

The Unit Economic Geography in the Institute of Geography, University of Bern, invites applications for the following position, which will start on November 1, 2020:

PhD in Economic Geography (SNF Project Industrial Towns)

The full-time position is part of an international research project on industrial towns in Switzerland and Slovenia. The 3-year project is funded through the Swiss National Science Foundation (“Places that don’t matter? Socio-economic transformation of industrial towns in Switzerland and Slovenia”, SNF grant number 192764). The Slovenian Science Foundation is funding additional positions that are based at the Anton Melik Geographical Institute in Ljubljana. The project is led by Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer in Bern and Dr. David Bole in Ljubljana. Both are experts on the development of small and medium-sized towns.

For this project, we will examine industrial transformation processes in small and medium-sized towns. We will analyze how these processes play out at the firm/sector level and how they affect communities (workers, families, civic society, etc.). Taking current crises such as Covid-19 into account, we will focus on its impact on industrial culture, innovation dynamics and community response. We will conduct case studies in Switzerland and utilize qualitative and participatory research methods. In addition to the PhD, we will also hire a Post Doc who will be able to co-supervise. The researchers will collaborate with our Slovenian research partners from the Anton Melik Geographical Institute in Ljubljana and have the opportunity to participate in joint workshops and visiting research stays in Slovenia.

We offer a stimulating and team-based work environment, which provides opportunities to present at national and international conferences and workshops, network with scholars and practitioners and develop skills in advanced research methods, data analysis and writing, teamwork and leadership.

The PhD does not require taking graduate level classes or subscribing to a graduate school. We encourage and support PhD students in developing their transferable skills for future careers in academia or beyond. PhD students have a second supervisor who they will choose during the first year. Successful candidates will convey that they are highly motivated and have potential for research, that they are able to work independently and in a team, that they can structure their work and handle workloads, have a good command of oral and written English and have a solid background in social science research methods. We will be using participatory methods and social skills are very important. As some of our case study towns are located in the German-, French- and Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, it will be a benefit to know at least one of these languages.

The position

Starting date: November 1, 2020

Workplace: Institute of Geography, University of Bern, Switzerland

The salary is according to guidelines of the University of Bern.

Your responsibilities

- Conducting research for a doctoral dissertation related to the research project
- Supporting the group's teaching and administrative activities

Your qualifications

- Candidates for the PhD position should hold a master's degree in geography or in a closely related discipline (economics, socioeconomics, sociology, history, etc.).
- Candidates should be able to conduct fieldwork using methods of social science analysis. Experiences in economic geography research and methods are an asset.
- Excellent language skills in English. German, French or Italian are a plus.

Your application

The application should include the following (one single pdf file):

- Letter of motivation
- Full CV
- Names and e-mail addresses of 2 references
- Copies of diplomas and diploma supplements
- Copy of master thesis or chapters of the thesis
- 1-page proposal about research agenda and how it relates to the SNF project

Deadline: June 15, 2020

The PhD position is part of the Unit Economic Geography at the University of Bern (Professor Heike Mayer). The research group is active in the [Center for Regional Economic Development \(CRED\)](#) at the University of Bern. We currently work on a number of SNF-funded research projects. In addition, we are engaged in applied research and regularly provide expert advice to local, regional and national policymakers. For more information about the research group, please visit our [website](#).

The University of Bern has more than 18,500 students and offers a full range of fields of studies. Bern boasts a high quality of life including urban swimming and hiking in the nearby Alps. For more information about the University as an employer, please visit this [link](#). If you would like to know more about a PhD at our university, please click [here](#).

For questions about the position, please contact Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer (mayer@giub.unibe.ch).

Please send your application to Therese Jost (therese.jost@giub.unibe.ch).