



Post-doctoral and Senior Research Fellowships in Colombo, Cape Town, Bogotá and Budapest

The OSUN Forum on Democracy and Development by CEU Democracy Institute (Budapest), Universidad de los Andes, (Bogotá), the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town and the Social Scientists' Association of Sri Lanka (Colombo) invites **applications for a total of 32 open positions**: six post-doctoral and two senior research fellows at each of the four institutions for an 8-month residential fellowship program between **October 1, 2024, and May 30, 2025**.

Focusing on the relationship between democracy and development, this initiative aims to redefine democracy in its political, social, and economic dimensions, establishing a unique platform for interdisciplinary and cross-regional exchanges between scholars from the Global South and Global North.

The OSUN Forum on Democracy and Development is structured around four interlinked research themes hosted at four institutions:

Theme 1: New Patterns of Mobilization for- and against- Democracy, hosted at Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá

Theme 2: Populism, Ideology, and Discourse in the Global South: Sources of Polarization and Their Mitigation, hosted at CEU Democracy Institute in Budapest

Theme 3: Democratizing the Developmental State, hosted at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance in Cape Town

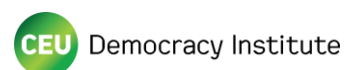
Theme 4: Exclusionary Regimes and Autocratization, hosted at the Social Scientists' Association in Colombo

Please see the details of the fellowships in each hub below or [here](#).

Application deadline in each hub: Open until filled

Starting date of the selection of fellows: February 15, 2024

Starting date of the fellowship: October 1, 2024



Colombia (Bogotá): New Patterns of Mobilization for- and against-Democracy

The successful candidates are expected to carry out independent research on new patterns of mobilization for - and against - democracy. We particularly welcome research projects that cover one or more of the following aspects:

- Cross-national empirical research on contemporary waves of pro- or anti-democracy mobilizations under various regime types
- In-depth studies on the links between political economy and pro-/anti-democracy mobilizations
- Case study contributions that unravel new patterns and dynamics of pro-/anti-democracy mobilization -
- Critical approaches to understanding the links between contemporary revolutionary waves and democratization.
- Macro and meso studies of patterns of mobilization in a historical perspective.
- The relationship between neoliberalism and the struggles for or against democracy.
- The prefiguration by social movements of alternatives to delegative democracy.
- The theorization and practice by social movements of direct democracy or autocratic forms of politics.

In addition, fellows will be also expected to contribute to a broader conversation and research agenda to advance our understanding of pro-/anti-democracy mobilization in the 21st century; and to produce new knowledge in the field of social movements and contentious politics. Preference will be given to interdisciplinary and cross-regional comparative research proposals; but we also welcome theoretically and empirically rich case-studies, especially if they are thematically also linked to one or more of the other three research axes under the purview of the OSUN Forum on Democracy and Development. Empirically-based proposals from all social sciences and humanities are welcome.

For more information, please click [here](#).

Hungary (Budapest): Populism, Ideology, and Discourse in the Global South: Sources of Polarization and Their Mitigation

The successful candidates are expected to carry out independent research on populism, ideology, or political discourse as sources of polarization. We particularly welcome systematic research on the following aspects:

- The empirical study of populism and other discourses/thin ideologies such as nationalism, patriotism, and pluralism.
- The contributions of understudied Global South cases to understanding the causes and consequences of populism
- Affective and pernicious polarization in the Global South

In addition, Fellows will be also expected to contribute to a broader conversation regarding the policy implications of their topic of research, and strategies for mitigating negative societal impacts. Preference will be given to interdisciplinary and cross-regional comparative research proposals especially if they are thematically also linked to one or more of the other three research axes under the purview of the OSUN Democracy and Development project.

For more information, please click [here](#).

South Africa (Cape Town): Democratizing the Developmental State

The successful candidates are expected to carry out independent research on the theme of democratizing the developmental state. Fellows will also be expected to contribute to a broader conversation regarding the policy implications of their topic of research, and strategies for mitigating negative societal impacts. Preference will be given to interdisciplinary and cross-regional comparative research proposals especially if they are thematically linked to one or more of the other three research axes under the purview of the OSUN Democracy and Development project.

This initiative understands a ‘developmental state’ as one where political elites intervene in economic activities with the overarching goal of improving the international market competitiveness of their domestic production. There is no necessary connection between authoritarianism and the developmental state. Key characteristics are a developmental mindset among policymakers, the emergence of governed interdependence between local firms and political elites, and creation of the state capacity required to implement industrial policies in collaboration with firms. Major issues confronting both scholars and practitioners include identifying the conditions under which developmental states emerge, inquiring into how to catalyze those conditions within democratic polities, and examining developmental states’ transitions and trajectories from authoritarianism to democracy.

We particularly welcome systematic research on the following aspects:

- Historical trajectories of economic nationalism in certain polities
- The factors shaping the political survival and electoral strategies of political elites
- The capabilities and business strategies of locally owned firms in internationally competitive industries
- The role of labor and popular classes more generally in the construction and operation of developmental states
- Diaspora professionals and entrepreneurs in transnational technical communities and the presence or absence of linkages to political and policy elites
- How industrial policies are financed, and how democratic politics shapes the sources of finance and how finance is used
- The opportunities provided by new green technologies and their falling prices for green development strategies
- How the challenge of sustaining developmental states in the 21st century differs from the past

For more information, please click [here](#).

Sri Lanka (Colombo): Exclusionary Regimes and Autocratization

The successful candidates are expected to contribute to our scholarly understanding of the characteristics, dynamics, and impacts of exclusionary regimes around the world from different social scientific perspectives and methodologies. In addition, Fellows will be also expected to contribute to a broader conversation regarding the policy implications of their topic of research, and strategies for mitigating negative societal impacts. Preference will be given to interdisciplinary and cross-regional comparative research proposals especially if they are thematically also linked to one or more of the other three research axes under the purview of the OSUN Democracy and Development project.

We particularly welcome systematic research on the following questions:

- The historical structural and agentic dynamics of the emergence of exclusionary regimes

- The impact of major global contemporary issues, such as migration, pandemics, or ecological crisis or wars, on exclusionary regimes and vice-versa.
- How exclusionary regimes maintain legitimacy through, for instance, social and public policies, sustaining patronage networks, and instrumentalizing ideological cleavages
- Conceptualization and understanding of resistance against majoritarian exclusionary regimes, and its consequences

For more information, please click [here](#).