

Postdoctoral Position in Political Science

The Department of Political Science at Aarhus University invites applications for one full-time, three-year postdoctoral position in the ERC Starting Grant project EQUILIBRIUM — *Changing for the Better: Escaping Negative Equilibria in State-Citizen Relations* — led by Associate Professor Jan P. Vogler.

The starting date is 1 August 2026 or 1 September 2026 (with further flexibility based on mutual agreement).

The Research Project

EQUILIBRIUM investigates how regions can escape vicious cycles in state-citizen relations. In some contexts, poor state performance in the delivery of public goods and services reinforces negative population attitudes, which leads to the election of parties that limit the state's resources and fewer applicants for public sector jobs, among others. This perpetuates the state's poor performance, creating a self-reinforcing dynamic. The project examines which factors enable regions to break out of these negative patterns and shift toward more positive equilibria characterized by more favorable citizen attitudes.

The project develops new theoretical concepts and empirical measures, using a novel sequential research design that integrates observational data, large-scale public opinion surveys, and inquiries to public administrations. Empirically, the project will collect comprehensive data across five European countries (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Romania) and the United States. Additional information about the project's content and goals can be found [here](#).

The Postdoctoral Position

As a postdoctoral researcher you will contribute to the early phases of the project, which involve designing and implementing major data collection efforts. Key responsibilities include:

Survey Research:

- Design and implement two waves of public opinion surveys across all six countries
- Develop survey items measuring citizens' experiences with public institutions
- Design and implement conjoint experiments
- Manage survey implementation through professional survey firms

Inquiries to Public Administrations:

- Design inquiries to bureaucracies across the selected countries
- Implement these inquiries and analyze response patterns

Data Collection and Analysis:

- Collect and organize observational data on public service quality
- Integrate multiple data sources to create comprehensive datasets
- Conduct quantitative analyses using advanced statistical methods

Collaboration and Dissemination:

- Work closely with the PI and other (future) team members
- Contribute to research publications in leading international journals
- Present findings at international conferences

Job Description

You will:

- Make major contributions to research design, pre-registration, the process of seeking ethical approval for the research, writing, data collection, analysis, publication, and public outreach
- Lead and co-author studies on the subject
- Engage meaningfully with the department's broader research community; a minimum presence of three days on campus each week is expected
- Teach the equivalent of one seminar per year, which is approximately 55 hours of classroom teaching and examination per year.

Application Deadline:

05 February 2026

Institute/Faculty:

Department of Political Science

Faculty:

Aarhus BSS

Academic contact person:

Jan P. Vogler
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Vacant positions:

1

Number of months:

36

Hours per week:

37

Expected date of accession:

01/08/2026

- Have opportunities to influence the process of data collection for additional research ideas.
- Have access to funding for travel and workshop/conference participation.

Your Qualifications

Required:

- PhD in political science or related fields (e.g., computational social science, sociology, economics, public administration)
- Proficiency in quantitative analysis, particularly in (quasi-)experimental methods
- Proficiency in working with R
- Experience with survey research, especially survey and conjoint experiments
- Experience with both solo work and teamwork, exhibiting creativity, effective communication, cooperation, and a collegial spirit
- High-level professional English

Desirable:

- Substantive interest(s) in at least one of the following areas: (a) citizens' views of and experiences with public institutions, (b) state-citizen relations/interactions, (c) administrative burdens, (d) public service quality, and/or (e) (the performance of) public bureaucracies
- Experience with the retrieval and analysis of observational data
- Experience in working with geographic data (desirable, but not strictly necessary)

Candidates who only partially meet this profile are nonetheless encouraged to apply.

What We Offer

- A chance to contribute to an ERC project on state-citizen relations and their political and social dimensions
- A supportive, collegial environment in one of Europe's leading political science departments, with excellent development opportunities and research support
- The opportunity to work with an international research team on a comparative project

Who we are

With around 130 academic staff members and 40 PhD students, the Department of Political Science is among Europe's largest political science departments. The research at the department covers most political science disciplines, including public administration, and represents a variety of methodological approaches. We are among Europe's highest-ranked departments, and our broad research profile enables us to focus on societal problems as they appear in the national and international political arena. This allows us to contribute actively to the development of the discipline. We offer a lively and ambitious research and teaching environment characterized by pluralism and openness. We expect active participation in the activities of the department, which includes being present at the department at least three days per week.

For more information about the Department of Political Science, please see [here](#).

The Department of Political Science is part of [Aarhus BSS](#), Aarhus University – a top 100 university. Aarhus BSS has achieved the triple-crown AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS accreditations.

Further Information

For further information on EQUILIBRIUM and questions about the position, please contact Associate Professor Jan P. Vogler at jan.vogler@ps.au.dk.

If you need help uploading your application or have any questions about the recruitment, please contact HR support person Astrid Valdgård Schmidt at avs@au.dk.

Place of Work

Department of Political Science, Bartholins Allé 7, DK-8000 Aarhus C.

International applicant?

Aarhus University offers a broad variety of services for international researchers and accompanying families, including relocation service and career counselling to expat partners. Please find more information here:

<https://internationalstaff.au.dk/relocationservice/>

Please find more information about research opportunities at Aarhus University here:

<http://international.au.dk/research/>

Aarhus University also offers a Junior Researcher Development Programme targeted at career development for postdocs at AU. You can read more about it here:

<http://talent.au.dk/junior-researcher-development-programme/>

Terms of employment

The appointment is made in accordance with the [Memorandum on Job Structure for Academic Staff at Danish Universities](#) as well as the circular on the [Collective Agreement for Academics Employed by the State](#) (in Danish).

The job content and qualification requirements are described in further detail in the [Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities](#).

Application procedure

When you apply for this position it is mandatory to attach the following:

- Application
- Curriculum Vitae. You are encouraged to declare any periods of leave without research activity, including, for example, maternity leave, since your research activities are assessed in relation to your actual research time
- Education (diploma for master's, PhD and possibly higher doctoral degree)
- List of publications (the enclosed publications must be clearly marked on the list of publications)
- Publications. Up to three publications can be included in the application. In the event of several authors the publications must be accompanied by a co-author statement concerning the applicant's share of the collaborative work with the consent of the co-authors. [This template may be used for the purpose](#)
- Teaching portfolio. The specific requirements regarding the documentation can be found [here](#)

Materials which cannot be uploaded together with the application may be submitted in three copies to Aarhus BSS HR & PhD, Aarhus University, Bartholins Allé 16, DK-8000 Aarhus C.

Read more about how to apply for an academic post at Aarhus BSS [here](#)

The evaluation process

After the application deadline, an assessment committee is appointed. Please note that the assessment of applicants is based solely on the material received prior to the application deadline. For further information, see [Guidelines for Assessment Committee, Aarhus BSS](#).

Aarhus University's ambition is to be an attractive and inspiring workplace for all and to foster a culture in which each individual has opportunities to thrive, achieve and develop. We view equality and diversity as assets, and we welcome all applicants.

The application must be submitted via Aarhus University's recruitment system, which can be accessed under the job advertisement on Aarhus University's website.

Aarhus University

Aarhus University is an academically diverse and research-intensive university with a strong commitment to high-quality research and education and the development of society nationally and globally. The university offers an inspiring research and teaching environment to its 38,000 students (FTEs) and 8,300 employees, and has an annual revenues of EUR 935 million. Learn more at www.international.au.dk/