Doctoral Researcher

WE OFFER A FULL-TIME DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP AT THE CENTRE DE RECHERCHE EN PHILOSOPHIE

Newton’s Metaphysics in 18th-century French Materialism (and related topics)

Job description

The Centre de recherche en Philosophie (https://phi.centresphisoc.ulb.be) based at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Campus Solbosch, invites applications for one four-year PhD position.

The research will be carried out in the context of the recently awarded EOS project ‘Responses to Newton’s Mathematical-Experimental Paradigm in 18th-Century Philosophy’ (RENEW18). More information on the EOS project, jointly led by Karin de Boer (KU Leuven), Steffen Ducheyne (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), and Arnaud Pelletier (Université libre de Bruxelles), can be found here: https://hiw.kuleuven.be/cmprpc/renew18

The subproject ‘Newton’s Metaphysics in French Materialism’ will be carried out under the supervision of Prof. Arnaud Pelletier.

Voltaire's reading of the Principia has largely shaped the image of "French Newtonianism": his Eléments de la philosophie de Newton (1741) pushed the idea of a 'Newtonian metaphysics' to undermine not only Descartes and Leibniz but also to thwart materialism. Challenging this reading, the project intends to study the many forms of appropriation of Newton by French materialist authors. The preliminary – but not exclusive – corpus of this investigation is made up by works of La Mettrie, Diderot and D'Holbach. Prospective candidates may also propose a project centered on only one of these figures, on other ones or on debates in 18th-century French Philosophy as long as it fits within the scope of RENEW18.

In addition to conducting independent research, the selected applicant is expected to participate in the organization of common activities such as team meetings, talks, workshops, and conferences as well as to take up a modest teaching load. The working language within the consortium is English; the PhD thesis can be written in French or English.

A later starting date can be taken into consideration.

The successful candidate will be employed at ULB under the standard conditions. S/He will be offered a one-year fellowship (renewable for three more years). The fellowship provides for training opportunities, social and health benefits, office space, and a research budget.
Profile

- MA degree in philosophy at the starting date of the contract
- Good knowledge of the history of modern philosophy
- Outstanding hermeneutical and analytical skills
- Excellent command of written and spoken English
- Excellent command of written French
- Team player
- Knowledge of Latin and the history and philosophy of science are a plus

Interested?

Please send your full application to Arnaud.Pelletier@ulb.be, including:

- A short cover letter
- CV (including a publication list, if available, and the names and contact details of two referees)
- Academic transcript of your MA degree(s) with a list of courses attended
- A writing sample (either the MA thesis or a 15-25 pages essay)
- A research statement (between 2 and 4 pages, not counting the bibliography) that (a) explains how your past research bears on the advertised subproject and the project as a whole and (b) sketches your approach to the topic of the subproject (state of the art, research objectives, work plan)

Prof. Arnaud Pelletier
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Fellowship (bourse doctorale): approximatively 2 100, 00 EUR (free from tax)

Duration: 12 month-fellowship (extendable up to max. 48 months).

Deadline for application: December 10, 2022

Preferred starting date: The position can be taken up from 1 February 2023.

We expect the (online) interviews to take place early in January 2023. For further information, please contact Arnaud Pelletier (Arnaud.Pelletier@ulb.be).
Equal opportunities policy
ULB's personnel management policy is geared towards diversity and equal opportunities. We recruit candidates on the basis of their skills, irrespective of age, gender, sexual orientation, origin, nationality, beliefs, disability, etc. More details on the ULB gender and diversity policy are available at https://www.ulb.be/en/about-ulb/gender-equality-at-ulb.