



OeAW - Discovering the future

As a central non-university institution for science and research, the **Austrian Academy of Sciences - OeAW** has the task of "**promoting science in every respect**". Founded in 1847 as a learned society, it now has over 760 members and around 1,800 employees dedicated to innovative basic research, interdisciplinary knowledge exchange and the dissemination of new insights. The OeAW initiates and maintains partnerships worldwide and represents Austria in international scientific organizations; it cooperates with numerous institutions in the scientific field in order to actively **shape the research landscape**.



POSTDOC (F/M/X) in Social Anthropology

Job IDs: ISA077PD225

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The [Institute for Social Anthropology \(ISA\)](#) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW), Austria's leading non-university research and science institution, is offering

THREE POSTDOC POSITIONS (F/M/X)

in social anthropology with a focus on Southeast Asia

(full-time, 40 hours per week)

for a duration of 36 months, **starting 1 January 2026.**

Your Tasks

We invite applications for three postdoctoral research positions as part of the ERC-funded project ‘[Resource spirits: An interactionist approach to animism and extractivism in Southeast Asia](#),’ led by Prof. Dr. Judith Bovensiepen. This project investigates the complex interplay between animism and extractivism in Southeast Asia. Each position involves conducting in-depth ethnographic fieldwork in one of the following countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, or the Philippines. The envisioned field sites are Sarawak (Malaysia), Mindanao or Palawan (Philippines), and Sulawesi (Indonesia). However, candidates with prior research experience or strong networks in other regions of these countries are encouraged to propose alternative field sites, provided they are within Indonesia, Malaysia, or the Philippines.

The postdoctoral researchers will be encouraged to develop their own original research projects and specific theoretical approaches independently. However, candidates should be aware that they will be working in a group project, led by a Principal Investigator (PI) within a pre-defined research framework. This means they will have to contribute collaboratively to the project’s core research questions and objectives. Each postdoc will conduct 12–15 months of ethnographic fieldwork in one of the three countries.

Your Profile

Essential criteria:

- Hold a PhD in Social Anthropology or a closely related field, awarded by 1 January 2026; no earlier than 10 years prior (plus parental leave).
- Have prior experience conducting long-term ethnographic fieldwork in Southeast Asia.
- Willingness and ability to conduct 12–15 months of fieldwork in Indonesia, Malaysia, or the Philippines.
- Fluency in a language relevant to fieldwork in Indonesia, Malaysia, or the Philippines.

- Ability to work independently, including conducting fieldwork, data analysis and writing, plus develop original lines of inquiry.
- Familiarity with the anthropological literature on resource extraction and animism.
- Show awareness of ethical considerations in fieldwork on extractive industries.
- Understand issues related to personal and participant security during fieldwork.
- Be prepared to join an existing research project and actively contribute to its central aims and collaborative inquiries.
- Be prepared to reside in Austria for the duration of the position (excluding fieldwork) and actively participate in project and institute events.

Desired criteria:

- Prior research experience on extractive industries, environmental conflict, or animism in Southeast Asia.
- Established networks with academic or civil society institutions in the region.
- A strong track record of, or (if early career) a clear plan for, publishing in international peer-reviewed anthropology journals.
- Experience with collaborative research projects.

Our Offer

- Membership in ISA's Environmental Anthropology working group.
- Generous funding for fieldwork, collaboration and attending conferences.
- An annual gross salary of € 69.028,40 according to the collective agreement of the ÖAW.

Informal enquiries about the position may be directed to Prof. Dr. Judith Bovensiepen (Office.Bovensiepen@oeaw.ac.at). Enquiries about the application process may be addressed to Sandra Forster (sandra.forster@oeaw.ac.at). Please upload your application including the following documents in a single pdf file under "CV" no later than 20 July 2025.

(1) Cover letter (2 pages max): should contain a description of how you meet the essential and desired criteria, detailed information on the proposed research site, and any existing local connections and networks you have.

- (2) **Academic CV** (including publications)
- (3) **Two writing samples** (publications or PhD chapters)

Interviews are expected to take place on the 10-12th September 2025.

Successful candidates will have to be based in Austria for the duration of the postdoc (unless on fieldwork).

APPLY NOW

The Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW) pursues a non-discriminatory employment policy and values equal opportunities, as well as diversity. Individuals from underrepresented groups are particularly encouraged to apply. We particularly encourage applications from women, disabled, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates and those from the Global South to apply.

Contact

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