



Three PhD positions (m/f/d) in Science & Technology Studies (STS) on mobility & society at TU Munich

(TV-L E13 65%, 3 years fixed-term)

Deadline: Aug 1, 2021

Start: Nov 1, 2021

Position overview

The professorship of Innovation, Society & Public Policy (Prof. Sebastian Pfotenhauer), based at the Munich Center for Technology in Society (MCTS), Technical University of Munich, announces a **new research group** that will investigate future mobility at the intersection of societal needs, urban technopolitics, and spatial (re)configurations. The group will consist of **three PhD candidates** and up to three postdocs (details on doctoral positions in a second announcement), led by a senior researcher. The group is affiliated with the Munich Cluster for the Future of Mobility in Metropolitan Regions (MCube), funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

All positions are university positions within structured projects, which means a strong focus on research and responsibilities in managing the projects, with optional teaching responsibilities. The advertised positions in the group correspond to three larger MCube cluster projects in which the group participates. For more information, see the official project pages (links below). Keep in mind that the available positions are tied to work packages within the projects that focus on qualitative social science research, particularly in these **three focus areas**:

- (1) Responsible experimentation (projects [TrEx](#) and [ReMGo](#))
- (2) Post-pandemic cities (project [TrEx](#))
- (3) Mobility justice (project [MGeM](#))

State your preferred focus areas (max. 2) in your letter of motivation (see below), including reasons for your choice and relevant experience related to the areas.

About the new mobility & society research group

Mobility has become a prominent topic in academic inquiry as well as political discourse. Issues related to mobility touch upon basic questions of social life and social order: How do we envision a sustainable and just future facing challenges from global warming to economic transformations? How do experts, planners, and economic actors articulate and stabilize competing visions of future mobility – given fossil and industrial legacies as well as global crises and disruptions? How will technological trends such as digitization, autonomous driving, electrification, and mobility-as-a-service shape the way we live, work, and plan our cities? How, in turn, will changing mobility cultures, values, and politics guide technological developments? What are the epistemic foundations (models, metrics, experiments) that underpin and govern our current system of (auto)mobility, how are these knowledge infrastructures changing, and what can engaged social science scholars contribute?

A new research group at TU Munich will investigate these questions for at least three years with the possibility of extension. The group will consist of three PhD candidates and up to three postdocs, led by senior researcher Dr. Alexander Wentland. We will be based at TU Munich's new Department of Science, Technology & Society (currently MCTS) and affiliated with the regional mobility research cluster MCube (see below). This positions us in a unique way. The group is committed to interpretive, critical social science, grounded particularly in the academic fields of Science & Technology Studies (STS), Sociology, and Mobilities Studies. Across a range of projects, we approach technoscientific and societal changes as essentially interrelated and co-evolving, which foregrounds the normative aspects of innovation, knowledge, and practice. At the same time, through MCube, the group will be embedded within a collaborative and transdisciplinary cluster that brings together researchers, policy makers, industry leaders, and civil society. We will engage with other disciplines, such as Urban Design, Transportation Engineering, and Management as well as partners ranging from the business sector to trade unions and environmental NGOs.

About the institutional environment

The new research group is part of a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and intellectually vibrant academic community. It is affiliated with the professorship of [Innovation, Society & Public Policy \(ISPP\)](#), which investigates the practices, politics, knowledge structures, economic processes, and conflicts underwriting today's technologized societies. ISPP examines current phenomena at both the level of public policy (e.g., national and regional innovation cultures and strategies, sustainability transitions, test beds) and concrete technologies (e.g., mobility, neuroscience, robotics, food).

The professorship is based at the [Munich Center for Technology in Society \(MCTS\)](#). MCTS is one of the most prominent centers in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) in Europe, serving as a hub for international scholars and events. Since its launch as part of the German Excellence Initiative in 2012, the center has become home to more than 60 researchers and two international MA programs. As of October 2021, the MCTS will form the **TUM Department of Science, Technology & Society** at the newly founded **TUM School of Social Sciences & Technology**. In its new form, MCTS will further expand its research profile, international network, and public outreach. The STS department deepens TU Munich's commitment to the social sciences and underscores the university's ambition to ground its education programs and research activities in societal need and trust.

In addition, the new positions will be affiliated with the [Munich Cluster for the Future of Mobility in Metropolitan Regions \(MCube\)](#). MCube is a transdisciplinary consortium funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The cluster builds on Munich's unique concentration of mobility-related activities and diverse actors to turn the region into a model for sustainable and innovative metropolitan regions in Germany and worldwide. Research projects in MCube seek to enhance the understanding of pressing problems in urban mobility as well as to contribute to novel, collaborative, and fair solutions with and for its citizens.

Your tasks as a PhD candidate

- Conduct qualitative social science research as part of a BMBF-funded project, including long-term data collection in the city of Munich and internationally;
- Develop your own PhD research questions and ideas within the broader group setting together with your supervisors and peers;
- Assist in building the new research group and its infrastructure, incl. project tasks, organizing the team, planning events and workshops, and contributing to administrative activities, such as reporting and stakeholder engagement;

- Co-publish and support the publication of academic papers, reports, and policy briefs in *both English and German*, incl. co-authored papers with senior group members in recognized international journals;
- Present results at national and international conferences, organize academic events, and participate in the intellectual community within the STS department;
- Collaborate in an interdisciplinary, diverse, and international research consortium as well as with external partners (academic, city, industry, NGOs);
- Co-supervise Master's students;
- Contribute to the group's teaching portfolio (optional).

Candidate profile

- Completed/submitted MA thesis in Science and Technology Studies (STS) or a related field (Sociology, Political Science, Human Geography, Anthropology, Innovation Studies), presuming that you can demonstrate an equivalent level of qualification and subject-specific expertise;
- Documented expertise and experience in qualitative research methods (ethnography, semi-structured interviews, document analysis) and interpretative social theory.

Strong advantages:

- Strong interest in mobility-related topics;
- Basic understanding of the topics, concepts, and methods of STS;
- Able to work independently and as part of a team;
- Interested in working in a transdisciplinary, collaborative research environment and in engaging with other knowledge cultures
- Excellent English and German language skills.

Application

Submit your application **as a single pdf document**, including the following (in this order):

1. Your CV, including information about language proficiencies;
2. A letter of motivation (max. 2 pages) that describes your academic trajectory, relevant experiences, and your interest in your preferred focus area (see above);
3. 1-2 writing samples (e.g., your MA thesis, term paper, manuscript for publication);
4. The names and contact details of up to two references;
5. Relevant transcripts and certificates (e.g., grade transcripts, degree certificates).

We are committed to raising the number of women and gender-non-binary individuals in research and teaching, who are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants with disabilities are treated with preference given comparable qualification.

Send your **complete application** to Li Dong (d.li@tum.de) **using the words "MCube PhD" in the subject line**. We will accept and review all applications received until and including **Sunday, August 1, 2021**. Interviews will be conducted shortly after the application deadline via a video conferencing tool. If you have questions about the application procedure, please contact Li Dong (d.li@tum.de). If you have questions about the projects and positions, please contact Alexander Wentland (alexander.wentland@tum.de). Both the group and the individual projects will officially start on **November 1, 2021**.