

PhD Position (f/m/div) - FutureU meets Resilience
Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and
Law; Institute of Education and Child Studies at Leiden
University

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Posted Aug. 5, 2024, set to expire Dec. 4, 2024

Job Title PhD Position (f/m/div) - FutureU meets Resilience

Department Criminology

<https://csl.mpg.de/criminology/research-program>

Institution Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law; Institute
of Education and Child Studies at Leiden University
Freiburg im Breisgau;, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Date Posted Aug. 5, 2024

**Application
Deadline** Sep. 8, 2024

**Position Start
Date** available from the earliest possible starting date.

Job Categories Graduate Student

**Academic
Field(s)** Psychology - General

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**Job
Description**

Are you interested in novel research methods and conducting state-of-the-art empirical research? Do you aspire to be a researcher that conducts innovative research with social relevance? Would you like to gain experience working in multidisciplinary teams at renowned scientific institutes in Germany and

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the Netherlands? If so, then this position may be perfect for you.

The challenge

Positive self-imagery is a key factor contributing to psychological resilience. A positive outlook towards the future during adolescence is also known to aid resilience in youth with experiences of childhood adversity. Conversely, negative self-imagery and a focus on the here and now often results in negative behaviors, such as delinquency, substance use, reckless decision making, and mental health problems.

This PhD project explores the future self as an intervention point to increase future-orientation and strengthen psychological resilience – building on and integrating research insights from the [FutureU research program](#) and the [Resilience Center Leiden](#). To this end, the project will further develop and test a gamified smartphone application that aims to establish a connection between users and their future self to help generate a positive image of the latter (see [here](#) for information on an earlier iteration of the app). At-risk youth will be presented with a virtual version of their future self and interact with it to make them more aware of the future and generate a positive (future) self-image.

The 4-year PhD project will be completed at the Department of Criminology at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law in Freiburg i. Br., Germany and offers the possibility of one or more research stays at the Institute of Education and Child Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

As a PhD candidate in this project, your primary tasks are to:

- contribute to the development of a novel smartphone-based intervention;
- set up and conduct experiments in the field focusing on youth with adverse early experiences;
- investigate the effectiveness of the intervention through large-scale research;
- manage support staff (including Bachelor/Master students and research assistants);
- write scientific articles resulting in a PhD thesis and giving presentations at conferences.

The PhD project is led and supervised by Prof. dr. Jean-Louis van Gelder and Prof. dr. Anne-Laura van Harmelen.

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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 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.

During the PhD-period, the PhD candidate will have the possibility to spend time at the [Institute of Education and Child Studies](#) which belongs to the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Leiden University. The academic staff of the Institute of Education and Child Studies teach and conduct research into the ways children and young people are raised, taught, and guided, and how differences in upbringing, education, and other forms of guidance influence the development of children. Research and teaching in education and child studies focus on how evidence-informed approaches can contribute to the optimal development of children, for example through support programs, diagnostic and intervention strategies, and learning methods.

EEO/AA Policy

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Contact Information

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

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