



The Institute of Geography of the University of Bern commits itself to a geography embracing social and physical sciences to contribute knowledge for societal transformation. It understands that interdisciplinarity is required to analyze human-environment interactions and to address current challenges toward a sustainable world.

We invite applications for:

### A postdoc position (80%) in Geography

As a successful candidate, you will be part of the interdisciplinary research project “Commonification: transition pathways for urban sustainability (COMMONPATHS)”, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation ([commonpaths.unibe.ch](https://commonpaths.unibe.ch)). Focusing on case studies in Switzerland and in Ghana, the project aims to better understand the emergence, organization, effects, and conditions of success of three commonification processes aimed at (1) greening cities, (2) creating affordable housing, and (3) supporting community-based agrifood initiatives. By focusing on the governance of these resource systems, COMMONPATHS aims to analyze how and under what conditions these movements effectively contribute to strong urban sustainability and the transformation toward a post-growth society.

Under the guidance of the senior project members of the project, who are based at the University of Bern, the University of Lausanne, the University of Leeds, the University of Ghana in Accra, the Erasmus University Rotterdam in The Hague, and the University of Vienna, you will conduct your main research in Switzerland and Ghana. You will be affiliated with the research group of Prof. Jean-David Gerber and work closely together with partners at the other universities involved in COMMONPATHS.

#### Tasks

- Conduct your own postdoctoral research within the COMMONPATHS project both in Switzerland and Ghana
- Analyze comparatively institutional arrangements (“the rules of the game”) governing community-based initiatives by means of a survey. You will examine how they evolve over time, how they manage resources and how they are embedded in large institutional regimes (e.g. public policies, property rights systems).
- Analyze the role of these initiatives in securing Nature’s Contributions to People.
- Contribute to advice of PhD researchers in human geography (University of Bern, CH) and environmental sciences (University of Leeds, UK)
- Contribute to the transdisciplinary platform of the COMMONPATHS project
- Contribute to the synthesis of the COMMONPATHS project

- Be one of four members of the project coordination office. You will develop the operational management of the project, an interdisciplinary understanding of the scientific issues at stake, a trustful research environment, and a common culture
- Publish your findings in scientific and non-scientific publications (e.g. written guidelines, factsheets for urban commons initiatives)

### Requirements

- An excellent PhD degree in human geography or related social sciences disciplines (e.g. heterodox economics, political ecology, political science). We will also consider other education backgrounds provided that you convincingly motivate your application;
- Proven research experience with (1) (new) institutionalist approaches and/or public policy analysis. (2) Experience with ecosystem services (or Nature's Contributions to People). (3) Demonstrated interest in urban development issues and (strong) sustainability;
- Excellent qualitative and quantitative research skills; proven experience with qualitative research methods;
- Excellent language skills in English;
- Practical or research experiences in Ghana or Switzerland and/or in community-based initiatives are a plus;
- Team orientation, working in a precise, engaged and self-organized manner, skills and commitment to work in an interdisciplinary field.

### What we offer

- A highly motivated, dynamic, and intercultural research environment, committed to shaping sustainable futures
- The chance to become an integral team member in the Sinergia-funded COMMONPATHS project
- Close and supportive supervision and collaboration of the project leaders and partners for your PhD research
- Postdoc position funded for 48 months, including fieldwork budget. Employment terms of the University of Bern

### Details

- *Location:* Institute of Geography, Hallerstrasse 12, 3012 Bern, Switzerland; with close exchanges in the project team, with extended presence and fieldwork in Ghana and Switzerland
- *Starting:* 1 March 2023 (or as agreed)
- *Duration:* 48 months
- *Application documents:* Please send your letter of motivation, CV including a copy of university transcripts, and contact details of two references (no reference letters needed at this stage) together as a single PDF document to: [marlen.stoeckli@giub.unibe.ch](mailto:marlen.stoeckli@giub.unibe.ch). Additionally, please send us a pdf of your PhD thesis in a separate PDF document.
- *Application deadline.* For full consideration, please submit your materials by November 20, 2022. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis after that deadline until the position is filled.
- *For more information:* Prof. Jean-David Gerber ([jean-david.gerber@giub.unibe.ch](mailto:jean-david.gerber@giub.unibe.ch)).

*The Institute of Geography values diversity and is committed to equal opportunities; applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates who meet the stated criteria.*