
Two PhD and one PostDoc positions in digital media history at the Institute of Media and Journalism (IMeG), Faculty of Communication Sciences, 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 (IMeG) is engaged in research activities in the areas of: media economics, media history, media culture and society, as well as journalism studies. In the field of media history, IMeG's researchers are active in the field of transnational communication, the history of digital media, media history in China, and broadcasting history. In media historical studies, IMeG's researchers adopt a long term, cross-media and multidisciplinary perspective, combining the political economy of communication, STS studies, media imaginaries, and media archaeology.

The Institute of Media and Journalism (IMeG) in the Faculty of Communication Sciences at USI (Università della Svizzera italiana) invites applications for 2 fully-funded PhD positions (4 years) and 1 fully-funded 50% PostDoc position (1 year) for conducting research in the project entitled "The origins and spread of the World Wide Web. Rediscovering the early years of the Web inside and outside the CERN archive (1989-1995)". These three positions will be supervised by Prof. Gabriele Balbi (principal investigator) and Dr. Eleonora Benecchi (project manager).

The project

The research project "The origins and spread of the World Wide Web. Rediscovering the early years of the Web inside and outside the CERN archive (1989-1995)" is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and for the first time will explore the WWW archives at CERN. This project will investigate how the Web was conceptualized, described and promoted within and outside CERN during its early stage, from the first proposal for information management written by Tim Berners-Lee in March 1989 to the consolidation of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) at MIT in 1995. To retrace the internal and external communication flows related to the early Web, this project adopts a twofold perspective: it looks at how the Web was spread and developed at CERN by its founding fathers Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Cailliau and by other relevant actors; it also investigates how selected newspapers and magazines discussed and framed the WWW in the same period.

Candidates' profile

Two PhD candidates – We are looking for candidates with a MA degree in communication sciences, media studies or another relevant area, preferably with a specialization in one of the following fields: digital technologies, social studies of technology, media history, the political economy of the media, cultural studies and similar. Ideally, candidates are interested in digital media history and the history of the web and have an international outlook. The candidates will have considerable experience in quantitative and/or qualitative research methods (e.g. content analysis and ethnography).

One PostDoc position – We are looking for a PostDoc candidate with relevant experience in the field of media history, digital media and internet studies. Ideally, the candidate holds a PhD in digital media history, internet studies, or related fields and demonstrates an excellent track record of publications in relevant journals.

Requirements for all the positions - Fluency in English is required. The candidates are expected to present papers at scientific conferences and produce publications in high-ranking journals. They will collaborate to the development of the institute research agenda. On the teaching side, the candidates will work as teaching assistant in courses at either bachelor or master level, helping in the preparation of teaching materials and tutoring students.

Contract terms

The two PhD positions are for four years. In addition to a tuition fee waiver for the duration of the four-year scholarship, a fully-funded PhD at USI includes an annual salary ([Salary ranges, guidelines for employees in SNSF-funded projects](#)). PhD scholarships are subject to annual review and successful completion of a progress report. The 50% PostDoc position is funded for one year with a grant of CHF 42.500.- gross.

The workplace is USI Università della Svizzera italiana, located in Lugano, Switzerland. Research activities will be carried out predominantly in Lugano, Switzerland, where the appointees should take residence. Several visits at the CERN archive in Geneva and other international travels are expected. Therefore, availability to travel to other parts of Switzerland and abroad (for purposes of collaboration and research) is required.

The starting date is October 2020 at the latest.

The Application

Application should contain 1) a letter in which the applicants describe their research interests and the motivation to apply; 2) a complete CV; 3) the names and contact information of three references, 4) university grade transcripts and certificates, and for PhD students only 5) a 1-page PhD research project in the field of web/Internet history (i.e. meanings and metaphors of the web, web in long term perspective, web ideology and imaginaries, web and the other media, etc.).

Please send your application in electronic form as a single PDF or request for further information to prof. Gabriele Balbi, gabriele.balbi@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.

