

## **Call for applications (deadline 10/3/2015)**

### **2 PhD fellowships in the field of Caspian Studies (social sciences and economics)**

#### **Tallinn University of Technology, Department of International Relations**

In the frame of the Marie Skłodowska Curie Innovative Training Network project

#### **Around the Caspian: a Doctoral Training for Future Experts in Development and Cooperation with Focus on the Caspian Region (2015-2019)**

*Funded by the REA of the European Commission in the frame of the Horizon 2020 Programme*

The Department of International Relations, at the Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration is looking for perspective candidates with a background in economics/social sciences and with an interest in the Caspian region (Russia, Caucasus, Central Asia, Iran). Ideally, they should know one of the regional languages but willingness to learn it as part of their fellowship is also acceptable.

Successful candidates will be employed as junior researchers and enrolled as PhD students to complete a PhD thesis related to one of the following two topics within the contract period of 3 years.

#### **Topic 1: The Politics of Welfare, Poverty and Inequality in Central Asia and the Caucasus**

Topic one is intended to critically engage with Western-based definitions of welfare and social policies to discuss whether current models of welfare and neoliberal approaches can be imported to the region or if new approaches, which offer a nuance of existing theory, show an alternative way of conceiving social policies in the region. Current works in this direction have informed a recent special issue of the Journal of Eurasian Studies that can be found here:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1879366514000190>

#### **Topic 2: Making Business around Caspian: Foreign investors between formal and informal challenges and opportunities**

Topic two will explore different strategies and modes to understand marketing, business, investment and risk in the Caspian region. Traditional approaches from economics and political science see dysfunctions of the system (corruption, lack of rule of law) as temporary and their eradication as necessary for a healthy business environment in the region. The selected fellow will be requested to challenge this model by exploring possible alternative value systems and factors that may help investors, policy makers and development workers to better understand the local reality.

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#### **Description of the PhD and training programme**

CASPIAN (2015-2019) is an Innovative Training Network that has received 3.8 Million Euro under a Marie Skłodowska Curie Scheme funded by the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission with the goal of training the next generation of experts on the Caspian region.

The training will have three main components:

**Academic training:** the students will have to undergo an extensive academic training. Based at Tallinn

University of Technology they will attend regular network events and will have access to a network of excellent universities where to receive complementary training.

**Private sector training:** in the course of their fellowship, our fellows will have the chance to spend a period in one of our partners to get a work experience and learn how to use academic skills for non-academic sectors.

**Worldwide vision on the Caspian region:** fellows will be encouraged to spend a research period in one of our non-EU university to gain an alternative, and non-Eurocentric, vision on the Caspian region.

The successful candidates will be involved in a large training programme benefiting from participation of the following partners:

Full partners (beneficiaries)	Non-academic partners	Academic non-EU partners
1. Dublin City University (Coordinator)	1. Eastern Partnership Advancement Centre	1. Renmin University of China
2. Tallinn University of Technology	2. Kimmage Development Studies Centre	2. Jawaharlal Nehru University
3. Oxford Brookes University	3. Ainouras Research	3. Marmara University
4. University of St Andrews	4. Finnish Institute of International Affairs	4. Harvard University
5. University of Coimbra	5. Centre for Social Studies	5. Moscow Higher School of Economics
6. University of Ghent	6. Levada Centre	6. Hanyang University
7. Forschungstelle Osteuropa	7. Transitions online	

### Eligibility and technical information

Candidates of any nationality and residence are eligible to apply as long as they meet the following criteria

- Minimal qualifications: candidates must be eligible for doctoral studies in Estonia and have a Master in a relevant topic completed by Spring 2015
- Maximum seniority allowed: candidates must have less than 4 years (full-time equivalent) of research experience after their Master's degree. This means that, from the moment they have completed their Master's, they may have held research position but for a total of less than 48 months
- Mobility clause: candidates must not have been resident or carried out activities in Estonia for more than 12 months in the past three years

**To apply** send an application package containing:

- Cover letter
- Academic CV
- Project proposal
- Name and contact of three referees who can comment on the applicant capacities and abilities (please inform them that, if you are shortlisted, we might contact them asking for a reference)

To: [marie.curie.management@gmail.com](mailto:marie.curie.management@gmail.com)

The same address can also be used if you need an answer to a specific question that is not findable on the Marie Curie website or this announcement.

**Deadline for receiving the documents is 10 March 2015**

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**Information about the Marie Skłodowska Curie actions is available at**

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/>

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/quick-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/quick-guide/index_en.htm)

**Financial and other technical information is available at**

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/itn/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-msca/actions/itn/index_en.htm)

**Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration (TSEBA)** at Tallinn University of Technology has been providing high quality education in economics and business administration since 1941, greatly benefiting from being an integral part of Tallinn University of Technology, which is one of the largest universities in Estonia. TSEBA is generally accepted to have not only the highest reputation but also the largest student body studying business at the university level in Estonia. A wide selection of economics, business and international relations programmes are provided on bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, all of which benefit from national and international accreditations and recognition.

**The Department of International Relations** has 22 faculty members who deal with International Relations and European and/or Asian studies or closely related fields. There are 3 PhD students and close to 100 MA students. The Department has participated in the Erasmus, Leonardo and other European programmes. The Department teaches its programmes in English and it has recently established a Research Centre for Asian-Pacific Studies. About one fourth of the student body are international students. Recent projects of the department include:

- Jean Monnet Module in European Integration (2014-2017)
- A NATO funded project: "NATO Perception Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific Region (2014-2016)
- The module "Asian Societies, Economy, Politics" funded by the Estonian Ministry of Education to increase awareness on Asia