Call for Application: A PhD Scholarship in AI and Human Rights in Migration Asylum Governance in Europe

The **Centre for Fundamental Rights** at the Hertie School, Berlin, is seeking applications for a PhD candidate. The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Doctoral Programme in Governance at the Hertie School and will be part of the research project AFAR, a collaborative project launched in autumn 2021 and led by **Cathryn Costello**, Professor of Fundamental Rights at the Hertie School and Co-Director of the School's Centre for Fundamental Rights.
The successful candidate will be based at the Centre for Fundamental Rights, Hertie School, Berlin. The fellowship is available from 1 March 2021 for a duration of 36 months. Start date is negotiable.

About the AFAR project

'AFAR - Algorithmic Fairness for Asylum Seekers and Refugees' investigates the use of new technologies – and particularly, forms of artificial intelligence (AI) – in migration and asylum governance. This includes automation of processes previously done by humans, using simple closed-rule algorithms, as well as more complex machine learning and AI systems. These new technologies are set to radically transform governance, but also risk human rights violations and unfairness, especially in areas such as migration and asylum where the 'data subjects' are already disempowered and disenfranchised. This calls for sustained research on what fairness means as a concept and how it can be institutionalized across emerging AI asylum and migration governance.

The PhD will work on a research proposal within the AFAR themes, examining the legality and fairness of the use of AI in migration and asylum governance in Europe define her own research idea and project within the AFAR project. The disciplinary focus should be law, broadly understood to include legal doctrinal research, normative legal theory and / or socio-legal approaches. The PhD project should focus on one or more key areas where these new technologies are being used, (1) access to asylum, (2) refugee status determination or asylum processing, (3) refugee-focused family reunification. We welcome project proposals that investigate the legality of the use of AI under EU and human rights law, in particular with a focus on fair procedures.

AFAR is a collaborative project drawing from expertise in law, data science, refugee studies, and political science. A relevant educational background and/or experience in one of these fields is necessary, in particular in law. As part of an interdisciplinary team, the PhD is expected to work in close collaboration within research partners based at the University of Oxford, University of Copenhagen, European University Institute, and the University of Zagreb. The PhD researcher will form part of a larger research team based at the Hertie School that incorporates legal and data science expertise.

Additional requirements:

- Conduct independent and high-quality research under the supervision of Cathryn Costello, Professor of Fundamental Rights and co-director of the Centre for Fundamental rights at the Hertie School, and other supervisors under the structured programme of the PhD programme at the Hertie School.
- Actively engage with the interdisciplinary research groups of the AFAR project and Centre for Fundamental Rights;
- Participate in international conferences, courses and meetings relevant to their research project;
- Comply with the formal requirements of the PhD programme;

Closing date for applications

The closing date for applications is **16 January 2022**.

Application documents and application procedure:

Please find the information and application link here.

For questions regarding the research project, please contact **Professor Cathryn Costello**.

For questions about the Doctoral Programme in Governance, please contact **Annika Zorn, Director of PhD Programmes and Digital Learning**.