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**UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN**

Faculty of Business, Economics and  
Social Sciences

Departement of Social Sciences

**Institute of Communication and  
Media Studies (icmb)**

## Job offer

The Institute of Communication and Media Studies at the University of Bern (icmb) is looking for a

### PhD student (75-100%)

**for the project “Through a Glass, Darkly: How to Study Authoritarian Regimes” funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation**

This five-year project examines how foreign audiences learn about the inner workings of **authoritarian regimes** (specifically the People’s Republic of **China** and the **Russian Federation**), focusing on the **role of country experts and their connections**. The position will be available **from September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025** (or by appointment). Note that there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> position available in this project that focuses on using LLMs to extract political networks from unstructured text.

#### We offer:

- A **fully funded PhD position for four years**, with a starting salary of approximately **50’000 CHF** and **no teaching requirements**. Compensated teaching assignments may be available, subject to departmental needs. Employment adheres to the regulations of the Canton of Berne.
- An attractive work environment with a collegial and **international team**, committed to supporting young scholars through cooperation and exchange.
- The **freedom to develop your own ideas for your dissertation** and add relevant questions to the surveys of China and Russia experts.

#### Tasks:

- **Write a dissertation** within the broader scope of the project
- Implement **surveys of China and Russia experts** and collect publicly available data on those experts
- Help disseminate results and organize stakeholder conferences

#### Requirements:

- An above-average completed or soon-to-be completed **master’s degree in communication science, political science, or other relevant social sciences**.
- Proven **quantitative research** and data science skills, experience with survey research
- Excellent **English** skills (German and French is an asset)
- Ability to work independently as well as collaboratively within interdisciplinary teams.

- Chinese and/or Russian language skills are an asset, as is demonstrated interest in the politics of those two countries

To apply for this position, please submit to [franziska.keller@unibe.ch](mailto:franziska.keller@unibe.ch) **one PDF file with a letter of motivation** including research interests and ideas, a **current CV** including a list of publications (if available), a **writing sample** (e.g. MA thesis), a copy of university **transcripts and degrees**, and a **letter of recommendation** by **July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025**. Late submissions will be considered until the position is filled. Contact Franziska Keller if you have questions regarding this position. The interviews will take place on **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> / Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2025**.