

The Department of Criminology at the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law in Freiburg i.Br., Germany is looking for a **doctoral researcher** (m/f/d) for the project:

Short-term mindsets and crime: Does short-term thinking explain the relation between criminogenic environments and criminal behavior?

This PhD project is part of the interdisciplinary research program “Crime and Time: How short-term mindsets encourage crime and how the future self can prevent it”. The program is funded through an ERC Consolidator Grant and led by Prof. Jean-Louis van Gelder. The formal position will be in the Department of Criminology at the Max Planck Institute in Freiburg, Germany.

The challenge

Why are some people more likely to commit crime than others? Answers to this question can be grouped into two broad views. On the one hand, dispositional perspectives argue that stable factors within the individual, such as lack of self-control, lie at the roots of criminal conduct. Sociogenic perspectives, on the other hand, put the locus of study outside the individual and point towards external factors such as rough neighborhoods, parental unemployment, and deviant peers, as the main causes of crime. Research into both perspectives has identified hundreds of correlates of criminal behavior, yet how these are related is still largely uncharted territory. The ERC research program aims to integrate both views based on a new theoretical perspective, which draws from criminology, social psychology and evolutionary theory. This perspective is premised on the idea that short-term mindsets encourage crime and specifies how both individual dispositions and sociogenic variables can encourage such mindsets.

The question that is central to this project is whether short-term mindsets mediate the relation between criminogenic environments (e.g., rough neighborhoods, delinquent peers), events (e.g., getting expelled from school, being incarcerated), and specific experiences (e.g., being drunk, high, aroused, or angry). The project will also test the new theoretical perspective - with help of a unique and extensive multi-wave data set - against several established crime theories, e.g., Routine Activities/Risky Lifestyles frameworks, Self-Control Theory, Labeling, and General Strain Theory.

The project is part of a larger ERC-funded research program in which the role of short-term thinking is central. This program’s ambition is to realize ground-breaking advances in the understanding of criminal and delinquent conduct by improving our understanding of what causes people to become shortsighted and also how they can learn and be motivated to take the longer term consequences of their actions better into account and move away from (embarking on) a criminal career.

You will be working closely together with other researchers in a young and ambitious multidisciplinary research team that aims to push the boundaries of the current state of the art in crime research. You will *inter alia* be using data from a unique longitudinal project following a large sample of Swiss urban youth since age 7, The Zurich Project on the Social Development from Childhood to Adulthood (<http://www.jacobscenter.uzh.ch/en/research/zproso>) and collaborate with members of the zproso team at the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Objectives

The PhD project aims to fulfill the following two objectives of the larger research program:

1. Identify the extent to which short-term mindsets account for the relation between contextual factors and crime. Measures of contextual factors include socio-economic status, social disorganization, negative life events, harsh parenting, substance use, and delinquent peers. Measures of short-term mindsets are self-control, impulsivity, future school orientation and vividness of/connectedness to the future self.
2. Contribute to the development of a new integrative theory explaining crime and delinquency and to test the new theoretical perspective against several established criminological theories.

Your profile

- you have obtained a MSc degree in a relevant field of the social sciences, preferably psychology, criminology or (quantitative) sociology. Completion of a Research Master is a plus as are publications and scientific presentations at conferences;
- you have a clear interest in crime research;
- you combine a strong background in statistics, preferably with experience in analyzing longitudinal data and/or complex modeling techniques with an interest in theory;
- you have good social and communication skills;
- you enjoy working independently but also function well in teams;
- you have excellent English language skills, both in writing and speaking;
- you are creative, critical and highly motivated

About us

The Department of Criminology of the Max Planck Institute in Freiburg has recently been taken over by a new Director and aspires to be leading innovation in the field. You will therefore be working in a young and dynamic and highly multi-disciplinary research environment in one of the leading centers for research in public security matters in Europe. The institute is organized in three research departments: criminal law, public law, and criminology and part of the Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science, one of world's most distinguished research organizations. Not only does the Max Planck Society and its institutes offer the opportunity for trans- and interdisciplinary cooperation among its 86 institutes, it also supports its researchers in such efforts and in the development of their academic careers.

Our offer

The Institute offers excellent facilities for professional and personal development, an international and dynamic atmosphere, and is located in a beautiful city with a vibrant student life set in spectacular green surroundings. The salary equals 60%-65% of the rate for German civil service employees (TVöD Bund) in payscale group E13/level one (from approx. €2400 gross). The contract will be for three years and can be extended by one year.

The Max Planck Society strives to ensure gender equality and diversity. Furthermore, the Max Planck Society is committed to employing more persons with disabilities and explicitly encourages applications from such qualified individuals. We welcome applications from all backgrounds.

The Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law is committed to the reconciliation of family and career. There are a limited number of daycare spots at a nearby childcare facility that are available to the children of institute employees. A parent-child office can be used on-site.

Information and Application

For more information you can contact Prof. Dr. Jean-Louis van Gelder (j.vangelder@mpicc.de) To apply for this position, please submit a letter with your motivation, your resume including name, email, address, phone number, two or more references and a copy of your master thesis – indicating the reference number **K-19-01** – as **one PDF file** to:

bewerbungen@mpicc.de, Re: K-19-01 (max. 5 MB per E-Mail).

The deadline for application is 1st December 2019.

