

Advertisement for a postdoctoral fellowship funded by the European Research Council at Sciences Po, France.

General information

Position Definition: Post-doctoral researcher

Place of work: France and/or Spain

Type of contract: Temporary contract

Contract duration: 24 months

Expected hiring date: 1st May 2026

Work time: full-time

Required level of study: PhD and post-doctorate

Successful applicants will be interviewed by 1 March 2026

The European Research Council Advanced Grant project “The Global War on Civilians, 1905-1945” seeks a Postdoctoral researcher on aerial bombardment in the Spanish Civil War.

Application deadline: 15 January 2026 **Start date:** 1st May 2026

Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in the Spanish Civil War

Funded by the European Research Council, the Advanced Grant “The Global War on Civilians, 1905-1945” aims at exploring the evolution of types of warfare that targeted the enemy’s civil population, focusing on (1) aerial bombardment, and civil defense (2) food blockades, and home front campaigns to ration food, and (3) efforts to “demoralize” enemy civilians, while boosting “morale” at home. We investigate how the transnational circulation of knowledge and practices culminated by World War II in systematic attacks on civilians *and* the creation of home fronts that mobilized civilians. The Principal Investigator (PI) is Prof. Sheldon Garon, a global historian and specialist in Japanese history. The project is hosted by the Centre d’histoire of Sciences Po, at Sciences Po, in Paris, France, an international research institution with strengths in history and the social sciences.

The current team members are researching Italy, Germany, Britain, France, Japan, the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Nazi-Soviet war, and international law and humanitarianism. We seek a Postdoctoral researcher on aerial bombardment in the Spanish Civil War.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will work under the direct supervision of the PI and in collaboration with the other team members. He/she would research the following topics:

- The aerial bombardment of Spanish cities as an important “transnational moment” in the development of strategic bombing by German, Italian, and Soviet air forces.
- The Spanish Civil War as a focus of the transnational peace movement and international law efforts.

- New developments in the mobilization of civilians and “home fronts” on both sides in the civil war.
- New developments in passive defense (civil defense), air-raid shelters, and understanding of civilian “morale” in Spain.
- Transnational learning. What “lessons” were other nations learning from bombardment, passive defense, and home-front programs in Spanish cities? Many nations were investigating these developments in the Spanish Civil War—including Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the postdoc will examine transnational connections, in cooperation with the project’s other researchers who will be researching Germany, Italy, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.

Tasks

Reporting to the Principal Investigator, the main tasks are (but are not limited to) the following:

- Research extensively in Spanish archives and libraries relating to the Research Questions above, and possibly in archives in Italy, Germany, and France.
- Publish at least two papers in English related to the project, one of which will appear in the collective volume edited by the PI
- Participate in the project’s workshops and conferences over the five-year span of the project
- Actively collaborate with other team members to excavate transnational connections among the national cases
- Assist the PI with research for his book, “When Home Fronts Became Battlegrounds: The Global War on Civilians”

Preference will be given to candidates who have done historical and archival research on aspects of the Spanish Civil War. The postdoc will conduct archival research on Barcelona and Madrid, at minimum, and possibly on other bombed cities in Spain, Catalonia, and Basque country. Depending on linguistic capabilities, the postdoc may also visit relevant archives in Italy and Germany.

The Postdoctoral researcher will be affiliated with Sciences Po in Paris, and the researcher may live in Paris if necessary. But because of the emphasis on archival research in Spain, we prefer that the Postdoc be based in Spain, with occasional team meetings in Paris.

The selected candidate must ensure they have legal permission to work in the European Union.

Sciences Po is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to ensuring a balanced representation of genders, geographical areas and minorities. Applications from women are particularly welcome.

Funding

For this position, we offer:

- a contract for two years of full-time employment as a Postdoctoral Researcher;
- an internationally competitive salary that include social benefits;
- an allowance for travel and research expenses.

Profile description

Ph.D. defense must be completed before the start date.

Excellent skills in archival research.

Expertise in collecting and preparing historical data for datasets.

Excellent writing and communication skills.

Advanced level of Spanish and English (written and spoken) and reading knowledge of Catalan.

Knowledge of Italian or German is an advantage.

Sense of teamwork.

Application

1. A **letter of application** (no more than 2 pages) explaining your qualifications and motivation for the project and the added value that you are expected to bring;
2. A **curriculum vitae** with a list of education, positions, teaching experience, administrative experience, other qualifying activities and a list of publications;
3. Scanned copies of relevant diplomas and certificates;
4. A final **report on your dissertation**;
5. Contact information (email addresses, number phones) for **two academic references**.

Applications to be sent to the ERC project manager: alexandra.shubenkova@sciencespo.fr