



RIVERS PROJECT

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS ¹

The Human Rights Institute of the University of Deusto (Bilbao, Spain), opens a call for applications for one (1) PhD researcher, two (2) postdoctoral researchers and one (1) research manager in the project *RIVERS - Water/human rights beyond the human? Indigenous water ontologies, plurilegal encounters and interlegal translation*, funded by the European Research Council (Grant agreement: ERC-2018-StG-804003), and coordinated by Dr. Lieselotte Viaene.

- PhD researcher “Water ontologies and interlegal translation – Colombian research context”
- Post-doctoral researcher “Water ontologies and interlegal translation- Nepal research context”
- Post-doctoral researcher “Interlegal translation – Colombia context & UN indigenous knowledge brokers”
- Project manager (50%) – researcher “UN water knowledge/norms production” (50%)

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¹ This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 804003). This call reflects only the author’s view and the Agency and the Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains

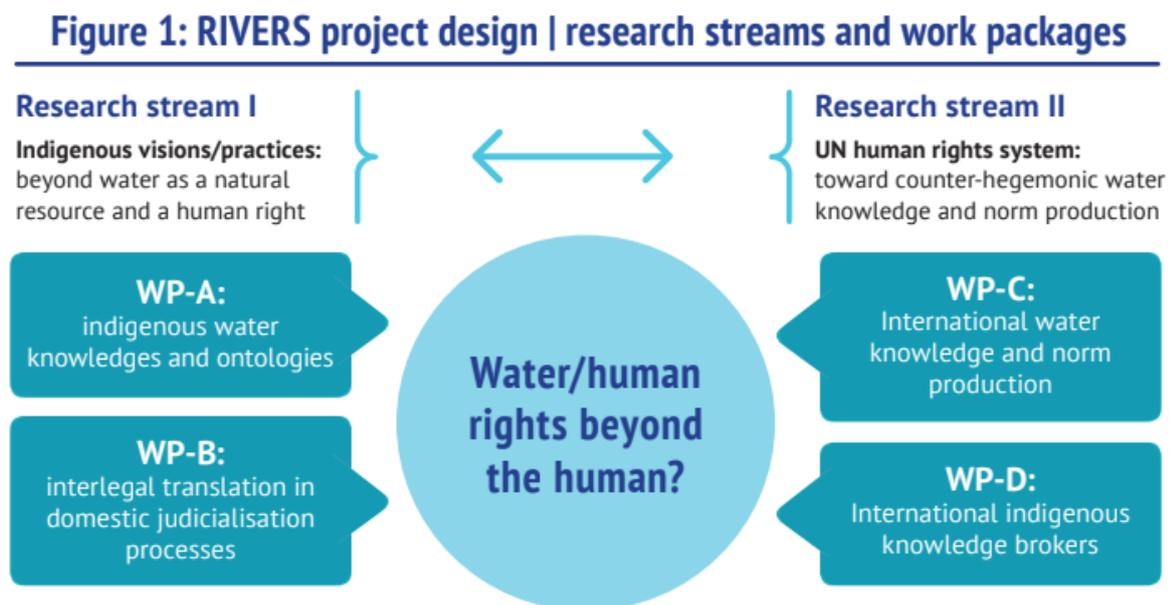


Project Description

RIVERS’s main challenge is to produce ground-breaking knowledge, from an empirical, interdisciplinary and dialogic perspective, about the contentions and challenges intrinsic to reconceptualising human rights with different ways of understanding and relating to water. RIVERS’s overarching research question is: To what extent can international human rights law come to grips with plurilegal water realities? This project engages with one of the most pressing questions of this century: the relationship between humans and “nature”. RIVERS tackles two intertwined core objectives: 1) analysing different ways of knowing and relating to water and life among indigenous peoples and their understanding of its (potential) violation by extractive projects; 2) discussing the contributions, challenges and pitfalls of interlegal translation of differing water natures in plurilegal encounters at domestic and international levels. RIVERS will develop a multi-sited analysis and empirical case-studies in three contexts: Colombia, Nepal and the United Nations human rights protection system.

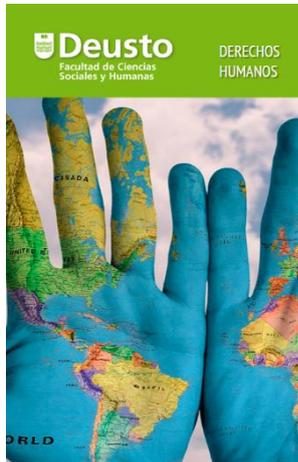
RIVERS follows two interrelated research streams: I) indigenous visions/practices: beyond water as a natural resource and a human right; and II) the UN human rights system: towards counter-hegemonic water knowledge and norm production. The RS will be operationalised through four mutually reinforcing work packages: WP-A) unveiling and grasping indigenous water knowledges and ontologies; WP-B) interlegal translation in court: anthropological expert testimonies; WP-C) human rights treaty bodies: water knowledge and norm production; and WP-D) universal human rights and international indigenous knowledge brokers.

Figure 1 – RIVERS project design





Human Rights Institute, University of Deusto – Bilbao, Spain



RIVERS will be developed on the premises of the Pedro Arrupe Institute of Human Rights, which is an independent, non-profit academic institution created in 1997 and affiliated to the University of Deusto. Currently, the institute's team is composed by 20 academics that work with the aim of creating a human rights culture, from a university perspective and a marked social and international approach. The Institute is mainly focused on three priority areas: Humanitarian action and human rights- crises and humanitarian conflicts; migrations, integration and social cohesion and cultural diversity and human rights, citizenship and multiculturalism. Inside those areas, it develops numerous activities through teaching, research, awareness raising and social impact actions. Therefore, the institute is actively engaged on a wide range of undertakings; such as Master's and PhD programmes, national and international research projects, publications, technical advisory services for social organisations, assessment for Basque institutions or direct political actions.

For more information about the Human Rights Institute-UD: [see link](#)



Come work with us



PhD researcher “Water ontologies and interlegal translation – Colombian research context”

Under the supervision of RIVERS’s Principal Investigator, the PhD candidate will develop his/her dissertation within the research stream “Indigenous visions/practices: beyond water as a natural resource and a human right” which will examine multiple and contested meanings attached by Latin American and Asian indigenous peoples to rivers and will interrogate the extent to which these counter-hegemonic understandings can be translated in courtroom settings investigating alleged human rights violations by extractive projects in their territories.

Applicants must be willing to enrol in the PhD programme in Human Rights: Ethical, Social and Political Challenges, offered by the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences.

Work plan

The selected PhD candidate is expected to contribute to the implementation of the Colombian research context of both Work Packages of this research stream: A) unveiling and grasping indigenous water knowledges and ontologies and B) interlegal translation in court: anthropological expert testimonies. The implementation of Work Package B will be in coordination with one of the selected post-doctoral researchers. The selected doctoral candidate will develop socio-political, anthropological and legal analysis of the Colombian case study and undertake participatory collaborative legal anthropological research at the local level of indigenous communities and during different phases of a judicialisation process using: participant observation, focus groups, ethnolinguistic workshops, life histories over generations, community collaborative documentary and collaborative community workshops. S/he will be also asked to support specified research activities associated with the project’s general objectives and participate in the project’s regular meetings and seminar. The selected PhD candidate will also contribute to RIVERS’s communication and



dissemination activities, networking and producing reports and outputs (e.g. scientific and policy publications, participation in and organization of scientific events).

The selected researcher should be able to undertake frequent traveling and to stay at least four months a year, in three consecutive years, in the Colombian research context.

Requirements:

1. Outstanding research qualities manifested in a high-quality MA thesis in Social Sciences (such as cultural/visual anthropology, international human rights law, indigenous peoples' rights, Latin American studies, development studies, sociology)
2. Previous experience and/or interest in developing a PhD research project in the fields of legal anthropology or anthropology of human rights, political ontology, decolonial human rights theory, indigenous peoples' rights;
3. Interest and/or previous experiences (training/courses, Master's field work) in using ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, focus groups interviews, life histories; a commitment to ethnographic fieldwork;
4. Knowledge and/or research experience with indigenous peoples in Colombia and/or another Latin American country
5. Availability for frequent travel and extended stays in Colombia and other international locations required for fieldwork;
6. Excellent communication skills in Spanish (oral and written form) and knowledge and/or willingness to learn English; knowledge of an indigenous language is an asset.
7. Critical awareness and readiness to engage in an interdisciplinary and bi-lingual (Spanish-English) team work.
8. Whether a working VISA will be required, this call is open to Non-EU nationals that would like to apply. Researchers belonging to an indigenous/ethnic group are strongly encouraged to apply.

Working conditions:

1. Being part of a vibrant, supportive and intercultural research team, which will conduct innovative and cutting-edge research within the interdisciplinary Human Rights Institute.
2. Labour contract as Assistant Researcher (Ayudante de Investigación) for four years with periodic evaluations.
3. Enrolment fees for the PhD programme will be fully supported by the project.
4. The project provides research funds for fieldwork, selected conference attendance and other research-related expenses. The University signs an insurance against accidents for workers.
5. Support to publish peer-reviewed scientific articles and to participate in international scientific conferences. The candidate has the option of compiling a cumulative PhD dissertation based on these publications.
6. Enrolment in English language courses of University of Deusto, if needed.
7. Attractive secondary benefits for University of Deusto personnel (such as discount on private health care).



8. EU Citizens and citizens from countries that have a bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, unemployment benefit, retirement pension, maternity leave benefits.
9. Non-EU Citizens from countries that have no bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, maternity leave and child benefits.
10. On-site services at the University of Deusto: sports centre, private gym, subsidized restaurants, cultural centre, activities for the UD community, etc.
11. Free support to researcher (and family) from Bizkaia Talent about administrative matters (Taxation, Legislation (visas/permits), Legal Procedures, Vehicle Registration and Driving Licenses, Foreigners' ID Number-NIE, Census Registration, Civil Register, etc.) ; Accommodation, health, education, schooling, leisure, culture...) (<https://www.bizkaialalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/>)
12. University of Deusto and BizkaiaTalent offer help to look for residences for students and research staff in Bilbao (<https://www.bizkaialalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/alojamiento-servicios-asociados/#init>)

Applications must include:

- a) a covering letter in Spanish explaining the reasons for applying for the post (max. 2 pages);
- b) a detailed Curriculum Vitae;
- c) copy of Master degree certificate and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes;
- d) two sole-authored publications (article, book chapter or Master's dissertation chapter);
- e) two reference letters and names and contact details of a maximum of three references.



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Post-doctoral researcher “Water ontologies and interlegal translation- Nepal research context”

Post-doctoral researcher “Water ontologies and interlegal translation- Nepal research context”

Applicants must be holders of a PhD Degree and have an interest in developing research within the research stream I “Indigenous visions/practices: beyond water as a natural resource and a human right” which will examine multiple and contested meanings attached by Latin American and Asian indigenous peoples to rivers and will interrogate the extent to which these counter-hegemonic understandings can be translated in courtroom settings investigating alleged human rights violations by extractive projects in their territories. The position is open to researchers at early career stage and also to more experienced researchers.

Workplan

The selected researcher will be expected to contribute to the implementation of the Nepal research context of both Work Packages of this research stream: A) unveiling and grasping indigenous water knowledges and ontologies and B) interlegal translation in court: anthropological expert testimonies. Especially, s/he will be asked to develop socio-political, anthropological and legal analysis of the Nepali case study and undertake participatory collaborative legal anthropological research at the local level of indigenous communities and during different phases of a judicialisation process using: participant observation, focus groups, ethnolinguistic workshops, life histories over generations, community collaborative documentary and collaborative community workshops. S/he will develop her/his research in close collaboration with the Principal Investigator. S/he will be also asked to support specified research activities associated with the project’s general objectives and to participate in the project’s regular meetings and seminars at the premises of the Human Rights Institute. The selected researcher will also contribute to RIVERS’s communication and dissemination activities, networking



and producing reports and outputs (e.g. scientific and policy publications, participation in and organization of scientific events).

The selected researcher should be available to undertake frequent travel and to stay at least four months a year, in three consecutive years, in the Nepal research context.

Requirements:

1. PhD Degree in Social Sciences (such as cultural/political/ social/ legal/visual anthropology, anthropology of human rights, international human rights law, development studies, ecology and/or environmental studies);
2. Record of independent and creative thinking and research experience in the fields of legal anthropology or anthropology of human rights, political ontology, decolonial human rights theory, indigenous peoples' rights, development and extractive industries, anthropology of natural resources; ecology studies.
3. Proven experience in using ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, focus groups interviews, life histories;
4. Record of research experience with ethnic groups/indigenous peoples in Nepal and/or another Asian country
5. Publishing record appropriate to career stage.
6. Availability for frequent travel and extended stays in Nepal and other international locations required for fieldwork;
7. Excellent communication skills in English (oral and written form) and knowledge and/or willingness to learn Spanish; Knowledge of an indigenous/ ethnic language is an asset.
8. Combining critical awareness, independent thinking and creativity. Willingness to engage on an ambitious project and ability to work in an interdisciplinary and bi-lingual (Spanish-English) team.
9. Whether a working VISA will be required, this call is open to Non-EU nationals that would like to apply. Researchers belonging to an indigenous/ethnic group are strongly encouraged to apply.

Working conditions:

1. Being part of a vibrant, supportive and intercultural research team which will conduct innovative and cutting-edge research within the interdisciplinary Human Rights Institute.
2. Labour contract as Associate Researcher (Investigador/a Asociado/a) for five years with periodic evaluations.
3. The project provides research funds for fieldwork, selected conference attendance and other research-related expenses.
4. Enrolment in Spanish language classes within languages courses of University of Deusto, if needed.
5. Attractive secondary benefits for University of Deusto personal (such as discount on private health care).
6. Free support to researcher (and family members) from Bizkaia Talent about administrative matters (Taxation, Legislation (visas/permits), Legal Procedures, Vehicle Registration and Driving



Licenses, Foreigners' ID Number-NIE, Census Registration, Civil Register, etc.) ; Accommodation, health, education, schooling, leisure, culture...) <https://www.bizkaiaalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/>

7. EU Citizens and citizens from countries that have a bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, unemployment benefit, retirement pension, maternity leave benefits.
8. Non-EU Citizens from countries that have no bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, maternity leave and child benefits.
9. On-site services at the University of Deusto: sports centre, private gym, subsidized restaurants, cultural centre, activities for the UD community, etc.
10. University of Deusto and BizkaiaTalent offer help to look for residences for students and research staff in Bilbao (<https://www.bizkaiaalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/alojamiento-servicios-asociados/#init>)

Applications must include:

1. A research statement (max. 4 pages) in English consisting of reasons for applying, a brief description of previous research experience (including academic networks and non-academic co-operation) and expectations.
2. A detailed Curriculum Vitae;
3. Copy of PhD degree certificate and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes;
4. Two writing samples (thesis and/or essay/conference papers or and/or published article) which provide evidence of ethnographic fieldwork experience and ability to theorize relevant to the proposal;
5. Two reference letters and names and contact details of a maximum of three references.



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Post-doctoral researcher “Interlegal translation – Colombia context & UN indigenous knowledge brokers”

Applicants must hold a PhD Degree and have an interest in developing research focusing on work package B “Interlegal translation in court: anthropological expert testimonies” in the Colombian research context and work package D “Universal human rights and international indigenous knowledge brokers”, enhancing the interconnection between research streams I and II.

Workplan

The selected researcher will be expected to contribute to the implementation of the Colombian research context of Work Package B of research stream I, which is focused on bridging the empirical knowledge gap about the contentions, challenges, success factors and lessons learned concerning the role of indigenous and non-indigenous anthropologists in strategic litigation. The implementation of Work Package B will be in coordination with the selected PhD researcher. S/he will also be expected to contribute to the implementation of work package C “Universal human rights and international indigenous knowledge brokers” of research stream II. S/he will be asked to conduct ethnographic research (participant observation, in-depth interviews and collaborative workshops) during different phases of judicialization processes of extractive projects in indigenous territories (Colombia) and to conduct ethnographic research (participant observation, in-depth interviews and collaborative workshops) during the yearly sessions of the Expert Mechanism of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), annual report presentation of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples at



the Human Rights Council, and during at least three country visits in cases related to natural resources of the Special Rapporteur. S/he will be also asked to support any research activities associated with the project's general objectives and to participate in the project's regular meetings and seminars at the premises of the Human Rights Institute. The selected researcher will also contribute to RIVERS's communication and dissemination activities, networking and producing reports and outputs (e.g. scientific and policy publications, participation in and organization of scientific events).

The selected researcher should have availability for frequent travel and to stay at least three months a year, in three consecutive years, in the Colombian research context with additional yearly travel to Geneva. The position is open to early career researchers and also to more experienced researchers.

Requirements:

1. Have or close to obtaining a PhD degree in Social Sciences (such as international human rights law, anthropology of human rights, legal/political/cultural anthropology, international relations, ecology and/or environmental studies);
2. Record of independent and creative thinking and research experience in the fields of legal anthropology or anthropology of human rights, political, decolonial human rights theory, indigenous peoples' rights, development and extractive industries, anthropology of natural resources; ecology studies;
3. Proven experiences in using ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, focus groups interviews, life histories; a commitment to ethnographic research;
4. Knowledge and/or experience with the UN human rights protection system;
5. Record of research experience with ethnic groups/indigenous peoples.
6. Publishing record commensurate with the career stage;
7. Availability for travel to Geneva (Switzerland) and extended research stay in Colombia (up to 3 months/yearly) and other international locations required for fieldwork;
8. Excellent written and oral communication skills in English, as well as a good knowledge of Spanish.
9. Whether a working VISA will be required, this call is open to Non-EU nationals that would like to apply. Researchers belonging to an indigenous/ethnic group are strongly encouraged to apply.

Working conditions:

1. Being part of a vibrant, supportive and intercultural research team which will conduct innovative and cutting-edge research within the interdisciplinary Human Rights Institute.
2. Labour contract as Associate Researcher (Investigador/a Asociado), for five years with periodic evaluations.
3. The project provides research funds for fieldwork, selected conference attendance and other research-related expenses.
4. Attractive secondary benefits for University of Deusto personal (such as discount on private health care).



5. Free support to researcher (and family members) from Bizkaia Talent about administrative matters (Taxation, Legislation (visas/permits), Legal Procedures, Vehicle Registration and Driving Licenses, Foreigners' ID Number-NIE, Census Registration, Civil Register, etc.) ; Accommodation, health, education, schooling, leisure, culture...) <https://www.bizkaiaalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/>
6. EU Citizens and citizens from countries that have a bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, unemployment benefit, retirement pension, maternity leave benefits.
7. Non-EU Citizens from countries that have no bilateral social security agreement with Spain: social security coverage including medical insurance, maternity leave and child benefits.
8. On-site services at the University of Deusto: sports centre, private gym, subsidized restaurants, cultural centre, activities for the UD community, etc.
9. University of Deusto and BizkaiaTalent offer help to look for residences for students and research staff in Bilbao (<https://www.bizkaiaalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/alojamiento-servicios-asociados/#init>)

Applications must include:

1. A research statement (max. 4 pages) in English or Spanish consisting of reasons for applying, a brief description of previous research experience (including academic networks and non-academic co-operation) and expectations;
2. A detailed Curriculum Vitae;
3. Copy of PhD degree certificate and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes;
4. Two writing samples (thesis and/or essay/conference papers or and/or published article) which provide evidence of ethnographic fieldwork experience and ability to theorize relevant to the project;
5. Two reference letters and names and contact details of a maximum of three references



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Project manager (50%) – researcher “UN water knowledge/norms production” (50%)

Applicants must have an interest in combining being responsible for the smooth running of the project from the management, reporting and financial aspects of RIVERS, as well as contributing to the implementation of the project’s scientific tasks. Specifically to the implementation of research stream II “UN human rights system: toward counter-hegemonic water knowledge and norm production”. RIVERS aims in this research stream to empirically scrutinise encounters of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic understandings of the human right to water and human rights broadly within this universal protection system. This research stream aspires to fill in knowledge gaps about how international human rights law is constructed and how human rights works at this international level. This position is open to researchers on early career stages and also to more experienced researchers.

Workplan

On the one hand, the research manager will work closely with the PI, assisting the team in: a) monitoring the progress of work ; b) reporting on financial and administrative related issues in collaboration with the Human Rights Institute’s manager; c) co-organizing scientific events and planning the research in the different fieldwork settings, etc.); e) updating RIVERS’s website and blog and implementing the communication strategy; d) support in evaluation and risk management. (50% time).

On the other hand, the research manager will be expected to contribute to Work Package C “Human rights treaty bodies: water knowledge and norm production” which engages with international norm-setting within key UN spaces, such as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation. Especially, s/he will be asked to conduct ethnographic research (participant participation, in-depth interviews, focus groups,



individual interviews) during the sessions of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and activities the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation in Geneva (50%).

Requirements:

1. Have or close to obtaining a PhD degree in Social Sciences (such as international human rights law, anthropology of human rights, legal/political/cultural anthropology, international relations, ecology and/or environmental studies);
2. Previous experience in project management of (inter)national research consortia, research networks and/or international development projects (European and/or UN funding).
3. Record of independent and creative thinking and research experience in the fields of legal anthropology or anthropology of human rights, political, decolonial human rights theory, indigenous peoples' rights, development and extractive industries, anthropology of natural resources; ecology studies;
4. Proven experience in using ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, focus groups interviews, life histories; commitment to ethnography;
5. Knowledge and/or experience with the UN human rights protection system;
6. Record of research experience with ethnic/ indigenous groups.
7. Publishing record commensurate with career stage;
8. Availability for frequent travel to Geneva (Switzerland) and other international locations required for fieldwork;
9. Excellent written and oral communication skills in English, as well as a good written and oral communication in Spanish.
10. Whether a working VISA will be required, this call is open to Non-EU nationals that would like to apply. Researchers belonging to an indigenous/ethnic group are strongly encouraged to apply.

Working conditions:

1. Being part of a vibrant, supportive and intercultural research team which will conduct innovative and cutting-edge research within the interdisciplinary Human Rights Institute.
2. Labour contract as Research Assistant (Ayudante de Investigación), or Associate Researcher (Investigador/a Asociado) for those who own a PhD Degree, for five years with periodic evaluations.
3. The project provides research funds for fieldwork, selected conference attendance and other research-related expenses.
4. Attractive secondary benefits for University of Deusto personal (such as discount on private health care).
5. Free support to researcher (and family members) from Bizkaia Talent about administrative matters (Taxation, Legislation (visas/permits), Legal Procedures, Vehicle Registration and Driving Licenses, Foreigners' ID Number-NIE, Census Registration, Civil Register, etc.) ; Accommodation,



health, education, schooling, leisure, culture...) <https://www.bizkaiaalent.eus/en/te-ofrecemos/relocation-and-be-basque-dual-career-centre/>

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Applications must include:

1. A research statement (max. 4 pages) in English/Spanish consisting of reasons for applying, a brief description of previous research experiences (including academic networks and non-academic co-operation) and expectations;
2. A detailed Curriculum Vitae;
3. Copy of PhD degree certificate and other relevant documents for eligibility purposes;
4. Two writing samples (thesis and/or essay/conference papers or and/or article) which provide evidence of ethnographic fieldwork experience and ability to theorize relevant to the project;
5. Two reference letters and names and contact details of a maximum of three references



Selection procedure for all positions

Deadline: 30 January 2019

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of:

- 1) RIVERS Project Principal Investigator Lieselotte Viaene
- 2) Director of the Human Rights Institute Gorka Urrutia Usua
- 3) One member of the RIVERS Project International Advisory Board

Candidates should be available for remote or direct interviewing (University of Deusto does not cover travel expenses). A selection of short listed candidates will be interviewed by the committee. The evaluation will combine the appraisal of written documents and interview in equal parts (50/50). Each position needs to be validated by the Department of Human Resources at University of Deusto through an additional procedure. Details will be provided to successful candidates.

For further information about administrative issues (salary conditions, visa requirements for Non EU-citizens, selection procedure, ...), please contact: gestiondepersonas@deusto.es

For further information about RIVERS, please contact Dr. Lieselotte Viaene: lviaene@deusto.es