

Research Position (PhD or Postdoc) Governing in/fertile bodies in Mexico (SNSF project)

Starting Date: October 2021- September 2025

The **Unit Social and Cultural Geography at the University of Bern**'s vision is to understand how processes of globalization affect intimate lives (for more information, see our [website](#)). Our new Swiss National Science Foundation funded research project entitled “Reproductive Geopolitics: Governing and Contesting In/Fertility in the Global Intimate” (2021-2025) aims to investigate how uneven access to reproductive technologies reflects the valuation of certain bodies and lives. Whose bodies are reproduced in the future depends on who has access to reproductive technologies, here understood as both low-tech and high-tech technologies affecting fertility and infertility, conception and contraception, pregnancy and pregnancy termination, and birth and infanticide. The research field of reproductive geopolitics we aim to develop in this project investigates how access to reproductive technologies becomes geopolitical when individuals, states, international organizations, transnational corporations, and religious and nongovernmental organizations define and contest whose bodies count as desirable for reproduction and whose bodies are denied reproduction or restricted in it. We will study the geopolitical governance of in/fertility through three marginalized populations: asylum-seeking women in Switzerland, indigenous women in Mexico and migrant farm workers in Spain. To empirically capture marginalized women's intimate experiences of reproductive governance, this project will advance an affectual methodology consisting of different participatory and creative methods which we develop through an affectual method toolbox in collaboration with participants and artists in the context of the [mLAB](#) at the Institute of Geography at the University of Bern. The affectual methods will generate sonic, visual, cartographic, and online data that we will use to a/effectively communicate these experiences to a broader public.

We are seeking a doctoral or postdoctoral scholar to join the research team led by Prof. [Carolin Schurr](#). The successful candidate will research how Mexico's past population control, which governed indigenous women's fertility through sterilization campaigns, affects indigenous women's access to reproductive technologies in the present. The person will study how past and present global and national population politics, uneven geographies of national health care, and local contestations of this transnational governance of indigenous fertility shape indigenous women's intimate experiences of reproduction.

Your Tasks:

- Develop and conduct a research project with a focus on population politics in Mexico
- Conduct empirical fieldwork in Mexico with indigenous women and relevant institutions
- Develop the theoretical and methodological framework of the wider research project in collaboration with the research team
- Co-develop and conduct research with new affectual and artistic methods in a collaborative fashion with the research team, research participants, and artists
- Co-organize workshops and conferences with the other members of the research team
- Present your research at scientific conferences and public events
- Publish results in international peer-reviewed journals and in public outlets

Your Qualifications:

- Completed MA or PhD in Human Geography (with a focus on feminist geographies), (Medical) Anthropology, Gender Studies, Sociology or a related field
- Experience in living and/or conducting fieldwork in rural areas in Latin America and Mexico
- Knowledge of feminist and postcolonial theories of space and the body
- Methodological skills in qualitative empirical research methods (experience with participative, visual or artistic methods is an asset)
- Excellent command of English, in writing and speaking is a requirement. Very good skills in Spanish, knowledge of local indigenous languages is an asset

We Offer:

- For you to be part of a feminist team consisting of academics, artists, and activists.
- Working in an international and innovative research environment comprising the Department of Geography ([GIUB](#)), the [mLAB](#) (an experimental space that brings together research, media, and arts), and the Interdisciplinary Center of Gender Studies ([IZFG](#))
- A luminous workplace with view on the Alps at the Department of Geography, including IT infrastructure and access to library services
- Flexible and family-friendly working hours and space for activist approaches and creativity
- Competitive salary and employment terms of the SNSF, Switzerland
- Expenses for travels, fieldwork, workshops, a field assistant, and translations are covered by the budget of the SNSF research project (2021-2025)

For more information about this position, please contact Prof. Carolin Schurr (carolin.schurr@giub.unibe.ch). Applications include the following documents: curriculum vitae with contact details of two referees and copies of relevant degrees and certificates, a cover letter of max. 2 pages laying out your motivation for the position, how you meet the criteria detailed above and your career plans, one page outline of a possible research project on the above-mentioned topic, and an academic paper, book chapter, or chapter from your thesis that represents best your past academic work. Please send all documents in one pdf file (name.pdf) to Leonie Haller (leonie.haller@giub.unibe.ch).

Closing date for applications: 5 September 2021. Interviews will take place in Bern or online on 14 September 2021.

We value diversity and equal opportunity and encourage in particular researchers from Latin America to apply for this position. The selection process builds on the criteria of the [Better Science Initiative](#). The desired starting date of the position is 1 October 2022 (1 January 2023 at the latest) and the successful candidate is expected to move to Bern, Switzerland.