

Two PhD positions in psychology available at the University of Geneva

We are seeking applicants for two 3-year PhD positions within the Department of Psychology. Both positions are embedded in research projects that investigate the psychological aspects of energy-related decisions with the aim of promoting energy efficiency and conservation (PI: Tobias Brosch).

Project 1 – Emotions and cognitive biases: The objective of this interdisciplinary research project (funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation) is to investigate to what extent energy savings can be mobilized by different electricity tariff structures. Using a combination of online and laboratory experiments, the project will investigate affective (e.g., emotional responses) and cognitive factors (e.g., heuristics and biases) that influence energy-related decisions in general and tariff acceptance in particular. The successful applicant will be part of an interdisciplinary team consisting of researchers at different departments of the University of Geneva (Prof. David Sander, Swiss Center for Affective Sciences and Prof. Martin Patel, Institute of Environmental Sciences).

Project 2 – Mental accounting mechanisms: People tend to organize acts of consumption and payments into mental categories, which can have a large impact on consumer decisions. Using a combination of online and laboratory experiments, this research project (funded by the Swiss Federal Office for Energy) investigates to what extent mental accounting mechanisms are relevant for energy-related decisions and how these mechanisms can be leveraged to promote energy conservation. The successful applicant will be part of an interdisciplinary team consisting of researchers at the University of Geneva (Prof. David Sander, Swiss Center for Affective Sciences and Prof. Martin Patel, Institute of Environmental Sciences) and the University of St. Gallen (Prof. Stefanie Hille and Prof. Rolf Wüstenhagen, Institute for Economy and the Environment).

Requirements: Applicants for both positions should have an excellent master's degree in psychology, very good methodological and statistical skills as well as a strong interest in environmental topics and consumer behavior. Furthermore, applicants should have a strong dedication to a scientific career, the willingness to work in an interdisciplinary environment, excellent oral and written skills in English, and a good knowledge of French (or the willingness to learn French quickly).

Benefits: The successful candidates will profit from the rich interdisciplinary environment of the National Center of Competence in Research in Affective Sciences (www.affective-sciences.org) and the Competence Center for Research in Energy, Society and Transition (www.sccer-crest.ch). Salary will start at about CHF 47'000 (before taxes and social charges). Additional resources to fund conference travel are available. Geneva is located between the Alps, the Jura, and Lake Geneva, and is noted for its international character and high quality of life.

Applications: Interested applicants are asked to send a cover letter outlining their interest in (one of) the projects and their motivation to pursue a PhD, their CV, previous publications (if any) and two letters of recommendation to tobias.brosch@unige.ch. Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. Earliest starting date is November 1, 2014. Please don't hesitate to contact us for further inquiries.