

PhD Position (f/m/div) - Developing and Testing Crime
Reduction Interventions in Public Space using
Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and
Law

Direct Link: <https://www.AcademicKeys.com/r?job=237488>

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Posted Jun. 13, 2024, set to expire Oct. 13, 2024

Job Title	PhD Position (f/m/div) - Developing and Testing Crime Reduction Interventions in Public Space using
Department	Criminology https://csl.mpg.de/criminology/research-program
Institution	Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law Freiburg im Breisgau, Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Date Posted	Jun. 13, 2024
Application Deadline	Jul. 15, 2024
Position Start Date	available from the earliest possible starting date
Job Categories	Graduate Student
Academic Field(s)	Criminology/Criminal Justice Psychology - General Psychology - Developmental Psychology - Social Sociology - General Sociology - Crime, Justice & Law Sociology - Economic
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Job Description	

We are seeking to recruit a PhD student with a strong empirical background and a keen interest in

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crime prevention and behavioral interventions. You will work with an international and interdisciplinary team of researchers and virtual reality developers to create and subsequently test interventions to reduce crime in urban settings.

The challenge

The criminologist's key predicament resides in its object of study: crime takes place outside our field of view. As a consequence, criminologists have historically prioritized studying the properties of individuals and the social factors that propel them into and out of crime (e.g., peers, gangs, neighborhoods, dispositions) over examining their decision-making and the criminal event itself.

The MAXLab Virtual Twin Program seeks to address this gap by using virtual reality (VR) to test the effect of interventions in preventing crime and/or increasing public safety. For this purpose, VR replicas of street segments, squares, or other public spaces, i.e., "virtual twins" of the city of Freiburg (and potentially other cities), will be developed and experimentally manipulated. This approach enables the creation of realistic and ecologically valid versions of these areas while maintaining researcher control. Additionally, in a departure from conventional field experiments, VR experiments provide access to the research population and can hence tap into individuals' motivations, emotions, and cognitions. This approach can offer unique insights into how interventions may work and for whom. Consequently, the research project can break new ground in advancing our understanding of criminal and anti-social behavior and how to reduce it.

Interventions may involve human presence (e.g., number and type of guardians present, 'eyes on the street') or entail physical changes to the environment (e.g., CCTV cameras, dynamic street lighting). Candidates will be encouraged to come up with their own ideas for innovative interventions, which they will subsequently test in virtual reality. The first phase of the project is dedicated to designing the intervention(s); consulting with practitioners, officials, and other stakeholders; and to the organization of a hackathon in which researchers from different disciplines, VR developers, and other stakeholders will join forces to provide the basis for the next generation of criminological intervention research. Implementation, testing, and data analysis are likely to begin during the second year of the position.

Our Offer

Our Institute offers unrivalled research conditions, including access to top-notch laboratory facilities as well as access to exceptional specialist libraries and databases, well-equipped workspaces, and

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comprehensive administrative and academic support. Collaboration with other researchers and international partners at the Institute is a key element of our work. Additionally, there are many opportunities for researchers to design, convene, or participate in workshops, seminars, and conferences.

The position is available from the earliest possible starting date. The position is limited to four years and it is a fully funded research position with no teaching obligations. The position is full-time (currently 39 hours/week). Remuneration and social benefits are based on the German Civil Service Collective Agreement (TVöD Bund), pay category 13, 65% (see <https://oeffentlicher-dienst.info/tvoed/bund/>). The salary includes all mandatory social insurance contributions for health care, long-term care, unemployment, and retirement. The work location is Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany). We are committed to ensuring a positive work-life balance and offer flexible work options as well as generous opportunities for personal and professional development, including free in-house German language courses. There are also a number of daycare spots at a nearby childcare facility.

The Max Planck Society is an equal opportunity employer and supports diversity in the workplace. Applications from disabled persons are welcome. We also aim to increase the percentage of female staff in fields in which they are underrepresented and therefore expressly encourage women to apply. Applications are particularly welcome from persons with backgrounds that have so far been underrepresented in science and research with regard to gender, age, professional and cultural background, family situation, sexual orientation, and nationality.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Annika Hampel, Recruitment Officer (a.hampel@csi.mpg.de).

EEO/AA Policy

About us

The Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law (MPI-CSL) is a growing European center for research in criminology, public security matters, and criminal law. The Institute is part of the Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science – Germany's flagship research organization.

The Department of Criminology at the MPI-CSL offers a highly interdisciplinary and dynamic research

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environment in which criminologists, psychologists, sociologists, mathematicians, and computer scientists work together to understand the causes and consequences of criminal behavior and to develop effective interventions for the prevention of crime and the facilitation of offender rehabilitation. The department pushes the boundaries of crime research through the application of innovative methods, developmental theories of crime, and real-world application. It currently hosts three researchers with prestigious individual European Research Council (ERC) grants.

The Institute, with its approximately 150 employees, is located in Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany), a dynamic university city with a 900-year history. The city in the trinational border region (Germany, Switzerland, and France) impresses newcomers with its high quality of life and international flair. Freiburg ranked third on Lonely Planet's "Best in Travel 2022" list of the top ten city destinations in the world.

Contact Information

Please reference Academickeys in your cover letter when applying for or inquiring about this job announcement.

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