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# PhD position at the Institute of Argumentation, Linguistics and Semiotics, Faculty of Communication Sciences at USI Università della Svizzera italiana

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Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) is a young and lively university, a hub of opportunity open to the world where students are offered a quality interdisciplinary education in which they can be fully engaged and take center stage, and where our researchers can count on having the space to freely pursue their initiative.

Established in 1996, USI is in constant evolution, always taking on new challenges while remaining true to its three guiding principles: quality, openness and responsibility.

The Institute of Argumentation, Linguistics and Semiotics (IALS) represents a lively research environment for a PhD student who specializes in argumentation. Interaction with several researchers specializing on argumentation in different contexts, as well as interdisciplinary interactions with colleagues inside and outside the Faculty is an asset for a PhD candidate who wants to work on empirical argumentation.

The IALS Institute invites applications for a research and teaching PhD position (100%, 3 years, potentially extendable to 4).

The PhD candidate will develop his or her dissertation project within the fields of Argumentation Theory and Discourse Analysis with a special focus on argumentation in situations of conflict or societal controversy. This dissertation will be supervised by Prof. Sara Greco.

## **The Research Project**

The selected candidate will develop his or her dissertation in the framework of the research activities directed by Prof. Sara Greco at the IALS, contributing to consider argumentation as an alternative to conflict (see this short publication for a synthesis of the research orientation: <http://doc.rero.ch/record/322610>). The candidate and supervisor will discuss the opportunity to choose between two research areas, also subject to availability of empirical data. The former is the study of argumentation in (formal or informal) conflict mediation in interpersonal conflicts, for example in organizations. The latter is the study of conflictual frames and issues misalignments in societal controversies (conflicts at a broader level), for example controversies on equal opportunities, or fashion sustainability, energy policies, or other. The latter stream of research will also benefit of the connection to the COST Action CA17132 research network (<https://publicpolicyargument.eu/>), in which Prof. Greco is leader of the empirical working group.

## **The Ph.D. Position**

The doctoral student will be enrolled in the [Ph.D. program in Communication Sciences](#). The PhD candidate will collaborate to the development of the institute research agenda.

He or she will have the task of setting up a collection of data for his or her dissertation, while at the same time participating in a variety of tasks related to the research streams in which he/she is involved. The PhD candidate is also asked to present papers at scientific conferences, and produce publications for scientific journals.

On the teaching side, he/she will work as teaching assistant in argumentation courses at the master level and in the course "Comunicazione verbale" (verbal communication) at the bachelor level, helping in the preparation of teaching materials and tutoring students.

### **Candidates' Profile**

Ideal candidates should satisfy the following requirements:

- A Master (or equivalent title) in argumentation, discourse analysis, linguistics, computational linguistics, applied linguistics, communication sciences, or related disciplines.
- High personal interest in the analysis of discourse and argumentation. Proven attitude for a fine-grained analysis of communicative interactions and language.
- Fluency in English is necessary. Knowledge of Italian will be considered an added value; in any case, it is expected that the selected candidate will learn to communicate in Italian during the PhD and work as an assistant in a bachelor course taught in Italian.
- Motivation to engage in the elaboration of a PhD dissertation. Ability to work in team and autonomy in scheduling research steps. Interest for teaching and tutoring students and availability to collaborate with colleagues (engage in scientific dialogue, listen and think critically) are required.

### **Contract terms**

The position is internally financed and the salary levels correspond to those set by the Swiss National Science Foundation for PhD researchers:

[http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/allg\\_doktorierende\\_f.pdf](http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/allg_doktorierende_f.pdf).

Starting date is September 1st, 2020 (at the earliest). However, the position will be kept open until a suitable candidate has been found.

Workplace is USI Università della Svizzera italiana, located in Lugano, Switzerland.

Availability to travel to other parts of Switzerland and abroad (for purposes of collaboration and research) is required.

### **The Application**

Applications should contain: (1) a letter in which the applicants describe their research interests and the motivation to apply, (2) a complete CV, (3) copies of relevant diplomas, certificates as well as the full transcript of records that prove the candidates' eligibility for doctoral studies in Communication Sciences, (4) an electronic version of a research work (Master thesis or other scientific publication). The latter must be accompanied by a short summary in English (1 page maximum). A support letter written by the Master thesis supervisor (or another Professor who knows the candidate well) is equally welcome.

Please send your application in electronic form or requests for further information to Prof. Sara Greco ([sara.greco@usi.ch](mailto:sara.greco@usi.ch)). Applications received before 20 March 2020, will be given priority. However, applications will be received until the position is filled.

USI strives to be an equal opportunity and family friendly employer and is further responsive to the needs of dual career couples. We guarantee that the selection process will give equal opportunities to female and male researchers.

Lugano, February 10th, 2020

