, please send an e-mail to Brenda Van Coppenolle: pollot@sciencespo.fr

Further information about the CEE

<https://www.sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/en.html>

Further information about the School of Research

<https://www.sciencespo.fr/ecole-recherche/en/>