

Call for Applications

PhD position on EU industrial and skills policy

About the project | The Department of Political and Social Sciences at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) invites applications for one fully funded PhD position in the research project *Governance Capacity and EU-led Industrial Upgrading in Southern Europe* (GUIDE-SE), led by Joan Miró and Alina Felder-Stindt. The project studies how governance arrangements shape the success of industrial and skills policies funded by the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility in Spain and Italy. It focuses on electric vehicles, semiconductors and the related skills reforms, and asks under which institutional and political conditions these policies support industrial upgrading. Drawing on theories of policy capacity, it examines state capacity, conditionality, skills alignment, experimentalist contracting and multilevel governance, using process tracing based on document analysis and elite interviews

The PhD position | The PhD researcher will develop a doctoral project that complements the project's focus. We would particularly welcome projects that extend the analysis to Eastern Europe, for example by looking at how EU-funded industrial or skills policies are governed in the region, but other relevant contexts and approaches are equally welcome. The precise thesis topic will be defined together with the supervisors and in light of the candidate's own research interests.

The researcher will be based at UPF in Barcelona and will be part of the Barcelona Center for European Studies (BACES). It will also join the EUGOV (Government and Governance in the EU) research group. The EUGOV group has established itself as a leader in EU studies in Spain, with the Generalitat of Catalunya recognizing it as a Consolidated Group from 2009 to present.

Contract and funding | The position is a full-time predoctoral contract of up to four years with a gross annual salary of 24,468.24 euros. Tuition fees and research-related costs will be covered. The PhD researcher is expected to join by September 2027 at the latest, with a preference for an earlier starting date. Relocation to Barcelona is required.

The successful applicant will join the PhD Program in Political and Social Sciences of the Department of Political and Social Sciences of UPF. The PhD researcher will participate in the Department's training program for PhD students and will develop a personal training and supervision plan. He/she will be supervised by the project's PIs (J. Miró and A. Felder-Stindt).

If you have not joined the PhD Programme in Political and Social Sciences, be aware that you will be applying at the same time for this scholarship and for entry into the programme.

What are we looking for | We welcome applicants with a Master's degree in political science, public policy, European studies or a related field, an interest in EU public policy, comparative and international political economy or industrial and skills policy, and solid training in social science research design and qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Willingness to do fieldwork is expected, and language skills that are relevant to the proposed research are an asset.

How to apply | Interested candidates may apply exclusively through an [online form](#). In this form select the project PID2025-173051OA-I00 ("Capacidad de gobernanza y modernización industrial impulsada por la UE en Europa del Sur").

The following documents are required:

1. Completed Relació de mèrits (list of merits)
2. ID or passport

3. Bachelor's and Master's diplomas and academic transcripts
4. Proof of English proficiency (B2.2)
5. Two academic recommendation letters
6. CV and motivation letter
7. Research project (about 500 words) with a clear link to GUIDE-SE. In this document candidates should outline potential research ideas relevant to the GUIDE-SE project. We understand that these ideas will be preliminary and may evolve as the doctoral project develops.

Deadline, interviews and contact | The deadline for applications is 14 November 2026.

Applications will be assessed by the principal investigators of the funded project.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an (online) interview in the first week of December 2026.

For questions, please contact alinajasmin.felderstindt@upf.edu and joan.miro@upf.edu.