EUI

The EUI has an open vacancy for a

Research Assistant in the

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

Who we are

The **European University Institute** (EUI) at a glance:
- an **international organisation** set up in 1972;
- a research university focusing exclusively on **postgraduate**, **doctoral** and **post-doctoral studies**, and advanced research;
- located in the hills overlooking the city of Florence, Italy.

The Institute also hosts the Historical Archives of the European Union.

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) is an inter-disciplinary research centre at the heart of the European University Institute (EUI). It was established in 1992 to complement the four EUI disciplinary departments (Economics, History and Civilization, Law, Political and Social Sciences) with the aim to be involved in both basic and policy research, collaborate with other centres of excellence in Europe, provide opportunities for young scholars and promote dialogue with the world of practice. The Centre's goal is to maintain an environment and support structure that fosters intellectual curiosity and excellent research. The research agenda of the Centre is currently guided by three major themes: Integration, Governance and Democracy; Regulating Markets and Governing Money; and 21st Century World Politics and Europe.

Employment details

Contract type	Full-time (30/30, 40 hours/week)
Length of contract	One year. Start date as soon as possible.
	This contract may be further renewed (several times and conditional to the availability of funds), leading to an extension of the period of service up to a total of 5 years, including the first contract period.
Salary indication and grade	Grade: ASTAC1b, step 1
	The basic net monthly salary after taxes is approximately 2670 Euro, plus

allowances if applicable.

More information about conditions of employment is available here.

| Place of work | Florence, Italy |

About the project

Project Directors   Primavera De Filippi and Erik Jones

Project details   Blockchain Gov is an **interdisciplinary** research project that will study the impact of blockchain technology on new and existing governance systems, and its consequences for **legitimacy** and **trust**. Blockchain Gov is a 5 year long project (2021-2026), EU-funded (ERC grant of €2M) and hosted at the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (France) and the European University Institute (Italy), with Principal Investigator and advisors from the Berkman Klein Center at Harvard University.

The project will investigate the **governance** of existing blockchain systems, and analyze the **power dynamics** at play within these systems. This will be done through the study of formal and informal governance practices in existing blockchain communities, analyzed in light of legal and political theory. The project relies on both an **empirical** and **theoretical** approach, with a view to develop a theoretical framework for distributed governance. It will explore the use of blockchain technology to support new models of distributed governance characterized by more decentralized and participatory decision-making, greater transparency and accountability. Drawing from these insights, the project will elaborate new distributed governance practices for blockchain communities that will be tested and implemented by selected pilot communities. Finally, the project will assess and support the adoption of the new governance models at the **community level**, at the **institutional level** and at the **global governance level.**

Job description   The research assistant will provide research assistance to the Directors of the project. Main tasks include:

- Exploring the multiple meanings of "trust" in different disciplines: trust as *security*, trust as *relationship*, trust as the flipside of *risk*, etc.;
- Investigating the impact of blockchain technology on both confidence and trust and the inherent limitations of a "trustless" technology;
- Exploring how public/permissionless or private/permissioned blockchains can serve as a "regulatory technology", using technological guarantees to achieve specific regulatory or policy objectives (e.g. promoting more transparency, auditability and accountability);
- Exploring the use of blockchain-based mechanisms as a means to increase confidence in the information system of public or private institutions, with a view to restore confidence and trust in these institutions;
- Investigating new ways of embedding constitutional constraints into the technological fabric of these information systems, to promote a greater degree of compliance between the rule of code and the rule of law;
- Exploring the extent to which the affordances and constraints of these blockchain-based solutions can be regarded as functionally equivalent to

the requirements enshrined in existing laws and regulations (e.g. formalities and reporting obligations) and whether this may justify a reduced regulatory burden for those that incorporate these solutions into their information system;
- Guiding other team members in investigating (a) the operations of both formal and informal governance structures in blockchain communities and (b) how blockchain technology can serve as a regulatory technology, using technological means to achieve specific regulatory or policy objectives;
- Contributing to the drafting of a monograph and an edited volume;
- Collaborating with a multidisciplinary team (legal scholars, social researchers, data scientists, designers, computer scientists) to support pilots communities who will experiment with new governance structures;
- Presenting the main outcomes of the research in international conferences, and publish in leading research journals;
- Maintaining fluent communication with international academic groups, blockchain projects and the developer community to facilitate collaboration and to promote cross-pollination.

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications and Experience

Essential:
- MA in Legal Philosophy, Legal Theory, Constitutional Theory, Political Theory or related fields;
- Demonstrated interest and pre-existing knowledge in several of the following topics: blockchain technology, peer-to-peer technologies, distributed governance, commons-based peer-production, science and technology studies, Internet governance and politics;
- Ability to work in multidisciplinary teams, autonomy, critical thinking.

Desirable:
- PhD in Legal Philosophy, Legal Theory, Constitutional Theory, Political Theory or related fields;
- Research publications in relevant conferences and/or journals;
- Active or passive participation in existing blockchain communities or projects;
- Demonstrated interest and previous experience with decentralized architectures;
- Proven experience in agile methodologies, research projects and multidisciplinary teams;
- Teamwork and interpersonal skills, collaboration, empathy and adaptation;
- Interest or demonstrated experience in social movements, activism, commons-oriented initiatives, co-ops, and/or open collaborative communities.

Languages

Excellent knowledge of English, both written and spoken (CEFR level: C1 or above). Knowledge of other languages (CEFR level: B1 or above) constitutes an advantage.

How to apply

Deadline

The closing date for applications is **8 September 2022** at midnight (Florence time)

Contact details   For more information contact Maria Elena Cau, mariaelena.cau@eui.eu

How to apply   Fill in the [online application form](#) and upload documents as requested