

The Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn is an international research university that offers a wide range of degree programs. With 200 years' worth of history, some 38,000 students, over 6,000 employees, and an excellent domestic and international reputation, Bonn University is among Germany's leading universities.

The [Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies](#) invites applications for two

### **PhD Positions (Research Associates, 65%)**

Starting date: January 1, 2021. Contracts will have a fixed duration of three years (ending December 31, 2023), with an option of extending for an additional year after a positive interim evaluation (3+1 years).

The successful candidates will work in the Research Group "[The concept of slavery in African history](#)". This Research Group is an integral part of the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, established in 2017 within the Faculty of Philosophy. The BCDSS was awarded the status of "Cluster of Excellence: Beyond Slavery and Freedom. Asymmetric Dependencies in pre-modern Societies" by the German Research Council. The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies offers excellent opportunities for interdisciplinary and comparative study of different forms of dependencies from Antiquity to the present, across many regions.

#### **Job description**

The successful candidates will formulate independent projects within the Research Group "The concept of slavery in African history".

The research group investigates the role of the concept of „slavery“ for Sub-Saharan African history and its representation (e.g. the historiography of Africa, portrayals of African history in the media etc.). It is interested in uncovering the complex relationship between concepts and actions, as well as between discourse and socio-economic realities. The research group asks if and how the meaning of the concept of “slavery” changed or needed to be modified to adapt to a given socio-economic context, but also how the existing conceptual framework guided people's actions.

Doctoral projects should meet the following three criteria: 1) focus on asymmetrical dependencies/ “slavery” 2) relate to Sub-Saharan African history and/or its representation and 3) approach the topic from the perspective of conceptual history in its broadest sense.

Candidates interested in pushing disciplinary boundaries are especially welcome to apply.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Analyses investigating how the connection between „slavery“ and “Africa” became (and remains) part of the dominant historical narrative (e.g. through academic scholarship, media, schoolbooks)
- Regional case studies of how European concepts of „slavery“ impacted African concepts and practices of asymmetrical dependencies (and/or vice versa)
- Analyses that reveal how concepts of asymmetrical dependencies have enabled or hampered (political) actions in or regarding Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. missionary activity, abolitionism; but also rebellion, war, diplomacy...)
- Case studies of individual (European or African) authors and their conceptualizations in the context of their own time and experiences

The research group itself forms part of the wider research of the BCDSS and here of the Research Area A "[Semantics – Lexical Fields – Narratives](#)".

The positions are funded for up to four years (3 + 1 years) on a salary of 65% of the TV-L-E13 salary level, approximately €30,000 pro-rata per annum before tax. The successful candidates will receive a salary and social security benefits. In addition, access to extra funding for archive trips and conferences will be available, as well as institutional support for women and applicants with families. The successful candidates will participate in the BCDSS's PhD program which offers both academic and non-academic training units. PhD candidates at the University of Bonn are advised to enroll as PhD students at the bi-annual fee of about €300. This fee covers free regional public transport within the state of North Rhine-Westphalia as well as student discounts at museums, cinemas, and other benefits.

### Qualifications

Applicants are required to have completed a university degree (Master, Magister or Staatsexamen) in history, African studies, cultural studies/Kulturwissenschaft or in a similar area of study relevant for the research group. We welcome applications from all over the world. English is the working language within the Research Group "The concept of slavery in African history" and within the BCDSS.

The English of the applicant must therefore be on an equivalent level of:

- ETS TOEFL certificate (minimum score of 600 for the paper-based test, 250 for the computer-based test, and 100 for the online test);
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English, CPE (any grade);
- Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English, CAE (grade A or B);
- IELTS test (level 7.0);
- C1 level according to CEFR native speakers or graduates from an English-speaking university are exempt from this verification.

**However, we do not require a formal certificate.**

### How to apply

Applicants are invited to submit:

1. their application, consisting of a) **curriculum vitae**, b) a **list of publications** (if applicable), c) copies of their **BA and MA certificates** or equivalents (including official transcripts)
2. an **outline of the research project** they would like to develop (max. four pages), including key research questions and hypotheses, sources and methodology, connections of the proposed project with, and relevance for, the topic of the research group.
3. a **sample of work** of max. three pages, together with a short description of the context (e.g. part of BA or MA thesis, term paper, published article etc.) in its original language.
4. the **names and contact details of two referees** (position, professional address, and e-mail).

The University of Bonn is committed to diversity and equal opportunities. It is certified as a family-friendly university. It aims to increase the proportion of women in areas where women are underrepresented and to promote their careers in particular. It therefore urges women with relevant qualifications to apply. Applications will be handled in accordance with the *Landesgleichstellungsgesetz* (State Equality Act). Applications from suitable individuals with a certified serious disability or similar are particularly welcome.

If you are interested in this position, please send your **complete English application documents** combined into one single pdf file by **July 31, 2020** to [application@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:application@dependency.uni-bonn.de) **with the application code 32/20/3.202**. For further information please refer to our [website](#) or contact Sarah Dusend at [researchandstudy@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:researchandstudy@dependency.uni-bonn.de).