



Call for applications: Paris Institute for Advanced Study – Électricité de France

“The energy transition of European societies: from the city to the region”

In partnership with [Électricité de France \(EDF\)](#), [Paris Institute for Advanced Studies \(Paris IAS\)](#) is recruiting two junior or senior researchers in economics, political science, sociology or other social sciences for a period of nine months, to take part in a research programme on the energy transition of European societies, on the city and regional levels, with particular emphasis on Germany and the UK.

Beginning with a state of the art on the energy transition issue in Europe, preferably focused on one of these two countries, and a detailed study of the specific local and national configurations of the country being studied, the successful applicants will analyse how new energy policies are implemented and accepted on a practical level. Based on these analyses, applicants may propose forward-looking views of short- and medium-term trends.

Germany and the UK: two examples

In anticipation of the energy transition ahead – with a change in the energy mix and growing importance of renewable energies – the UK and Germany, two major European countries in terms of their demographic, economic, and political weight, have already adopted orientations aimed at adjusting their future energy mix policies.

In the wake of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, Germany has adopted its *Energiewende* regulations, which break down the energy transition concept: an exit from nuclear power scheduled for 2022, development of renewable energies on a massive scale, and energy conservation/efficiency aspects (for buildings and transport). In addition to these objectives, Germany has adopted an ambitious carbon target, planning for continued use of coal during a transitional period. Germany has committed to challenging objectives for the electricity sector, based on the development of offshore wind farms, related electricity transmission infrastructure, and electricity generation reserve capacity, but also dependent on the social and economic acceptability of more local solutions (onshore wind farms and photovoltaic power). In the building sector, the challenge lies in the substantial uncertainty that surrounds the costs of implementing the energy transition policy and the potential for mobilising different sectors.

While adopting a different approach, the UK, with its ageing electricity generation network, has also committed to an ambitious policy of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% in 2050 compared to their 1990 levels. To achieve this goal, the UK plans to focus on nuclear power and substantial

development of renewable energy (notably offshore wind farms), while relying on natural gas during the transitional period. In the UK, the effects of the economic crisis have had an impact on the energy transition debate, e.g. through the question of household energy vulnerability or prices for end-users, as well as the issue of company competitiveness and the contribution of energy producers or suppliers, who are asked to help implement a policy aimed at reducing their sales.

Possible reactions of civil society

The actual combination of actions aimed at energy conservation, along with the greening or denuclearisation of the energy mix, will spark reactions from civil society, just as other past infrastructure projects have done. Some segments of civil society will be in favour of these actions, while others will be opposed (usage conflicts), thus giving rise to changes in the institutional landscape. Energy transition policies, notably those aimed at energy conservation, raise issues of environmental, social, and political acceptability: to what extent and under what conditions will regional populations and stakeholders accept or support the construction of infrastructure for energy production (onshore or offshore wind farms, etc.) and electricity generation? These policies also have economic stakes given the investments needed (for buildings, transport, and production) and financing. These economic stakes affect citizens, customers, local associations or local authorities, as well as various industrial sectors, including energy production firms. Given the potential flurry of local initiatives, what contradictions will local and national authorities have to deal with?

Research project

The projects proposed should respond to one or more of the following issues:

- Study the sociological, economic, and political foundations that underlie the capacity of the society in question to cope with a major energy transition.
- Analyse the actual conditions of the energy transition, incorporating the concepts of energy conservation and autonomy.
- Identify how the energy transition is taking shape at the local level, in a European country in which the governance of cities and their surrounding regions has a strong impact. This will notably entail answering the following questions:
 - How are cities or towns grouped together?
 - On the local level, what are the current and future sources of leverage for, and obstacles to, the energy transition?
 - What are the current and future roles played by various local stakeholders (customers, citizens, NGOs, regional authorities, industrials, trade federations), and how do they interact with the various schemes in place?
 - Do strong local initiatives coexist alongside a top-down policy?
- Evaluate, possibly in a forward-looking scenario, how the consensus in favour of an energy transition may break down over time based on the difficulties that can be anticipated. In particular, the aim will be to consider the local dimension of the country being studied, notably on the level of cities/towns and groups of towns, as these are the places where experience is actually taking place and consensus is arrived at.
- Propose a method for testing the hypothesis of an “ecologisation” of civil society, and identify its economic, social, or environmental driver.

Residency conditions and rules

The two successful applicants will become resident researchers at Paris IAS for a period of nine months. During this period, they will be free of any administrative or teaching tasks. They will benefit from the working conditions offered by Paris IAS (including an office and workstation, meeting and conference rooms, facilitated access to research libraries in Paris, and funding for travel expenses). Furthermore, they will benefit from the scientific contacts of the IEA in the research institutions of the Paris area, and they will have the opportunity to develop collaborations with centers engaged in research on the energy transition.

During their residency, the cost of their accommodation in Paris will be covered by Paris IAS. Insofar as possible, Paris IAS will ensure that each resident researcher is compensated for the additional costs incurred by his/her stay in Paris. Researchers are not allowed to benefit from several fellowships over the same period.

The status proposed by Paris IAS for resident researchers will depend on whether or not their home institutions contribute to their compensation during their residency, and whether or not they have insurance coverage.

If, during the period of their residency in Paris:

A – The resident retains his/her professional status as a professor or researcher at the home institution (with pay or as an unpaid sabbatical leave) and insurance coverage, then the resident shall be covered by a stipend agreement signed by two parties (i.e. the resident and Paris IAS) or three parties (i.e. the home institution, the resident, and Paris IAS);

B – The resident does not enjoy permanent professional status in his/her country of origin, then he/she shall be offered a fixed-term employment contract upon arriving in France.

Other special cases will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

During their residency at Paris IAS, residents will organise a cycle of three conferences related to their research:

The first conference will be held within the first two months and will be aimed at presenting early research and the initial paths explored. This conference will entail a summary document and a presentation.

The second conference will be held halfway through the residency during the fifth month, and will report on progress achieved. It will also entail a summary document and a presentation.

The third conference will be held just before the end of the residency. It will entail a research report and a presentation.

APPLICATION FILE

To apply, candidates will write a brief research project proposal in French or in English. This proposal, five to ten pages in length, will start with an actual case drawn from Germany or the UK, and will describe the research to be conducted. Candidates may, if they so desire, present two separate applications: one for Germany and one for the UK. Candidates will describe how they intend to gather the information required, as well as the methods that they plan to use. Candidates must be able to work autonomously.

The application file, in English or in French, must be submitted only through the [online application system](#). Paper applications will not be accepted.

The online application will include the following:

- Completed online application form
- Curriculum vitae (maximum 10 pages) including a list of publications and a list of the five most important publications
- Description of the research project (5-10 pages), including:
 - A general presentation of the research, hypotheses and main objectives
 - A description of the methodology to be applied
 - A selected bibliography covering the proposed topic
 - A short summary of the project in English and in French
- Two letters of recommendation for junior researchers (3 to 9 years after PhD)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Researchers from all over the world are eligible.

The applicant must have at least three years of active research experience following their PhD.

Researchers with less than 10 years of active research experience after their PhD must provide two letters of recommendation.

French language skills are not a prerequisite, but would be a plus. If French is not spoken, English language skills are required.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The main selection criteria are:

- Scientific quality of the project and its suitability for the current call for applications
- The applicant's scientific background
- For junior researchers (3 to 9 years after PhD), two letters of recommendation

TIMETABLE

Deadline for applications: Friday, March 7, 2014 at 14h (2:00 pm), Paris time

Short-listing: March-April 2014

Final selection: June 2014

Publication of chosen applicants: June-July 2014

Beginning of the research residency: October 2014 or January 2015, depending on the availability of the applicant

To access the online application system: <http://appelthematique.paris-iea.fr>

For additional information:

Paris IAS: <http://www.paris-iea.fr/en>

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