

Saarland University is a campus university that is internationally recognized for its strong research programmes. Fostering young academic talent and creating ideal conditions for teaching and research are a core part of the university's mission. As part of the University of the Greater Region, Saarland University enables students and staff to share and exchange knowledge and ideas between disciplines, between universities and across borders. With over 17,000 national and international students, studying more than a hundred different academic disciplines, Saarland University is a diverse and dynamic learning environment.

The Chair of Public Law and Public International Law, with a focus on Sustainability and Resilience Research, is inviting applications for the following PhD position commencing at the earliest opportunity.

Doctoral researcher / Research associate (m/f/x)

Reference number W2952, salary in accordance with the German TV-L salary scale[1], pay grade: E13 TV-L, duration of employment: 2 years, volume of employment: 50 % of standard working time.

Workplace/Department:

The Chair of Prof. Dr. Anne Dienelt, maîtr. en droit (Aix-en-Provence), is part of the Public Law department at the Faculty of Law at Saarland University in Saarbrücken, Germany.

Besides the law of sustainability in a multi-level system and research projects on environmental and climate protection, the Chair focuses on the resilience of national and international legal systems. Its guiding question is how legal orders can be structured to absorb challenges of various kinds: as a tool for shaping and governing, as an adaptive yet robust order, and as a system in flux that must balance flexibility and normative stability.

The Project: From Molecules to Mandates

Soils are fundamental to food security, biodiversity and climate regulation, yet international law gives them comparatively little attention. The interdisciplinary Wellcome Trust-funded project *From Molecules to Mandates* tests

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[1] TV-L = collective agreement on remuneration of public sector employees in the German *Länder*
The pay grade assigned to an employee depends on their professional qualifications and the number of years of service. Each pay grade is further subdivided into levels. Entry-level employees with no previous experience will initially be assigned a level 1 rating. After one year at level 1 of the E10 pay grade, an employee will move up to level 2. After a further two years, the employee will move to level 3, etc.

the legal framework protecting soils by exploring conflict pollution and damage to microbial life in soil samples from war-affected regions in Ukraine.

The doctoral project focuses on the legal framework for soil health in peacetime and wartime. It covers international environmental law and EU law, including the EU Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience, as well as the protection of the natural environment under international humanitarian law and human rights law, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and obligations that arise once hostilities have ended. Rather than treating these regimes in isolation, the project examines how they apply concurrently to the same soils across the conflict cycle and how they interact where their protection overlaps, diverges or leaves gaps.

Within this project, the PhD candidate is expected to analyse the relevant international and EU legal frameworks, including international environmental law, international humanitarian law, human rights law and post-conflict obligations. On this basis, they will ask how scientific indicators of soil health, degradation and contamination can inform legal obligations. Moreover, the PhD candidate will contribute to the project's publications, workshops and dissemination activities.

Job requirements:

- Knowledge of public international law and EU law,
- A keen interest in interdisciplinary research in an international team, and
- Excellent analytical skills and strong written and oral communication skills.

Your academic qualifications:

- Completed university studies in law and the qualification to conduct doctoral studies, as well as
- Language skills (according to GER): English at CEFT level C1, basic German knowledge is an asset.

What we also expect:

- High motivation for academic work
- Openness to working with interdisciplinary groups of scientists and scholars,
- The ability to work independently and with dedication, as well as
- Reliability and strong organizational skills.

What we can offer you:

- An interesting and varied role in a scientific and international setting,
- A supportive and dedicated team and a respectful work environment,
- Close professional guidance for your doctoral project,
- A flexible work schedule allowing you to balance work and family, among other things the possibility of remote working,
- Secure and future-oriented employment with attractive conditions,
- A broad range of further education and professional development programmes (for example language courses),
- An occupational health management model with numerous attractive options, such as our university sports programme,
- Supplementary pension scheme (RZVK),
- Discounted tickets on local public transport services ('Job-Ticket' of the saarVV),
- Job bike leasing (JobRad).

We look forward to receiving your **complete online application** (in a PDF file) by **21 December 2026** to **ls-dienelt@uni-saarland.de**. Please include the reference number **W2952** in the subject line of the email.

Your application should include:

- Cover letter including research interests, motivation for joining the project, relevant research and work experiences, and an indication of proficiency in English and German,
- A detailed CV, and
- Copies of academic degree certificates, academic transcripts, and, where applicable, work or professional qualification certificates.

If you have any **questions**, please contact Prof. Dienelt directly: anne.dienelt@uni-saarland.de.

Pay grade classification is based on the particular details of the position held and the extent to which the applicant meets the requirements of the pay grade within the TV-L salary scale. Part-time employment is generally possible.

If you have obtained a foreign university degree, a proof of the equivalence of this degree with a German degree by the Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen (ZAB) is needed before hiring. If necessary, please apply for this in time. You can find more information at https://www.kmk.org/zeugnisbewertung.

Unfortunately, neither costs for attending an interview at Saarland University nor costs for any certificate evaluation by the ZAB can be reimbursed in principle.

We welcome applications regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic and social origin, religion/belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation and identity. In accordance with its policy of increasing the proportion of women, the University actively encourages applications from women. Applications from severely disabled persons will be given preferential consideration in the event of equal suitability.

When you submit a job application to Saarland University you will be transmitting personal data. Please refer to our privacy notice for information on how we collect and process personal data in accordance with Art. 13 of the Datenschutz-Grundverordnung. By submitting your application you confirm that you have taken note of the information in the Saarland University privacy notice.