

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Thematic Research Group on Conservatism 2020

Duration: 10 weeks (December 2020 – February 2021)

Constitution: 2 senior scholars and 2 junior scholars

Deadline for applications: 18 October 2020

Mecila (Maria Sibylla Merian International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America) is a joint project of the following German and Latin American research institutions: Freie Universität Berlin (coordination); Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut (Berlin); Universität zu Köln (Cologne); Universidade de São Paulo and Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (São Paulo); Instituto de Investigaciones en Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales (Universidad Nacional de La Plata/Conicet, La Plata); and El Colegio de México (Mexico City).

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and established in São Paulo, Mecila invites candidates to apply for a grant for a Thematic Research Group on conservatism, including two Senior and two Junior Fellows for a duration of ten weeks. Under usual circumstances, the grant is used for fellowships during the stay in São Paulo. Due to the exceptional current health circumstances, the collaboration will take place in digital form. The grant can be used for fellowships or research allowances during the period of collaboration with the Centre.

Topics of Interest

Successful applicants are expected to participate in an international research network that focuses on the co-constitution of conviviality and inequality from an interdisciplinary perspective. Accordingly, the Centre addresses the processes of negotiation, legitimation, transformation, and representation of differences and existing hierarchies as they take place in everyday interactions and within institutions. (see [our website](#) for an outline of the Centre's research programme).

The recent conservative backlash (not only in Latin America) has radically changed the way how differences and inequalities are negotiated and represented in cultural and

political arenas. Thus, social polarization and radicalizing political struggles increasingly challenge democratic politics and social coexistence in numerous countries. The polarization and radicalization traverse all media and modes of interaction, from online to offline, from virtual to real. Mecila is open to proposals of both theoretical and empirical research dedicated to studying how conservatisms transform configurations of conviviality and inequality. The Centre equally welcomes proposals focused on single countries and comparative studies as well as projects addressing contemporary or historical processes and experiences.

Requirements

- For promoting an international, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational exchange, the Thematic Research Group includes outstanding scholars from at least two different countries, diverse disciplines as well as Senior Fellows (scholars with permanent senior positions) and Junior Fellows (scholars who have obtained their doctoral degrees in the last five years)
- At least one member of the Thematic Research Group is based at one of the seven partner institutions of Mecila.
- The group members have the ability to and interest in actively participating in an international and interdisciplinary research environment

Expectations

- The Research Group conducts a ten-week (from December 2020 to February 2021) research or publication project for studying the impacts of conservatisms in past or present configurations of conviviality-inequality.
- The Research Group participates actively in the Centre's activities (including the bi-weekly colloquia) and engages in interdisciplinary exchange. The main working language of the Centre is English.
- The Research Group contributes at least one issue to Mecila's Working Paper Series.
- The Research Group participates in an International Thematic Workshop, which will take place in digital format in February 2021.

Application

Applicants are invited to send the following documents in English, Spanish or Portuguese via e-mail as a single PDF-attachment no later than 18 October 2020 to the Coordination Office in São Paulo (mecila@cebrap.org.br):

- Motivation letter (max. 500 words)
- Research outline discussing the research question and the scholarly added value of the Research Group's project (max. 1.500 words)
- Curriculum Vitae, including a list of publications, of all four group members.

Selection criteria

Applications from prospective Thematic Research Groups will be submitted to a peer-review process. The primary selection criterion is the Research Group's potential to yield original and excellent research results through the collaboration with the Centre. The scientific merit of the project will be assessed in terms of its originality, the importance of the scientific questions addressed, and its relevance to study conservatisms in the context of conviviality-inequality. An appropriate methodology and a feasible timeframe will also be part of the assessment.

Final decisions will be taken by Mecila's Executive Board, in close consultation with its Advisory Board and Ethics Committee, aiming at disciplinary and gender balance as well as intersectional equity. We aim to inform the applicants of the selection results by 15. November 2020. For further inquiries regarding the fellowship or the application process, please contact Mecila's Coordination Office in São Paulo via e-mail (mecila@cebrap.org.br).