

PhD student position at the Institute of Economics, Faculty of Economics at USI Università della Svizzera italiana

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 Economics (IdEP) was created of the former MecopP institute and regroups research and teaching activities in Economics and Public Management at the Università della Svizzera italiana. The faculty of IdEP actively promotes high level research publications by its members and runs a research seminar series. Teaching activities include coordination of two Bologna Masters Public Management and Policy (PMP) and Economia e Politiche Internazionali (MEPIN). Further, Idep is involved in two national research networks (SSPH+ and SPAN) with their respective Doctoral Programs, and provides executive education in the area of health management (Net-MEGS and the Summer School in Public Health Policy, Economics and Management).

The Institute invites applications for fully funded Ph.D. positions in all fields of economics (100%, 5 years).

The Ph.D. Position

Our PhD students focus on completing PhD courses and their doctoral research. To support this goal, the working environment we provide is very attractive, including compensation, infrastructure, and opportunities for research and teaching assistant positions. Admitted students are offered the opportunity to be employed full-time by the university in return for providing teaching or research assistance to the institute (see below). To participate in and contribute to the active research culture of the institute, employed students are expected to work as much as possible on site in Lugano.

The Doctoral School in Economics at the University of Lugano

In advancing to the PhD degree, students pass through two major stages: course work and the completion of a dissertation.

Year 1 is devoted to developing a strong foundation in the basic tools of economics, including full-year courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics (core courses) offered by the Study Center Gerzensee of the Swiss National Bank through its Swiss Program for Beginning Doctoral Students in Economics. Successful candidates will devote year 1 to this program and their own research.

Year 2 is devoted to developing the dissertation topic and to deepening courses to bring successful candidates to the research frontier of their field(s) of interest. From year 2 on, in addition to doctoral work, successful candidates will provide part-time assistance in the institute's research and/or teaching activities. At the end of year 2, students present a proposal of their dissertation project in an oral exam.

Years 3 to 5 are devoted to completing the dissertation, which consists of at least three original research papers. Successful candidates will present their research progress regularly to their supervisor(s) and in informal seminars to the rest of the faculty and their graduate student peers, who will provide constructive feedback that will improve the research.

Candidates' profile

Ideal candidates have, or are upon completion of, a master's degree in economics, econometrics, or a related field such as computer science or mathematics. Candidates with a general interest in quantitative empirical research and who have already completed the GRE will be given a strong preference.

Contract terms

Admission to the Ph.D. program is highly competitive. Admission decisions are based on the candidate's background, interests, attitude and potential for academic achievement. Successful enrolment in the Ph.D. program and the position as doctoral researcher are not compatible with a further professional activity.

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

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

Starting date is July 1, 2026 (at the earliest).

The Application

Applications may be submitted upon acceptance of the Applicant Personal Data Processing Notice found at the following **LINK**. In the online form, you will be asked to declare that you have read and understood our privacy policy.

Applications should contain: (1) a complete CV, including your email address, date of birth, and any programming skills and other relevant information that might be important for us, (2) a transcript of your university education (bachelor's and master's degrees or equivalent), including the grade point average (GPA) and the courses taken, (3) a tentative research proposal on a topic you would be interested in working on (max. 4 pages long, not including the bibliography), (4) your GRE certificate with the test score (optional, but highly recommended) and (5) your master's thesis (if available).

Applications must be submitted ONLINE by filling out the form accessible through the following link: **APPLY**. The online application form asks you for the name and email address of two academic references that could be contacted for more information. You will also need to upload the documents listed above as a zip folder. Please name the zip folder LastName_FirstName.zip (Example: Smith_Adam.zip).

Requests for further information to idep@usi.ch.

Applications received before January 15, 2026, will be given priority.

Owing to the large number of applications received, only those applicants whose profiles are likely to fit the positions will be notified for further details and eventual interviews. Qualified applicants will be interviewed in January and February.

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.

As an institution that values diversity, USI particularly encourages applications from women and from all individuals from underrepresented groups.

Lugano, 17.11.2025