



LAW, SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY  
& SOCIETY  
RESEARCH GROUP

## Call for Applications: PhD Position on Democratic Governance of Surveillance

The **VUB Research Chair in Surveillance Studies**, which is based at the Law, Science, Technology and Society Research Group (<http://lsts.research.vub.be/>) and is supported by the research groups CRiS (<https://cris.research.vub.be/en/>) and imec-SMIT (<https://smit.vub.ac.be>) and is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Rosamunde van Brakel is launching a call for applications for PhD candidates in the area of democratic governance of surveillance with a special focus on policing in Belgium.

The VUB Research Chair in Surveillance Studies is located at and has the following aims:

- Stimulating and encouraging interdisciplinary research in Surveillance Studies
- Stimulating cooperation and exchange of researchers within different research groups of the VUB, other researchers and research groups in Belgium and from across the world who do research on surveillance
- Creating a knowledge center on surveillance in Belgium and exploring the possibility of establishing an interfaculty research group at the VUB.

Activities of the chair include: conducting and promoting original interdisciplinary scientific research on surveillance and dissemination of the research through publications (books, scientific articles, policy briefs and reports) and participation in international conferences, policy events, scientific and expert networks, exploring the possibilities for setting up an interfaculty research group and a interfaculty elective MA course, establish a seminar series in surveillance studies, contribute to science communication of scientific research on surveillance.

For more information about the Chair see : [https://www.vub.be/chair-in-surveillance-studies#chair-in-surveillance-studies-\(en\)](https://www.vub.be/chair-in-surveillance-studies#chair-in-surveillance-studies-(en))

The multidisciplinary Research Group on **Law, Science, Technology & Society (LSTS)** is an independent entity within the Faculty of Law & Criminology at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). With more than 45 researchers at all levels of experience, LSTS has become a prominent European research institute in the area of technology regulation. The team is led, both administratively and academically, by Prof. Mireille Hildebrandt and Prof. Gloria González Fuster. The staff comprises several postdoc researchers, PhD researchers, associated researchers and affiliated professors. Research staff at LSTS have backgrounds in a number of areas, including law, ethics, philosophy, political science, sociology, chemistry, criminology,

and others. Great emphasis is placed on incorporating a multidisciplinary perspective in all our work.

### **Research and activities:**

The PhD Student is expected to:

- Develop an original PhD thesis on a topic related to democratic governance of surveillance with a special focus on policing in Belgium or comparative research which includes Belgium.
- Provide general support for the Chair including the coordination, execution and communication of activities and projects of the chair, including the organisation of academic events such as the VUB surveillance studies seminar series;
- Contribute to the organization of the annual CPDP conference and its side events, especially with regards to social media, communication and programming
- Participate in international seminars and conferences;
- (Co-)publish scientific articles in peer reviewed journals;
- Contribute to drafting project proposals for external funding;

### **Profile and qualifications:**

#### **Essential**

- A Master's Degree in Criminology, Socio-legal studies or similar, awarded by the deadline for applications;
- Fluency in English and either Dutch or French
- Good ICT skills and social media knowledge
- Excellent organisational and communicative skills;
- Quality-oriented, conscientious, creative and the ability to work independently, under pressure and to respect deadlines

#### **Desirable**

- Previous research focus on policing and/or surveillance
- Knowledge of Data Protection
- Experience in conference and/or event organization
- Experience in conducting interdisciplinary research.
- Experience in qualitative social science research methods.

### **Conditions:**

The successful candidate will work under the guidance of Prof. Rosamunde van Brakel and Prof. Paul De Hert. The candidate will have access to doctoral training offered by the VUB, as well as to all facilities of the university. Successful candidates are expected to work at the VUB premises in Brussels. Office space and equipment will be provided along with a budget for travelling and other research-related expenses.

We offer employment as a full-time doctoral researcher. The PhD degree will be awarded in criminology. For more information about facilities and benefits of employment at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, please visit <https://www.vub.be/en> under the heading 'future employees'.

Contract: full-time research grant for one year, renewable on an annual basis for a maximum of four years. Extension of the contract is subject to the agreement of the doctoral committee and yearly evaluation. Remuneration is at the level of a fulltime research assistant at a Flemish university and includes contributions for social security. Secondary employment is not allowed.

### **Applications:**

The PhD candidate will be selected on the basis of the quality of the project proposal, her/his expertise, work experience and qualifications. The following application documents are to be consolidated into a single PDF file sent by email to [rosamunde.van.brakel@vub.be](mailto:rosamunde.van.brakel@vub.be) (subject heading: 'Application PhD Democratic Governance of Surveillance).

Applications (in English) should include the following:

- your current CV including contact details of two referees;
- a cover letter in which you explain your motivation and qualifications;
- max 3 writing samples demonstrating prior experience research, enquiry or debate, e.g. published paper; policy report; blog or excerpt from Masters thesis,
- a short research proposal outlining how you would approach the research project (max 1 page)

Deadline for the submission of applications is **1 April 2020**. Pre-selected candidates will be notified in the second week of April and Interviews will take place in the last week of April. The position would start on **1 June 2020** (the start date may be negotiable).