

Ph.D. Summer School *univie: Vienna Arctic Summer School 2016* (VASS)

Call for Applications

The University of Vienna, in cooperation with the European University in St. Petersburg is pleased to announce the call for a Ph.D. summer school that will take place in late summer 2016.

Locations

The VASS summer school is designed as a mixture of intensive lectures and seminars for Ph.D. students and young researchers. Senior and early career scholars will be working together in this two-week course. After an introductory workshop in Vienna a field trip and excursions will lead to several locations in the Austrian Alps. Moving westwards from Vienna to the Pinzgau region of Salzburg and further on to the Pitztal valley (Tyrol), participants will experience local articulations of dwelling and working in these regions, focusing on topics including tourism, resource extraction and infrastructure.

The course continues the FENOR Nomadic Summer School of 2015. (For more information see <http://eu.spb.ru/en/arctic-social-sciences/news/15800-fenor-results> and <http://arcticanthropology.org/2015/09/01/the-fenor-school-is-over-next-edition-to-come/>).

Dates

Arrival in Vienna is scheduled for Sunday, August 28. The course will begin on August 29. The field trip will take place during the first week of September, followed by two more days in Vienna, where the summer school will conclude on Friday, September 9.

Aims and Expected Learning Outcomes

The basic idea of VASS is to bring Arctic social science Ph.D. students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds to Vienna in order to confront them with international state-of-the-art social science approaches and methods applied outside the Arctic. At the same time, VASS will confront Arctic students with lessons learned from Alpine experience. VASS will provide its participants with in-depth treatments of three areas: 1) human-environmental interactions in the Anthropocene, 2) regimes of mobility and immobility, and 3) the study of the interrelationship of human and non-human actants in technological and infrastructural settings.

The field trip to the Austrian Alps will showcase a region that has many similarities with the Arctic in terms of environmental, infrastructural and mobility challenges, but is embedded in a quite different geographic and sociocultural setting. Alpine and arctic environments still show structural characteristics of “remote regions”, i.e. low population density, out-migration and reduced accessibility. This also leads to a limited set of development options. In both cases, mining and tourism have been seen as one of the few available possibilities at different points in time. Thus, the question of what students of the Arctic can learn from alpine experiences constitutes an important dimension of VASS.

Climate change is another process that invites comparisons between arctic and alpine settings, both of which are heavily impacted by the overheating of our planet. Looking at the interactions between climate change, tourism and extractive industries will inform the practical student assignments during the field trip. These will reinforce the theoretical priorities of VASS – environmental change, human mobility, as well as material and technological dimensions of social assemblages – to make the encounter of Vienna and the Arctic a productive one for both sides.

Target Group

VASS is designed for Ph.D. students and younger researchers in the Arctic social sciences. We are inviting proposals from students in Arctic and non-Arctic countries. The total number of participants is limited to 18.

Languages

All lectures and seminars will be held in English.

Teachers

Lecturers will include Dr. Peter Schweitzer (University of Vienna), Dr. Nikolai Vakhtin (European University of St. Petersburg), Dr. Gertrude Saxinger (University of Vienna), Dr. Noel B. Salazar (KU Leuven), Dr. Herta Nöbauer (University of Vienna), Dr. Andreas Koch (University of Salzburg), Dr. Olga Povoroznyuk (University of Vienna).

Credit info

Participation in VASS will constitute official enrollment in a University of Vienna summer school, and successful completion will result in the award of 6 ECTS from that institution, which equals 150 hours of student work.

Fee info

Participants cover the expenses for their travel from their location to Vienna and back. The organizers have secured funding for housing and local travel. A fee of € 120 will be charged to cover some of these expenses. A full or partial fee waiver can be applied for (please include reasons).

Application and Selection

Applicants should apply not later than April 4, 2016. The application package includes:

- a short letter of the student's motivation to attend the summer school;
- a short CV;
- a one-page description of the applicant's current research topic(s).
- non-native speakers of English should indicate their level of English-language proficiency.

Important note: A third summer school is planned in northern Finland during summer 2017. In their application letters, students are invited to indicate whether they are interested in participating in both schools.

Contact info

Organizer: Prof. Peter Schweitzer (peter.schweitzer@univie.ac.at)

Administrator: Mag. Ilja Steffelbauer (ilja.steffelbauer@univie.ac.at).

For applications and additional information use this address.



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