



Opening: Student Assistant

The research group “Conquering (with) Concrete. Global Construction Companies as Global Players in Local Contexts” invites applications for one student/scientific assistant (SHK/WHK, 10h/week) to join the team in April 2021. The contract will be granted for the period of 6 months, with an option for renewal. The research project is funded by the VolkswagenStiftung as part of the Freigeist Fellowship program and co-funded by the IRS Erkner.

Research topic

Global construction companies impact our futures. Beyond the edifices and infrastructures they construct, they also fundamentally influence governmental development aid policies, or dislocate people to build a new dam, for example. Yet the role of these major global players and their persistent presence in different world regions has barely been reflected upon.

This project uses German construction companies as a prism to address a wide spectrum of economic, political, environmental or cultural impacts in specific local contexts through case studies. The choice to investigate such entrenched power structures through German firms is triggered by an interest in the label ‘Made in Germany’ which was established in the late colonial period and remains an unquestioned marker of quality. The main research question is: how have architecture and infrastructure projects built by German companies conquered the world? The project not only seeks to critically analyse success stories, but also to interrogate moments of failure.

Focusing on production cycles, a research team of the PI and three PhD candidates and a student assistant are scrutinise global flows of capital, labour, know-how and construction materials such as concrete between Germany and Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Research group

The research group is integrated in the Department for Historical Research at the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS), Erkner (near Berlin) and closely affiliated with the Faculty for Architecture and Urbanism at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. Further collaboration exist with Prof. Dr. Johan Lagae and his research unit at the Ghent University. The project is embedded in a broad academic network. The student assistant supports the team in research (research, care of the project database etc.), outreach (webpage, Facebook etc.) and administrative tasks such as organisation of conferences and fieldwork trips.

Requirements

The candidate must be a student of Architecture, Architectural/Art History, Urban Planning, Social Anthropology, Geography, History or related discipline in the humanities and social sciences with a significant focus on the built environment and its history. Preference will be given to applicants with a training in global and/or extra-European (architectural and urban) history, urban geography or social anthropology/ethnography, including language proficiency in English and German as well as other languages relevant to the project. Moreover, applicants should demonstrate ability in (archival) research, commitment to teamwork, affinity towards social media and agility in organisational tasks. International academic experience (study, research, publications, conferences etc.) is an advantage.

Applications must include:

- 1) cover letter,
- 2) CV,
- 3) diplomas/certificates,
- 4) name and contact information of one academic referee,
- 5) confirmation of enrolment.

Please submit your application until **12 February 2021** to bewerbung@leibniz-irs.de with the reference number **5121**. Interviews with the candidates are scheduled for 17 and 18 February and will be held via Zoom. Invited candidates will receive an invitation via email on 15 February until 6:00 pm CET. For further information and questions regarding the position and the research project please contact the principal investigator **Dr Monika Motylinska**: monika.motylinska@leibniz-irs.de.

The IRS is committed to the principle of equality of opportunities. Female applicants are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants with disabilities with equivalent qualifications and aptitude will be given preferential consideration. The IRS supports the compatibility of career and family and is certified as a family-oriented employer since 2015.