



BKHS Fellowship “For a just democracy!” Call for Applications

Background

Social inequality and poverty have been on the rise for decades and have had a major impact on trust in democracy, participatory justice and social cohesion. What are the causes and consequences of this dynamic - both nationally and internationally? How can we better mobilise to fight poverty? How can we strengthen the representation of the interests of the socially marginalised as we need to engage in the ecological transformation of the economy? How must international business be organised so that everyone involved along global supply chains benefits from international trade? Are populism and right-wing extremism linked to social injustice and precarity? What obligations exist from a democratic perspective in the face of social disadvantage?

To address these questions, the Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt Foundation (BKHS) will award one BKHS Fellowship in 2024 on the topic “**For a just democracy!**”. The Fellowship is closely linked to the **Helmut Schmidt Lecture**, which will take place in Berlin at the end of 2024, and the **BKHS Magazine**, which will be published at the same time. Each year, the Helmut Schmidt Lecture features a public figure speaking on a current political and social issue - in recent years, the topics have been [Living Democracy! \(2021\)](#), [Speaking Up! \(2022\)](#) and [Remaking Globalisation! \(2023\)](#). With the **BKHS Magazine** ([#1/2021](#), [#2/2022](#), [#3/2023](#)), which is published each year to accompany the lecture, the BKHS brings together voices from academia, politics, the arts and civil society to develop concrete political recommendations for action on the annual theme. With further background discussions in Berlin and publications (e.g. the policy brief series *BKHS Perspectives*), the BKHS also provides policy advice on the theme of the year.

Organisation of the BKHS Fellowship

This year, the BKHS is offering **one six-month fellowship** on the theme of the Helmut Schmidt Lecture and the BKHS Magazine 2024 “**For a just democracy!**”. In terms of content and organisation, the fellowship is part of the programme “Global Markets and Social Justice” and will focus on the topic “**International Trade Policy and Social Inequality**”. The Fellow will work closely with the programme team.

The Fellow will bring his/her own, self-contained research project on the thematic focus, with a clear link to the theme “For a just democracy!”. At least one external publication and one policy brief in the *BKHS Perspectives* format should be produced during the fellowship. Depending on the focus of the project, the external publication may address different audiences; both opinion pieces and academic articles are conceivable. In addition, the BKHS expects the Fellow to design and implement a virtual knowledge transfer programme (e.g. the “Streitgespräch” established at the BKHS). The Fellow will be supported by the BKHS team.

Beyond the Fellowship period, the BKHS strives to maintain a long-term relationship between the Foundation and the Fellow.

Application requirements

- Political scientists specialising in international relations or international political economy with in-depth knowledge in one or more of the following areas: social inequality in international comparison or global, bilateral and multilateral trade policy, geo-economics.
- The research project could, for example, focus on the future of global trade governance in the face of intensifying geo-economic competition, solutions for a socio-ecological transformation of the economy, or the changing role of trade unions in these processes.
- There does not necessarily have to be a regional focus, although Germany or the EU should be treated as relevant actors.

Please also note:

- The fellowship is aimed at political scientists at the beginning of their career (at least an advanced doctorate). However, the BKHS does not offer fellowships exclusively for doctoral students.
- Qualitative and theory-developing research methods are desired. In addition to expertise on the topic, an interest in interlinking science, politics and society is essential.
- As the BKHS values diversity, applications from people without a family background in academia, with a so-called uneven CV or from underrepresented regions of the world are particularly welcome.
- A very good command of English and German is required. The Fellow's work may be conducted in English (publications, events, etc.), but as German is the working language of the BKHS team, a good knowledge of German, especially in oral use, is required.
- The BKHS expects the Fellow to be regularly present in Hamburg for the duration of the Fellowship.
- For non-EU citizens, a residence and work permit for Germany is a prerequisite for application. Unfortunately, the BKHS cannot provide any assistance in this regard.

Scope

- Six-month fellowship with a stipend of €1,700 per month for living expenses (starting 15 July 2024 or later)
- Small travel budget for networking or interview appointments (up to €1,000)
- Time for independent academic work on the annual lecture topic
- Invitation to the Helmut Schmidt Lecture in Berlin and participation in background talks
- Access to the BKHS network and collaboration in a young, motivated and interdisciplinary team

Application documents

The documents required for an application include a one-page letter of application, a one-page project outline (concrete research question and approach with reference to the topic, plan for publications and transfer event), a CV with at least one reference and relevant (work) records and certificates.

The application (all documents as one pdf file to d.leupold@helmut-schmidt.de) should be sent to Ms Doris Leupold with the subject 'Application BKHS Fellowship'. The deadline for applications is 15 June 2024. The decision on the awarding of the fellowship will be taken by the programme director in cooperation with the executive management of the BKHS.

There is no legal entitlement to a BKHS Fellowship.

Who we are

The Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt Foundation commemorates one of the most important German statesmen of the 20th century. As a forward-looking think tank, we address issues that inspired Schmidt as a pioneering thinker. The Foundation's work programme focuses on three overarching areas: 1) European and international affairs, 2) global markets and social justice, and 3) democracy and society.

Closely linked to these programmes is the permanent exhibition "Schmidt! Living Democracy" in Hamburg's city centre. It reflects almost half a century of German and international contemporary history. It places the achievements of its namesake in a contemporary and historical context. In the Helmut Schmidt Archive in Hamburg's Langenhorn district, the Foundation makes the private documents of Schmidt and his wife Loki available to researchers and opens the Schmidts' former private home to the public.

Privacy Notice:

Your data will be treated in accordance with data protection regulations. You can access our general data protection information in accordance with Art. 12, 13, 14 GDPR at <https://www.helmut-schmidt.de/datenschutzerklaerung>. You will receive further information during the application process.