

Date of publication of the job offer: 19/04/2024

Job title: Postdoctoral Researcher in Databases and Geographic Information Systems at [Universitat Pompeu Fabra](#) (Barcelona, Spain), Department of Political and Social Sciences.

Job description and tasks

We are seeking a Postdoctoral Researcher to work in the project **Digitalization for Environmental Justice and Biocultural Diversity (DIVERSE)**, funded by a 2.13m eur-Consolidator Grant of the European Research Council (ERC-CoG). Grant Agreement: 101124195.

The successful applicant will work under the supervision of Dr. Beatriz Rodriguez-Labajos as part of the DIVERSE team. The team will include another postdoctoral researcher, 3 PhD students, a Research Assistant, and a Communication Assistant, and it will be based at the [Johns Hopkins University-Universitat Pompeu Fabra Public Policy Center](#), and the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona.

The postdoctoral researcher will study the digitalization of grassroots initiatives pursuing environmental justice and biocultural diversity (project description below). The researcher will work with the project PI and another postdoc, with expertise in political ecology and environmental justice, in the development of the conceptual and analytical framework of the project, co-supervise PhD students, and directly manage a core task of the project.

In particular, the postdoctoral researcher will lead the development of a relational database of 'digital elements in transformative initiatives' connected to spatial data, and conduct spatial analyses of digital access and presence of grassroots transformative initiatives (GTI) at the international level. Research tools involve PostgreSQL, including the PostGIS extension, and Geographic Information Systems (using QGIS or ArcGIS).

Duration: 3 years contract, with a 6-month probationary period.

Deadline for applications: May 31th 2024

The Postdoctoral Researcher is expected to be physically based at UPF in Barcelona. The position has no citizenship requirement. We encourage applications from underrepresented groups in research, especially those from women.

Specific Tasks:

- Develop a relational database (DB) of ‘digital elements in transformative initiatives’ connected to spatial data, in collaboration with the PI and other team members.
- Prepare a DB front end for adding, and updating values for team members and collaborators.
- Prepare the DB user guide for team members and collaborators.
- Generate data management and ethics protocols.
- Conduct literature reviews, contribute to data collection on the research topic (through agreements with data providers, and web scrapping publicly available data in compliance with GDPR regulations), undertake geospatial analyses, and support team members undertaking topic modelling.
- Lead and co-author scientific publications.
- Collaborate on the generation project reports
- Participate in project coordination meetings, and help with project coordination
- Engage in project scientific and public dissemination activities

Project and institution that finance the contract:

The **DIVERSE** project looks at whether digitalisation is enabling or disabling worldwide transformative initiatives towards environmental justice (EJ) and biocultural diversity. DIVERSE is funded by a Consolidator Grant (CoG) of the European Research Council (ERC), which is among Europe’s most prestigious and competitive research grants. The ERC supports ground-breaking ideas with scientific excellence as sole criterion for selection.

Rapid elite-and growth-driven digital innovations are redefining lifestyles in areas such as work, education, and health, and overall imaginaries of the future. The global pandemics put the digital divide on the spotlight yet digital exclusion was already seen as a major force against global equality. Meanwhile, EJ struggles around the world, management of biocultural diverse territories by indigenous people and local communities (IPLC), or practices of social solidarity economy constitute a plurality of grassroots transformative initiatives (GTI) often located in marginalised areas. Vis-à-vis urgent calls for a healthy planet to tackle the climate emergency, GTI are taking real steps to produce food sustainably, prevent land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Then, how is digitalisation of GTI unfolding amidst unequal digital endowments and what good is it doing?

From drone monitoring of forests to indigenous digital media and online mapping to vindicate stories of resistance and transformation, a digital transformation from the ground up may not only be paving the way for just and diverse futures but also for an alternative understanding of digitalisation. Yet no large-scale scientific study has examined the occurrence of digitalisation in grassroots transformative initiatives (GTI) nor theorised its effects. A strong debate in the fields of political ecology and EJ involves two confronted views (celebratory vs technophobic) on the likelihood of enfranchising technologies. DIVERSE’s overarching goal is to theorise an alternative model of digital transformation rooted in relationality (care, community, personal connection) that emerges from GTI in their pursuit of environmentally just and diverse worlds.

The postdoctoral researcher will participate in the activities of the first stage of this project, which involve 1) laying out the methodological basis of the project, 2) analysing global digital access versus spatial distribution of GTI, and 3) identifying trends and scenarios of the digitalisation of the GTI. These important steps will serve to prepare the examination of place-based experiences of transformative digitalisation by undergraduate students in subsequent stages of the project.

Official number reference project:
101124195

Research line of the contract: *Environmental Social Science, Political Ecology*

Required qualifications for candidate

We seek candidates with a track record of completing DB projects and preparing research publications, with a strong commitment to collaborative, inclusive and equity-based work ethics. Required qualifications involve:

- A PhD or equivalent degree in computer science, geospatial science, statistics, management science, information systems, environmental social sciences, political science, or other social science domains. Degree requirements must be satisfied by the time of appointment.
- Demonstrated advanced SQL skills, and experience using PostgreSQL (desirably with the PostGIS extension).
- Demonstrated experience in geospatial data processing and analysis.
- Experience using R and/or Python (desirably for GIS Spatial Data Analysis and/ or topic modelling).
- Strong interest and background in conducting interdisciplinary research in the themes of the project (e.g., social movements, environmental justice, biocultural diversity).
- Demonstrated ability to conduct independent academic research and experience of delivering an academic research project to completion, including high-impact publication.
- Excellent written and spoken language skills in English are required. Spanish and or Catalan are highly valued. Knowledge of other languages will be valued.
- Experience of smooth collaboration in multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural research teams.
- Ability to manage multiple activities simultaneously, efficiently and on-time, and to meet deadlines.

Selection criteria:

- Disciplinary fit with project: 1-5 points
- Relevant methodological skills: 1-5 points
- Relevant academic and research experience: 1-5 points

The selection committee will short-list candidates who pass an average score of 4.0 points for an online interview.

Selection committee:

President: Beatriz Rodríguez-Labajos

Secretary: Ferran Muntané

Member: Camil Ungureanu

Salary/duration/benefits/facilities

This is a full-time post (35 hours/ week) for 3 years contract (with possible extension to 5 years), with a 6-month probationary period, starting 1st January 2025

Gross yearly salary: 36.000 € aprox

The contract includes all the **benefits** of the Spanish public health and social security system. **Additional funds** will be provided for data gathering, conference attendance, and open-access publication. If welcome, the successful candidate will benefit from **effective career advice** by the PI, who counts on an outstanding track record of research funding.

The position will be based at the **facilities** of the [Johns Hopkins University-Universitat Pompeu Fabra Public Policy Center](#), linked to the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the [Pompeu Fabra University](#) (UPF), Barcelona. The JHU-UPF Public Policy Center a highly internationalized, inclusive, and accessible work environment. It is located at [Ciutadella Campus](#) of the UPF, near Barcelona seaside, and it is specialized in social sciences and humanities. Researchers at JHU-UPF Public Policy Center actively participate in critical social environmental science debates, in Barcelona and globally.

Information on the application process

To apply for this position, candidates send the documentation by *Interfolio* through the following link: <http://apply.interfolio.com/144826>

1. A letter of motivation (max 2 pages) explaining how the candidate fulfils the qualifications mentioned in the job description
2. Candidate CV
3. Two letters of reference and contact information of the two referees.
4. One publication (preferably as a first author) or an online sample of a finalised database project.
5. A copy of the PhD Diploma
6. A copy of the candidate's ID card, or passport

Deadline to submit applications: 31/05/2024

Interviews: 2nd week of June 2024

Start date: January 2025

Contact: beatriz.rodriguez@upf.edu

Euraxess Link: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/225999>

Information about the selection process: <https://www.upf.edu/web/politiques/ofertes-de-treball>