

PhD student position in digital journalism at the Institute of Media and Journalism, Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society 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 Media and Journalism, part of the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society, conducts research in media studies, digital culture, journalism studies, media economics, and media history. In journalism studies, IMeG is active in journalism and artificial intelligence (AI), journalism innovation, media accountability as well as media governance. IMeG adopts multiple perspectives and methods and promotes a culture of cooperation and mutual support. Within the Institute, people from different disciplines and backgrounds collaborate to generate new knowledge and societal impact. We offer excellent opportunities for national and international networking.

The Institute invites applications for 1 fully funded PhD position (4 years).

The Ph.D. Position

The position will be supervised by Prof. Colin Porlezza (<http://usi.to/dvg>), Head of the Institute, who leads research on digital journalism, journalism innovation and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, as well as media accountability. The PhD candidate is expected to complete a dissertation in three to four years and should contribute to the chair's main research areas. In addition, he or she will collaborate to the development of the institute's research agenda.

The successful candidate will join an international and multidisciplinary team of scholars. As a PhD candidate, he or she will take part in the doctoral educational programme at the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society. The candidate will serve as a teaching assistant in courses at both the Bachelor and Master levels, contributing to the preparation of teaching materials and tutoring students. The PhD candidate is expected to present papers at scientific conferences (the position entails travel), publish in high-ranking scientific journals, acquire further academic qualifications, and contribute to academic service within the Institute.

Candidates' profile

Ideal candidates should satisfy the following requirements:

- A Master (or equivalent title) in journalism, media studies, communication sciences, or a related discipline.
- A strong personal interest in digital journalism and artificial intelligence, journalism innovation. Interest in journalism ethics, journalism epistemology and authority, or accountability is an advantage.
- Excellence in qualitative and/or quantitative methods and data analysis; interest in ethnographic and computational research methods.
- Enthusiasm for working in an interdisciplinary and international setting.
- Excellent oral and written skills in English.
- Excellent oral and writing skills in German and Italian are an advantage.
- Good organisational skills; ability to work independently and to plan and direct one's own work.
- Motivation to undertake a PhD dissertation; ability to work in a team and engage in scientific dialogue with colleagues and other members of the Institute.
- Interest in teaching and tutoring students.

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 fully 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, Lugano, Switzerland.

The ideal **starting date is 1 September 2026**. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an online interview in **early July 2026**.

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 cover letter, including a description of your research interests and an explanation of why you are applying for this position, (2) a complete CV, (3) copies of certificates and official transcripts of your Master's degree, (4) a PhD proposal that clearly speaks to one of the indicated fields of research, (5) the names, affiliations, and email addresses of two academic references and (6) an electronic copy of a research work (Master's thesis or another scientific publication).

The PhD proposal should: (a) articulate a focused research question relevant to one or more of the following fields: journalism and artificial intelligence, journalism innovation, journalism authority, media accountability; (b) specify the theoretical approach and key concepts; (c) indicate your preferred methodological orientation (qualitative, quantitative, mixed) with a brief plan appropriate to your question; and (d) explain the anticipated contribution to the state of the art and to the project's aims.

Innovative, interdisciplinary approaches are welcome, provided they are thematically coherent and ethically sound (maximum wordcount for the proposal: 1000 words).

Applications must be submitted **ONLINE** by filling out the form accessible through the following link: **APPLY**. You will also need to upload the documents listed above.

Applications received before **26 June 2026**, will be given priority. However, applications will be received until the position is filled.

Requests for further information can be sent to the Head of the Institute of Media and Journalism Prof. Colin Porlezza (colin.porlezza@usi.ch).

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, 27.05.2026