

PHD SCHOLARSHIP (4 YEARS)

FNRS RESEARCH PROJECT “WEAPONS” (POLITICAL SCIENCE/POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY/INTERNATIONAL POLITICS)

START DATE: SPRING 2025 (TO BE DETERMINED WITH THE SELECTED CANDIDATE)

DEADLINE: 02/17/2025

Located in the French-speaking part of Belgium, the University of Liège welcomes nearly 27,000 students of 123 different nationalities in a dynamic, multicultural city less than an hour away from Brussels and Cologne, two hours from Paris and three hours from London and Amsterdam. ULiège is spread across 4 campuses and boasts over 5,700 staff members, including 3,600 teachers and researchers active in all areas of the humanities and social sciences, science and technology, and health sciences.

As a key player in social change and environmental awareness, ULiège promotes ethical, transdisciplinary and open science. It contributes to the socio-economic development of its region through numerous partnerships with several institutions, including the university hospital (CHU). Given its international orientation, the University participates [in the European University of Post-Industrial Cities \(UNIC\)](#) initiative and has one of the most extensive collaborative networks in the world.

ULiège offers attractive career prospects [in a high-quality working environment](#) where well-being, diversity and equality of opportunity are promoted. Since 2011, ULiège has been proud to display the European [Human resources strategy for researchers \(HRS4R\)](#) label, which reflects its commitment to open, transparent and merit-based procedures. In addition, it upholds quality and diversity in line with the recommendations of the [Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment \(CoARA\)](#). ULiège encourages its academic staff to travel internationally and welcomes international researchers through its EURAXESS center.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This call for doctoral scholarship is being issued through the Department of Political Science at ULiège as part of a *Research Project* (PDR) recently funded by the Fondation nationale pour la recherche scientifique (FNRS).

The “WEAPONS” project, led and coordinated by Julien Pomarède (Associate Professor), aims to examine the socio-historical foundations underlying the use of conventional weapons in modern land warfare. The project, which will be conducted over a four-year period, stems from a critique of two predominant explanatory frameworks: the instrumental-rational and constructivist perspectives, which subordinate the use of armaments either to the attainment of politico-strategic objectives or to social perceptions (ideas, norms). In particular, the project

contends that these schools of thought do not to fully grasp the central role played by weapons in the intensification and normalization of mass violence in modern warfare. Therefore, the project calls for a greater appreciation of the enduring and changing social environments that condition their use. At the intersection of historical sociology and science and technology studies, the research project ambitions to demonstrate that weapons serve as both products and factors influencing social structures (socio-economic transformations, the organizational anatomy of the state and armies, the ideological dimension of the battlefield), thereby offering a more holistic perspective on the socio-political dynamics of war and mass destruction. WEAPONS intends to shed new light on the complex links between society, military technology and violence, offering innovative perspectives on the social foundations of modern warfare.

Based on this hypothesis, the scholarship has the objective to complete a doctoral thesis within 4 years. The project focuses primarily on the case study of the United States (US) field artillery warfare from the mid-19th to the late 20th century. The specific conflicts and exact temporal scale covered by the doctoral research shall be determined through consultation with the supervisor and in coordination with his research. Should it be deemed necessary, the potential for European research (to examine transnational connections with the United States, for instance) is also envisioned.

A substantial portion of the research will concentrate on the US military archives, primarily situated in Washington D.C. and College Park (Maryland). Should European research be conducted, it will focus on the British (Kew-Richmond) and French (Service historique de la Défense) national archives.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Doctoral researcher

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Completion of a doctoral thesis in political science within four years
- ▶ Contribution to the (inter)national roll-out of the project through participation in conferences and academic events

PROFILE

○ REQUIRED SKILLS :

- ▶ To possess a Master's degree with distinction in political science, social sciences or history
- ▶ To have demonstrated, particularly during graduate studies, a solid ability to conduct scientific research

○ DESIRABLE SKILLS :

- ▶ Basic knowledge of military, defence or international security issues would be an asset
- ▶ Be open to mobility
- ▶ Be motivated to work on archival material, mainly in English

○ **HUMAN SKILLS :**

- ▶ Ability to work as part of a team and to contribute to a project with a national and international dimension
- ▶ Capacity for autonomous work whilst adhering to the project deadlines

○ **LANGUAGES :**

ULiège is both a French-speaking and an English-speaking environment. Language requirements will therefore depend primarily on the language in which the thesis will be written.

- ▶ **English:** strong reading skills (for archives and literature). Proficiency in written and spoken English, or the commitment to develop such proficiency, is requisite for participation in the international activities of the project. Should the thesis be composed in English, a high level of competence in both written and spoken English is essential.
- ▶ **French:** not compulsory, except if research focused on France is included (requiring a proficient reading level) or if the thesis is written in French (necessitating an excellent written and oral proficiency level).

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ **TYPE OF CONTRACT:** Doctoral scholarship. The grant is subject to social security but is tax-exempt and follows the indexation of salaries.
- ▶ **WORK SCHEDULE :** Full time
- ▶ **CONTRACT DURATION :** 4 years
- ▶ **EXPECTED START DATE:** Spring 2025. The exact starting date shall be determined in consultation with the selected candidate.

OUR OFFER

Basic gross monthly scholarship: €2,783.37, for a net grant of approximately €2,609.

Remuneration will be paid from the FNRS PDR budget.

Employment benefits such as reimbursement of public transportation fees and access to a variety of training opportunities (in methodologies) are also included.

A dedicated workspace within the university will be made available.

Opportunities for joint publications.

Operating expenses are financed based on the general principle of reimbursement, with exceptions such as flight tickets and certain types of IT equipment, which are charged directly to the PDR budget (as they are subject to public procurement procedures). The following operating expenses are covered:

- Basic IT equipment needed to conduct the thesis (computer, monitor, etc.)
- Equipment needed for archive work (digital reproduction devices, external hard drives, etc.)
- Transportation and accommodation for archival fieldwork
- Registration, transportation and accommodation for conferences
- Purchase of books and documentation necessary to the research
- Training sessions for archival research (e.g. ECPR Summer or Winter School)
- Small office equipment (pens, paper, notepads, etc.)
- Publication expenses (proof-reading, etc.)

► WORK ENVIRONMENT

The doctoral research will be carried out in ULiège's [Department of Political Science](#), part of the [Faculty of Law, Criminology and Political Science](#) and attached to the [Cité Research Unit](#). With 14 permanent staff and a significant number of PhD students and scientific assistants, the department offers a welcoming and collegial environment. Research focuses on a variety of themes, including the study of political regimes, public administration, European studies, technological governance and international relations.

The PDR is part of a fast-growing, internationalized research area and team, led by the project promoter, which focuses on reflexive and socio-historical approaches to security and warfare.

The thesis shall be primarily supervised by the project promoter from ULiège. The possibility of a co-supervision may be considered. The thesis may be written in either English or French.

The opportunity will be afforded to actively participate in the broader scientific dissemination of the project, in collaboration with the promoter. The PDR encompasses the organization of events (seminars, conferences, workshops at ULiège or in partner institutions) and the presentation of research at (inter)national conferences. The project entails integration into scientific networks associated with the project and the potential for joint publications.

Regular presence at the office is required as far as possible, which necessitates residence within a reasonable proximity to the university (outside Liège, Brussels is a viable alternative for instance).

HOW TO APPLY?

Applications, which may be sent in French or English, must contain (in a single PDF):

- A cover letter (max. 3 pages)
- A CV
- Summary of Master's dissertation (max. 1 page)
- Master's diploma and grades from the Master's cycle
- The names and contact details (e-mail) of 2 reference persons

Applications must be sent to the project promoter (julien.pomarede@uliege.be), with the reference 'WEAPONS PhD APP', **by 02/17/2025**.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

- ▶ Pre-selection based on applications
- ▶ Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed remotely via Teams in February/March. Should the interview be conducted in French, a part of the discussion will be in English.

Our corporate policy is based on diversity and equal opportunity. We select candidates on the basis of their skills and do not discriminate on grounds of age, sexual orientation, origin, beliefs, disability or nationality.

CONTACT DETAILS

Informal inquiries about the project are welcome. Please feel free to contact Julien Pomarède by email (julien.pomarede@uliege.be)

Release date: 01/07/2025

Privacy policy

Personal data collected following your application will be processed by Julien Pomarède of the University of Liege for the sole purpose of recruitment.

The data will be processed within the framework of pre-contractual measures (art. 6-1, b. of the General Data Protection Regulation) and kept for up to 9 months after the publication of the vacancy. Your personal data will not be passed on to any third parties.

In accordance with the provisions of the GDPR (EU 2016/679), you may exercise your data protection rights (right of access, rectification, erasure, restriction, and portability) by contacting ULiège Data Protection Officer (dpo@uliege.be - Mr. Data Protection Officer, Bât. B9 Cellule "GDPR", Quartier Village 3, Boulevard de Colonster 2, 4000 Liège, Belgium). You may also lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Authority (<https://www.autoriteprotectiondonnees.be> , contact@apd-gba.be).