

The Unit of Social Anthropology at the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) is inviting applications for a

PhD Position (100%) in the research project «Digital agriculture: Sino-European contrasts, correspondences and collaborations»

Starting date 1 August 2024 (or by agreement). The position is limited to four years.

The successful PhD candidate will conduct research within the Ambizione project «Digital agriculture: Sino-European contrasts, correspondences and collaborations» funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The project is headed by Dr. Lena Kaufmann. Based on the example of the digitalization of agriculture through drones/UAVs in China, Germany and Switzerland, the overall objectives of this project are to gain an in-depth, actor-centered understanding of the challenges and opportunities of agricultural digitalization through drones, and to use this as a case for understanding broader reconfigurations of global hierarchies of digital technologies and knowledge. The project consists of two studies exploring the use of agricultural drones in the Sino-German context (PhD candidate) and in the Sino-Swiss context (PI). Together, the two subprojects aim to better understand the digitalization of agriculture, especially from the farmers' perspectives, to assess its social implications and contribute to responsible innovation. A further goal of the project is to achieve more comprehensive, actor-centered insights into China's role in global food security, shedding light on the challenges related to the implementation of digital agricultural technologies in a transnational context.

Requirements

- M.A. (or equivalent) in Social or Cultural Anthropology, China Studies, Human Geography, Science and Technology Studies, Sociology, or related fields
- Experience with ethnographic research methods
- Proficiency in German and English, knowledge of Chinese is an additional asset
- Interest in questions of digitalization, technologies and global China
- Ability to work independently as well as in collaboration with the team
- For the duration of the contract, the PhD researcher must be resident in Fribourg or another place in Switzerland; weekly presence at the Department is expected.

Tasks

- Planning and realization of a PhD project, including 10-12 months of multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork
- Organizational and administrative tasks in the framework of the project, contribution to the overall aims of the research project by participating in regular meetings and organizing workshops
- Active participation in Department's activities (colloquia; collaboration in media outreach; co-teaching)
- Presentation of research results at workshops and international conferences
- Publishing
- Collaboration with institutions and stakeholders in the field of agricultural digitalization
- Contribution to science communication for a non-academic audience

We offer

- A welcoming academic home in the Unit of Social Anthropology in Fribourg
- The possibility to write a PhD thesis in an innovative research team, in a vibrant academic environment of the bilingual University of Fribourg
- The opportunity to become integrated in national and international research networks, including research visits at our partner institutions in Germany and China
- Access to funding for fieldwork, workshops, and conference visits abroad
- Additional funding can be obtained via the SNSF for the purpose of compatibility (e.g., childcare costs) and equal opportunities, and separate applications can be made for mobility grants for stays abroad.

Employment conditions

The PhD employment is limited to four years, with a salary according to the [SNSF regulations](#) for PhD students between CHF 48,680 and CHF 51,790 annually.

Applications should be submitted electronically in a single PDF file by **30 April 2024** to lena.kaufmann@uzh.ch and include a motivation letter, CV, degree certificates, contact details of at least one reference person, and a chapter of the M.A. thesis or an equivalent sample text. Interviews with selected candidates will be held in person or online on 21 and 22 May 2024 with Dr. Lena Kaufmann and Prof. Dr. Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi.

For more information about the Unit of Social Anthropology, see [here](#). For further information on the advertised position please contact the Ambizione project leader Dr. Lena Kaufmann (lena.kaufmann@uzh.ch).