



Call for Application: Berggruen Research Center Fellowship

About the Berggruen Research Center, Peking University

[The Berggruen Research Center at Peking University](#) (henceforth referred to as ‘the Center’) was established on December 19, 2018. Launched by the President of Peking University and the Chairman of the [Berggruen Institute](#), the Center is a hub for East-West research and dialogue dedicated to cross-cultural and interdisciplinary studies of the transformations affecting humanity. The Center engages China’s most outstanding thinkers to examine, share, and develop ideas to address global challenges. The Berggruen Institute has committed a generous amount of support to the Center, which includes a fellowship program, and houses program activities such as lectures and symposia alongside a host of other public events.

Click [here](#) for the Center’s Fifth Anniversary Report.

About the Berggruen Fellowship

Selected Berggruen Fellows will work on topics related to one of the Center’s three core themes: (1) **Frontier Science, Technology, and Philosophy**, (2) **Creative Futures**, and (3) **Ancient Wisdom and Planetary Governance**. (For details of the core themes and existed projects, please refer to the description of programs in the attachment.) The core themes serve as a broad guidance for applicants, who will need to propose their own specific research projects under those themes.

Click [here](#) to know more about 2023-2024 Berggruen Fellows, and Berggruen Fellow alumni.

Thinkers in all areas, including science, philosophy, sociology, art, etc. are welcome to join us. The fellowship is part-time and is expected to last one year from 2024 to 2025. The Center will negotiate with the fellow on their starting date. A yearly stipend of 200,000 CNY (before tax) will be paid to fellows monthly, and fellows are expected to be aware of their own income tax liability.

The selected fellows will negotiate an agreement with the Center to contribute to the Center’s yearly programs, such as writing short [essays](#), organizing events, or conducting their own initiatives. Fellows are required to participate Center’s fellow gathering events. Fellows who are not based in Beijing are expected to spend some time in Beijing during the fellowship period and the Center will organize accommodation and transportation.

Criteria

- Fellows must be committed to intellectual work of the highest quality.
- Applicants should hold the highest degree in their field of study or commensurate research expertise.
- The fellowship program is open to all research backgrounds.

To Apply

Send application materials denoted below to ChinaCenter@berggruen.org before May 31, 2024.

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I. Curriculum Vitae

II. Project Statement

A project statement (up to 1000 words) should answer two questions:

Question #1: What is your proposed project?

Concisely describe the work you plan to do during your fellowship year(s):

- Explain the specific questions and research ideas that you will explore as well as your working schedule for the entire year of your fellowship.
- Describe the public impact of your project: how will you collaborate with the Center to raise public awareness of the Center's theme and work?

Question #2: What is your most important work relevant to the Center's three core areas?

- Identify your most important book, book chapter, or article and explain its importance and its relevance to the Center's work. Explain how it corrected a misconception in the literature, how it advanced thinking in some salient way, and/or how it filled an important knowledge gap.

The application deadline is May 31, 2024. The Center's Academic Advisory Board, chaired by Professor Lin Jianhua and Professor Roger T. Ames, will decide upon the awardees. The awardees will receive notification of their fellowship before July 20, 2024.

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Attachments (Programs' Description)

Frontier Science, Technology, and Philosophy Program

We live in an era of explosive growth in knowledge. Frontier technologies are allowing humans to understand the world in unprecedented ways at speeds faster than in any other time in history. At the same time, they have also created new perspectives from which human beings understand themselves. Progress in digital technologies and cognitive science, which includes the field of artificial intelligence, constantly refreshes and challenges the human understanding of the mind. Meanwhile, the rapid development of biotechnologies has created new ethical issues.

The Center believes that it is imperative to make full use of intellectual resources from across the world to explore topics in philosophy which can respond to the challenges from frontier technological paradigms, provide an interdisciplinary roadmap for the way ahead, and connect the past with the future. In this way we can develop and shape impactful ideas and scientific/technological concepts.

Since its establishment in 2018, the Center has focused on frontier technologies that involve artificial intelligence philosophy, biotechnology philosophy, and Chinese philosophy. In the field of artificial intelligence ethics, we promote communication between scientists and philosophers and advocate thinking about fundamental issues before formulating specific ethical codes. The project produced book *Intelligence and Wisdom: AI Meets Chinese Philosophers*, which was published by CITIC Press ([Chinese](#)) and Springer ([English](#)). With the “Gongsheng (Symbiosis)” project, we explore the intellectual connotations and contemporary value of symbiosis from fields including philosophy, sociology, economics, and global governance. [Gongsheng Across Contexts: A Philosophy of Co-becoming](#) was published by Palgrave Macmillan in January 2024.

The Center plans to expand further into the intersection between technology and philosophy. We will turn our focus to the topics and challenges brought about by frontier technological research in life sciences, cognitive science, and intelligence science to the traditional humanities such as philosophy. We will also explore how philosophy can provide new angles and ideas for further exploration of topics related to these frontier technologies. The Center encourages effective cross-disciplinary dialogue between cutting-edge fields such as evolution, cognition, and artificial intelligence that reflects philosophically on the future of life, human society, and human self-understanding. At the same time, starting from perspectives in sci-fi literature and art, we will discuss topics such as the underlying relationship between technology and humanity and what the future holds for humans. By fully tapping into ideas offered by different cultures and historical traditions, we hope to positively contribute theoretical approaches to how humans can coexist harmoniously with nature in the technology age. We encourage interdisciplinary thinkers to join our projects and jointly promote the enrichment and development of these topics, which are not only of great urgency, but also of profound value to future generations.

This program is closely linked with the Center's "Creative Futures" and "Ancient Wisdom and Planetary Governance" programs, providing them with guidance through fundamental ideas that will enhance our understanding of this era of change and help institutions, policy makers, and members of the public from around the world cope with these profound changes.



Creative Futures Program

The rapid development and extensive application of life technologies and digital technologies are profoundly changing how human society is organized, requiring us to assess and reflect on the interaction between frontier technologies and society.

The Berggruen Research Center, Peking University believes that it is imperative to make full use of intellectual resources from across the world to deeply examine, from an interdisciplinary perspective, how human society has been changed by the development of frontier technologies, as well as to explore the opportunities and challenges that we face regarding ethics and governance.

Since its establishment in 2018, the Center has focused on ethical and social discussions related to artificial intelligence, gene editing, and other fields of research. In our "AI narratives in China" project, a collaborative with the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence, we explore how ancient Chinese classics and folk legends, and contemporary science fiction narratives and media jointly exert an impact on contemporary public attitudes towards intelligent technology. *Imagining AI: How the World Sees Intelligent Machines* was published in May 2023 by Oxford University Press. In our "Imagining Futures" project, we invite scientists, philosophers, social science experts, writers, and artists to imagine futures and project scenarios of human society over the next thirty years. We hope to promote evidence-based and future-oriented philosophical and ethical thinking. Co-directors and scholars of the Center have also contributed to the book project *Chinese Prospects for the Standardization of Robot Ethics*, commissioned by the National Robotics Standardization General Working Group of China.

The Center hopes to further expand into fields where technology and society intersect, uphold the concept of openness, and encourage the examination of how different social, historical, and cultural backgrounds lead to different conceptions of relational rationality. This will allow us to unearth the cultural and social implications that underlie frontier technologies and related ethical topics, from fundamental reflections on the social significance of the ethical foundations of science and technology that arose due to the breakout of COVID-19, to new challenges to social governance created by the development of artificial intelligence, gene editing, and microbial communities. We encourage interdisciplinary thinkers to join our projects and together promote these topics of profound contemporary and future significance.

The program is closely linked to the Center's "Frontier Science, Technology, and Philosophy" and "Ancient Wisdom and Planetary Governance" programs, which will structurally enhance our understanding of this era of change, cultivate and advance new ideas and concepts, and help institutions, policy makers, and members of the public from around the world cope with these profound changes.

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Ancient Wisdom and Planetary Governance Program

We live in an era of great transformation. Frontier technologies are developing rapidly, geopolitical rivalries are intensifying, political polarization is occurring in many countries, social divisions are worsening, and the climate crisis continues unchecked. Amidst all these are repeated surges in COVID-19 outbreaks around the world. Together, these global challenges have exerted a profound impact on human society.

The Berggruen Research Center, Peking University believes that it is imperative to make full use of intellectual resources from across the world to discuss and explore future-oriented global governance concepts aligned with the overall interests of mankind and our living environment, so as to develop and shape new ideas, concepts, and practices that will have an impact on the world.

Since its establishment in 2018, the Center has focused on global governance. In our “[Tianxia](#)” project, we have explored how a worldview founded upon all-embracing openness, integration, and relational rationality inspires, impacts, and advances global governance.

In exploring related topics, we are focusing on how value systems originating from the world’s philosophical, cultural, and historical traditions both shape and limit concepts and practices in contemporary global governance. We encourage drawing upon underlying intellectual frameworks to reflect on the relational nature of human rationality at the levels of the individual, societal, political, and cultural ecosystems, in order to explore paths towards a truly open and pluralistic value system that encompasses the big picture. Through these explorations, we think about how to build a planetary system that is oriented toward the overall interests of mankind and our living environment and that reflects a “planetary mindset” characterized by harmonious, convivial coexistence. We encourage interdisciplinary thinkers to join our project and together promote this far-reaching intellectual shift.

This program works closely with the Center's "Frontier Science, Technology, and Philosophy" and "Creative Futures" programs, and it is closely linked with projects led by the Los Angeles Center. Through holding academic seminars, supporting experimental exploration, and launching a full range of media products, this project helps institutions, policy makers, and members of the public from around the world cope with the challenges brought about by global change.