PhD student position at the Institute of Marketing and Communication Management, Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society

Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) is a young and lively university in Lugano, Switzerland and ranks 3rd in the U-Multirank 2022 of Swiss universities. It is 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 centre stage, and where our researchers can count on having the space to freely pursue their initiatives. 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 Marketing and Communication Management (IMCA) (www.imca.usi.ch) proposes an alternative perspective in education and research in the fields of marketing and management focusing on communication and cultural processes. IMCA’s communicative and interdisciplinary approach has allowed the Institute to develop a processual, cultural, performative, and socio-material reading of organizations, business networks, communities of stakeholders and consumers. IMCA distinguishes itself for its focus on qualitative methodologies, in particular case studies, ethnographies, and visual analysis.

PhD position
IMCA invites applications for a full time PhD approaching the study of organizations from a communication-centred, sociomaterial, and or practice-theoretical perspective. The doctoral student will work under the scientific supervision of Prof. Jeanne Mengis (http://usi.to/dgz). The successful candidate will be able to design and carry out his/her PhD project within the broader research interests of his/her supervisor such as organizational attention, organizational space, materiality and affect in organizational processes, the digital mediation of new forms of work, visual methodologies (e.g. video-based research), or developing a practice-theoretical and communication sensitive perspective to interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge work and innovation (https://www.imca.usi.ch/en/organizational-communication-materiality). During the doctoral studies, the person will have the unique opportunity to collaborate within an international research team, conduct an ethnographic study within an organizational context of his/her own choice, and present emerging findings at international conferences and high-ranked academic journals.

The doctoral student will be enrolled in the Doctoral Program of the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society (https://www.com.usi.ch/en/study-communication/phd-doctoral-studies/phd-communication-sciences). Upon successful completion of the program requirements, the candidate will earn a PhD in Communication Sciences with a Specialization in Organization Studies.

The candidate will be expected to also be expected to provide support for the activities at IMCA, including support for teaching, service and for the organization of events. On the
teaching side, he/she will work as teaching assistant in courses at either bachelor or master level, helping in the preparation of teaching materials and tutoring students.

Candidate’s profile
The ideal candidate for the position should satisfy the following requirements:
- A Master’s degree in business, communication, sociology, anthropology, or related disciplines. Final score of 8 or higher (on a 10-point scale);
- An international orientation, some experience in qualitative research methods, and an academic curiosity for developing our understanding of organizational phenomena and publishing in English in high-ranked journals;
- Be proficient in English and master another national language of Switzerland (ideally Italian or German);
- Motivation to engage in the elaboration of a PhD dissertation and take ownership of a research project. Ability to work in team and autonomy in ideating, planning and carrying out qualitative research. Interest for teaching and tutoring students and availability to collaborate with colleagues (engage in scientific dialogue, listen and think critically) are required;
- High personal interest in understanding organizational phenomena through immersive, qualitative (i.e. ethnographic methods) research.

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 successful candidate will work as research assistant at the Institute of Marketing and Communication Management (IMCA), and will have the possibility to interact with an international network of collaborators.

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.

Starting date is 1 September 2023. However, the position will be kept open until a suitable candidate has been found.

The Application
Applications should contain:
(1) a letter in which the applicant describes his/her research interests and the motivation to apply. The letter should lay out the links between his/her academic and professional preparation, his/her interests and how they relate to one or the other research domains and interests of Prof. Mengis;
(2) a complete CV;
(3) copies of relevant diplomas, certificates as well as the full transcript of records that prove the candidate’s eligibility for doctoral studies in communication studies (in case the candidate has not yet concluded a Master’s programme, expected graduation date and full transcript of records so far are required).
(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 incl. detailed CV (with 2 references), university grade transcripts, and a letter of motivation electronically to Jeanne Mengis, jeanne.mengis@usi.ch

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an online interview.

Applications received before 1 June 2023 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.
As an institution that values diversity, USI particularly encourages applications from women and from all individuals from underrepresented groups.

Lugano, 18 April 2023