

2 PhD Positions in Political Science at the World Trade Institute, University of Bern (2025-2029)

The project “**The design of trade agreements and global supply chains: A large language model approach and its application**”, led by Prof Dr **Manfred Elsig** (University of Bern) and Prof Dr **Andreas Dür** (University of Salzburg) invites applications for 2 PhD positions.

Project description: The project, which is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) via the Weave programme, applies **computational text analysis** to code the contents and design of preferential trade agreements (PTAs). The resulting data will contribute to the **Design of Trade Agreements (DESTA)** dataset, which is widely used by researchers and practitioners to understand the creation, evolution, and impact of PTAs. A particular interest of the project lies in creating novel market access measures for trade agreements, and in studying how particular legal commitments travel through the PTA network and how these relate to supply chain characteristics.

Profile: Applicants should hold a **Masters’ degree in political science, computational social sciences, economics, or a related discipline**. The successful candidate will have some experience in computational text analysis (machine learning, large language models) and an excellent command of English. The successful candidate is team-oriented, works diligently and exhibits a high level of commitment and flexibility.

The position: The PhD positions are based at the World Trade Institute, **University of Bern**, a strategic interdisciplinary research center of the University of Bern. The candidates are part of the WTI’s PhD programme and interact closely with researchers in Salzburg. In collaboration with other members of the project team, he/she will also work on publications relevant to the project.

The position is for **four years**, with an intended **start date of August 1, 2025**, or as soon as possible thereafter. The PhD positions are funded by the SNF. Funds for conference attendance and research travel are also available.

How to apply: Please send your applications to phd.wti@unibe.ch with a letter of motivation including how your research interests relate to the project, a CV, a scan of your university diploma(s) and transcripts, and the names and email addresses of two referees. The **deadline for applications is 28 of February 2025**.



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The University of Bern is an equal-opportunity employer and particularly encourages applications from qualified women and persons with disabilities.

Informal inquiries may be addressed to Dr Manfred Elsig (manfred.elsig@unibe.ch)



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