

A Work Leader/Tenure Track Professor (m/f/x) in the domain “Belgium & the Cold War”

Ref. ZAP-2021-132

This position is part of the FED-tWIN program of the Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO), aimed at stimulating sustainable cooperation between ten federal scientific institutions and Belgian universities by financing joint research profiles. The profile FED-tWIN BELCOWAR is a joint initiative of the Belgian State Archives and KU Leuven. Dr. Dirk Luyten and Prof. dr. Bart Kerremans are the promoters.

The State Archives of Belgium is a federal scientific institution that is part of the Federal Public Planning Service (POD) Science Policy. The institution consists of the National Archives in Brussels, 18 branches of the State Archives spread across the country, and the Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society (CegeSoma) in Brussels. CegeSoma (www.cegesoma.be) thus functions as the Belgian knowledge center for the history of the conflicts of the 20th century. It conducts related research, engages in public outreach and preserves relevant documents.

The State Archives acquire and store (after evaluation) archives that are at least 30 years old and originating from, among others, courts and tribunals, public authorities and notaries, as well as from the private sector and private individuals (companies, politicians, associations and societies, influential families, etc.).

One of the institutions main tasks is promoting accessibility. The State Archives make an extensive research environment available to a wide and varied public, not only in its 19 reading rooms, but also online.

KU Leuven is a Belgian university strongly embedded in Flanders, thanks in part to its fourteen campuses spread over ten cities in the Region. It has an international allure and is invariably recognized in rankings as a top European university. Indeed, KU Leuven places a strong emphasis on high-quality scientific research and the transfer of its findings through education and community service. Research and education at KU Leuven encompass almost all scientific disciplines. While education is organized by the fifteen faculties, research is conducted through departments and research groups. Two research groups are involved in this vacancy: Leuven International and European Studies (LINES; Faculty of Social Sciences) – to which the KU Leuven supervisor is affiliated – and MoSa (Research Group Modernity and Society, 1800-2000; Faculty of Arts) – to which the candidate will be affiliated.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FUNCTION

The role to be filled consists of a half-time position at the State Archives/CegeSoma and a half-time position at KU Leuven. The candidate must be prepared to hold both half-time positions and therefore apply for both positions simultaneously. It is not possible to only apply for one of the two half-time positions.

Duties

Research

As a scientific staff member (work leader) of the State Archives and as a tenure track professor of KU Leuven, you will be responsible for the implementation of the FED-tWIN BELCOWAR in CegeSoma, operational directorate 4 of the State Archives, and at KU Leuven.

BELCOWAR aims to shed new light on the history of the Cold War by examining Belgium's position within the Pax Americana. The focus is on economic policy, especially international trade, and the question of the effects of US macroeconomic policy pressures on the actions of European countries. BELCOWAR is an acronym of "Belgium Cold War"; the full title is "Belgium and the Cold War: Gain or Loss of Economic Sovereignty by the Pax Americana?".

BELCOWAR is innovative in three respects: (i) through the exploration of large quantities of unknown archival collections held by the State Archives and the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; (ii) through the operationalization of concepts and methods from political science in historical research; (iii) through a re-evaluation of the role of Western European countries in the history of the East/West divide, based on new original research material.

You will build on recent historical research that, based on newly unlocked archival collections, has led to a reassessment of Transatlantic relations in a much broader and much more complex web of multilateral ties. Emphasis is put on the importance of European agency (as opposed to a US-oriented approach) and the role of exchanges and negotiations between both state and non-state actors (pressure groups, social movements and private companies). In this renewed historiography, significant attention is paid to the way in which economic dimensions have shaped Transatlantic relations.

By connecting these new historiographical developments, your mission will be to conduct historical/political-economic research with a focus on the pressures that small countries face when they depend on the protection offered by a great power, the ways in which they deal with this and position themselves, and their considerations of international security and economic interests. You will do this with a focus on Belgium. Belgium is indeed a very relevant case, in terms of actors (P.-H. Spaak, P. Harmel), location (cf. seats of NATO and EU) and economic structure (Belgium is a small open economy, heavily dependent on international trade). Your research will therefore include an analysis of how Belgian governments and non-state actors dealt with conflicting interests, how loyalty to the US developed over time, and how it related to the Cold War economy, the development of European integration, the changing global context, and to administrative shifts and ideological differences within Belgium. As such, you will make an original contribution to existing historical and political-economic research by mutually integrating them through an historical perspective based on archival research.

During the first two years, you will conduct an in-depth study of Belgium's positioning in the GATT negotiations from the late 1950s to the late 1970s (Dillon Round, Kennedy Round, Tokyo Round). The aim of this pilot study is to gain a better understanding of the structure and content of the archives and thus provide an overview of the entire period studied. The subsequent years will provide scope for further archival research, both in depth (e.g. focus on certain elements that have influenced Belgian decision-making) and in breadth (e.g. comparison with other Western European countries or broadening the field to monetary policy). You will conduct this research in close consultation with your colleagues at CegeSoma and KU Leuven (LINES and MoSa).

You will valorize important unknown archival collections, not only through your research, but also through the development of new (digital) tools and publications targeted at researchers from different disciplines and countries with the aim of promoting interdisciplinary transnational research. You will also do this for the benefit of students and user communities outside of academia.

In addition to your own research, you are also expected to generate new research that further strengthens the research context of BELCOWAR related to BELCOWAR. This means, among other things, that you are committed to supervising doctoral research at KU Leuven that is directly related to BELCOWAR.

Teaching

As part of your appointment as a tenure track professor at KU Leuven, you will also carry out a limited teaching assignment in the programs of European Studies (particularly within the module Transatlantic Relations) and History. You will also supervise master's theses and, if necessary, bachelor's papers.

Service

KU Leuven attaches great importance to the community service of its academic staff. Valorization is also an important part of FED-tWIN BELCOWAR and a major task for CegeSoma. You will therefore present your research through public science communication and broader community service. With this in mind, you will take special initiatives to make CegeSoma's archive collections known and accessible, for example by organizing seminars based on the archive collections, setting up an international research seminar and developing a MOOC and a number of SPOCs. The latter should focus on disseminating information about the Belgian Cold War archives and research conducted on them to a broad international audience – and certainly to user communities outside the academic world.

Profile

- You hold a doctorate in history (twentieth century), or a doctorate in social sciences (political sciences), or equivalent.
- The doctorate may not have been defended for more than 12 years (counting from the date of submission of the application). This 12-year period is extended by one year for any absence due to pregnancy, parental or adoption leave, as well as any long-term absence due to illness of the candidate or long-term absence due to illness of a first-degree relative.
- You have demonstrable research experience in contemporary political, social or economic history.
- If you hold a PhD in social sciences or equivalent, you have training or research experience in contemporary political, social or economic history.
- Experience with archival research is absolutely necessary. On that basis, you are expected to have conducted high-quality scientific research, substantiated by recent international scientific peer-reviewed publications.
- You have knowledge of Microsoft Office.
- You have a good knowledge of Dutch, French and English and can fluently communicate in those languages.
- You can work in an organized and independent manner and function well in a multidisciplinary team.

Offer

We offer:

A half-time employment contract of indefinite duration at the State Archives as work leader, combined with a half-time appointment as a tenure track professor at KU Leuven.

At the State Archives this consists of a half-time permanent appointment (19 hours per week) as a work leader (salary scale SW 21 31,880 – 48,350 € / year, gross salary, non-indexed, or a net indexed 0.5 FTE salary of ± 1450 € / month, without seniority) to be performed at OD 4 CegeSoma. Useful experience in government employment or as a researcher may be taken into consideration.

The tenure track appointment at KU Leuven means that you will be appointed – as provided by decree – for a period of five years in the tenure track professor degree and that an evaluation will take place after five years, which, if positive, will lead to a permanent appointment and promotion to associate professor. Halfway through this period, an interim evaluation will take place, which is of an advisory nature only. To support the research at the outset, KU Leuven offers the possibility to apply for a starting grant of 100,000 euros. This scholarship is for new professors who do not dispose of substantial other funding and who have a more than half-time appointment.

Date of employment : October 1, 2022

ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGES

- Free public transport for commuting and/or bicycle allowance
- Favorable hospitalization insurance through the State Archives and KU Leuven
- Minimum 13 vacation days/year at the State Archives
- Additional benefits, see for the State Archives: <http://www.fedplus.be>

LANGUAGE REGIME

This position is open to candidates who can be assigned to the Dutch language role at the State Archives, in application of the rules and laws on the use of languages in administrative matters. At KU Leuven, the administrative language is Dutch. If you do not know Dutch (sufficiently) when you are recruited, KU Leuven will provide training courses that will give you the proficiency to participate in board meetings.

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

You will work at two places. The first one is CegeSoma (OD 4), Luchtvaartsquare 29, 1070 Brussels, with possible relocation to other depots of the State Archives (in the first place the State Archives, Ruisbroekstraat Brussels and the Cuvelier Depot of the State Archives, Hopstraat Brussels). The second one is KU Leuven, Research Group Modernity and Society, 1800-2000 (MoSa), Blijde-Inkomststraat 21, 3000 Leuven. Given the integrated nature of your assignment to CegeSoma and KU Leuven, working in both places is essential. For the part at KU Leuven, collaboration with political scientists and historians is crucial. With that goal in mind, you are ready to collaborate with colleagues from both disciplines and to regularly consult with the KU Leuven supervisor.

Interested?

To be eligible, candidates must send their file (PDF) by email to recruit@arch.be (with the reference: candidacy FED-tWIN_BELCOWAR) and to apply via the online KU Leuven application tool at the latest on 3 February 2022.

Applicants are asked to add the following components to their candidacy, taking into account the assignment at the two institutions:

- a bio in which they demonstrate their added value as academics for the core tasks of research, education and community service in their past career and for their future activities (maximum 2 pages);
- a file on their five most important publications and/or achievements;
- a comprehensive CV (including a full list of publications)
- a research plan with attention to the development of a line of research and an associated research team and with an eye for collaboration with fellow researchers within the entity/entities of employment (maximum 4 pages);
- their vision on academic education and its function (maximum 2 pages);
- their contribution to community service (internal representation through membership in councils and governing bodies, contributions to society through education and research, outreach and science communication) (maximum 1 page);
- their vision on leadership (maximum 1 page).

The candidates selected on the basis of their CV will be invited for an oral test. This consists of an interview with the members of the selection committee of the State Archives and with the members of the assessment committee of KU Leuven. During the interview, the contents of the CV and various aspects of the profile will be discussed. Other elements may be added to the selection process (e.g. a test lesson).

For additional information, please contact Prof. dr. Sébastien Dubois, operational director of research (sebastien.dubois@arch.be) and/or Prof. dr. Liesbet Heyvaert, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at KU Leuven (liesbet.heyvaert@kuleuven.be).

You can apply for this job no later than 00, 0000 via the online application tool (Bij publicatie komt hier automatisch de link naar de online sollicitatiepagina.)

KU Leuven seeks to foster an environment where all talents can flourish, regardless of gender, age, cultural background, nationality or impairments. If you have any questions relating to accessibility or support, please contact us at diversiteit.HR@kuleuven.be.